



*Serving  
Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland  
and Salem Counties*

# Regional Transportation Plan Update

MARCH 23, 1998

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# **SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

## **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This report will review and update the SJTPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted in August 1995. Federal planning regulations require that Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) long-range plans be updated triennially, and while the 2015 RTP was amended in August 1997, that amendment primarily consisted of the addition of several regionally-significant projects and the subsequent air quality conformity analysis.

The US Environmental Protection Agency recently disapproved New Jersey's "15 percent" plan, a key component of the NJ State Implementation Plan. As a result, New Jersey's three MPO's may not conduct conformity determinations after April 11 and until various conditions of USEPA's conformity "freeze" are met.

During this period, no Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments involving non-exempt projects or programs may take place, and no long-range plans may be updated, since these require a conformity determination on the TIP or Plan. An entirely new Regional Transportation Plan was recently commissioned, and will utilize the South Jersey Travel Demand Model, the NJ Office of State Planning Population and Employment Distribution Model (OSP/PED) and SJTPO's Congestion Management System (CMS) tools, all nearing completion. This new Plan is scheduled for adoption in August, 1998 pending the completion of the technical work programs.

To enable SJTPO programs and projects to continue throughout the conformity freeze, this Plan re-examination and update will review the original RTP assumptions, transportation trends, development in the area, air quality considerations, system characteristics, and extension of forecasts to the required 20-year time horizon. This re-examination follows the basic structure of the 2015 RTP, noting any significant changes in the underlying assumptions.

## II. PLAN FRAMEWORK AND GOALS

As required by the Federal government, transportation planning and decision-making for urbanized areas is carried out through Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). On July 1, 1993, the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPPO) was designated the MPO for the southern New Jersey counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem. The SJTPPO replaced three smaller MPOs which previously covered parts of the area and also incorporated areas not formerly served by an MPO. The SJTPPO was formed to allow a stronger regional approach to solving transportation problems and brings new opportunities to southern New Jersey. New Jersey's MPO's have become partners with state government in deciding how available federal transportation dollars are spent and bring transportation decisions closer to those served. Figure 1 depicts the SJTPPO region.

MPOs coordinate the planning activities of participating agencies in the region (e.g., New Jersey Department of Transportation, NJ TRANSIT, and the four counties, among others) and provide a forum for cooperative decision-making among responsible state and local officials, public and private passenger and freight operators, and the general public. Under federal legislation (the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 or ISTEA), MPO's are entrusted with an expanded role in transportation planning and capital programming. ISTEA expired in 1997, and while a six-month extension preserves transportation funding until May 1, 1998, it is not clear at this writing what impact ISTEA's successor legislation will have on SJTPPO's operations.

The goals of the SJTPPO 2015 Regional Transportation Plan were formed from a careful review of existing regional, county, and local policy and master planning documents, followed by a visioning retreat of the SJTPPO Policy Board. These goals served as the basis for the 2015 Plan, as well as other programs and activities of SJTPPO. The goals are to:

- ▶ Improve Safety
- ▶ Support the Regional Economy
- ▶ Reduce Congestion
- ▶ Promote Transportation Choices
- ▶ Protect and Improve the Environment
- ▶ Restore, Preserve, and Maintain the Existing Transportation System
- ▶ Secure Dependable, Reliable Sources of Funds
- ▶ Recognize the Interrelationships between Transportation and Land Use Plans

These goals remain valid, and will continue to govern the planning and programming activities of SJTPPO. A clear example of the influence of these goals is the adopted Project Ranking System, which annually guides the selection of projects for the SJTPPO TIP.

Figure 1

# South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization



The Project Ranking System relies heavily on the goals articulated by the Policy Board as well as Federal metropolitan planning guidance and regulation. (Table 1, below, shows the project ranking categories and relative weights). One significant amendment to the Project Ranking System involves output from SJTPO's Congestion Management System (CMS), one of the six federally-mandated management systems for non-attainment areas. The operation of SJTPO's CMS, described more fully in Section IV, System Outlook, is consistent with the SJTPO's adopted goal of reducing congestion, a driving force behind many of SJTPO's activities.

**TABLE 1**

**SJTPO Project Ranking System**

<b><u>CATEGORY</u></b>	<b><u>WEIGHT</u></b>
Support the Regional Economy	15 %
Improve Safety	20 %
Reduce Congestion/Promote Mobility	15 %
Protect and Improve the Environment	10 %
Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System	20 %
Favor Projects for More Important Facilities/Service/Programs	15 %
Favor Cost-Effective Projects	5 %

Federal planning regulations require that the metropolitan planning process and products reflect certain key factors. At the time of the 2015 RTP, there were 15 such required planning factors:

- ▶ Preservation of existing transportation facilities.
- ▶ Consistency of transportation planning with applicable energy conservation programs.
- ▶ The need to relieve congestion and prevent it from occurring in areas where it does not yet occur.
- ▶ The likely effect of transportation policy decisions on land use and development and the consistency of transportation plans and programs with land use and development plans.
- ▶ Programming of transportation enhancement activities.
- ▶ The effects of projects without regard to funding source.
- ▶ Access to ports, airports, intermodal facilities, major freight distribution routes, recreation areas, monuments and historic sites, and military bases.
- ▶ Connectivity to roads outside the MPO region.
- ▶ Needs identified through management systems.
- ▶ Preservation of rights-of-way for future transportation projects.
- ▶ Enhancement of the efficient movement of freight.
- ▶ Use of life-cycle costs in design.
- ▶ The overall social, economic, energy, and environmental effects of transportation decisions.
- ▶ Expansion, enhancement, and increased use of transit services.
- ▶ Capital investments that would result in increased security in transit systems.

The 2015 RTP specified the adopted goal, policy or action step that related to each planning factor. Since then, federal legislation has added one required planning factor, which is central to SJTPO's operations: recreational travel and tourism.

The focus on recreational travel and tourism by SJTPO cannot be overstated. For example, one of the principal reasons for upgrading the South Jersey Highway Model was to incorporate recreational travel considerations into SJTPO's planning activities. A major beach activity survey was taken, previous technical work involving Atlantic City-based travel was utilized, and separate beach and casino activity sub-models are now part of the SJ Travel Demand Model, along with a wide variety of modes and time periods reflecting recreational travel.

In addition, the public involvement being conducted by SJTPO - the Shore Connection Committee described earlier - has a major focus on recreational travel and tourism, and its benefits to the region and state.

SJTPO's activities and planning process have thus fully embraced the 16 required planning factors, and will continue to do so in subsequent Plan Updates, TIP's, Unified Planning Work Programs, and technical studies.



### III. BASELINE CONDITIONS

#### Transportation Network

Benchmarks for determining existing transportation characteristics are little changed since the publication of the 2015 RTP in 1995. The 1990 U.S. Census and the subsequent releases of transportation indicators, such as the 1990 Census Transportation Planning Package, are still primary sources.

A review of the highway and transit system reveals several changes, but none that would affect the conclusions of the 2015 RTP or the conformity analysis conducted for the August 1997 RTP amendments. Notable among these are:

- ▶ the completion of the Atlantic City Corridor improvements - local street and intersection improvements in Atlantic City at the foot of the Atlantic City Expressway
- ▶ the expansion of routes in Atlantic City served by jitneys, which provide connections among casinos, the Atlantic City Convention Center/Rail Terminal, and other sites
- ▶ the discontinuation of NJ Transit's WHEELS services in Atlantic County and Salem County due to extremely low ridership
- ▶ continued airside and landside improvements at the Atlantic City International Airport

One event that may affect the region's transportation system is the impending division of Conrail's assets and operations between the Norfolk Southern and CSX rail freight systems. The matter is currently before the Federal Surface Transportation Board, and SJTPO has filed a position statement before the Board on the proposal.

In short, the SJTPO's position supports the acquisition of Conrail, provided that:

- ▶ there be full competitive access
- ▶ passenger operations are preserved
- ▶ competitive access is equally available for shortlines and should allow direct interchange where practical and feasible
- ▶ shippers have adequate access to a full range of transportation options
- ▶ employment impacts are minimized

The acquisition of Conrail, if approved, should have a beneficial impact upon rail freight operations in the region. For the first time since the formation of Conrail, customers and short lines would have a choice of long-haul carriers, and if substantial increases in rail freight traffic result, highway traffic and congestion might be reduced.

## **Population and Employment**

The demographic figures presented in the 2018 RTP are being reviewed for the Plan Update currently underway, with adoption scheduled for August 1998. That update will utilize the new technical tools now under development, including the South Jersey Travel Demand Model (SJTDM) linked to the NJ Office of State Planning Population and Employment Distribution Model (OSP-PED), and SJTPO's Congestion Management System tools.

Detailed demographic forecasts are being prepared for the August 1998 Update, but a review of the 2015 RTP forecasts versus 1996 demographic estimates reveals that a great deal of growth forecasted to occur between 1990 and 1996 did not occur. Only 62 % of the 1990-1996 population growth and 15 % of the employment growth forecasted for the SJTPO region actually took place, as will be detailed in the System Outlook section.

## **Air Quality Issues**

Under federal law, long range MPO plans in non-attainment areas for ozone or under an attainment maintenance plan for carbon monoxide (SJTPO is both) must demonstrate conformity with applicable Federal air quality standards. At the time of the 2015 RTP and 1997 Plan amendments, all four SJTPO Counties were designated as being in non-attainment status for ozone: Cumberland and Salem Counties in the Severe category, while Atlantic and Cape May Counties in the Moderate non-attainment classification. Atlantic and Salem Counties are under New Jersey's maintenance plan for carbon monoxide.

A recent event of great significance to the August 1998 Update is USEPA's March 17, 1998 designation of Atlantic and Cape May Counties as in attainment for ozone. Conformity issues for ozone for these counties are therefore no longer relevant. Because the conformity finding of August 1997 relates to the entire SJTPO region, however, that conformity finding will be utilized for this update.

## IV. SYSTEM OUTLOOK

Updating the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan requires that the time horizon be extended to the year 2018, twenty years from the date of adoption. The 2015 RTP and August 1997 amendments utilized the South Jersey Highway Model, which is currently being significantly upgraded for use in the Plan update scheduled for August 1998.

Due to the unavailability of the new South Jersey Travel Demand Model, the traffic forecasts and conformity analysis from the recent Plan amendment were examined for suitability for use in this Update. These plan components are primarily based on the population and employment forecasts prepared for the year 2015 and subsequently adopted into the August 1997 Plan amendments.

### Demographic Inputs

Since those amendments, population and employment estimates have been released and may provide some guidance for this update. The US Census Bureau recently published municipal-level population estimates for 1995. Because the South Jersey Travel Demand Model was being validated in late 1997, new baseline (i.e., 1996) demographic estimates for the SJTPO region were needed for this purpose. SJTPO staff extrapolated the US Census 1995 population estimates one year, to be used with 1996 employment estimates recently released by Rutgers University.

These municipal-level population and employment estimates and the 2015 forecasts from the recent Plan amendment were reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee, and retained for possible further refinement during the use of the SJTDM for the RTP Update scheduled for August 1998. They are also used in the following analysis of demographic trends and the extension of the 2015 RTP to a twenty year time horizon at 2018.

As indicated above, year 2015 population and employment forecasts were adopted by SJTPO in the 2015 RTP and re-adopted in the August 1997 RTP amendments. These forecasts anticipated strong employment growth, especially in Atlantic City, at the beginning of the forecast period. Several major developments have been completed (e.g., casino expansions, Atlantic City Convention Center), but other regionally-significant developments, such as the new casinos planned for Atlantic City's "H-tract", Marina, Uptown Urban Renewal Tract, and Albany Avenue site have not yet begun construction. It is anticipated that they will indeed be built within twenty years, although not as quickly as originally envisioned.

To arrive at year 2018 demographic forecasts for the current update of the Plan, it was necessary to first analyze the validity of the original RTP forecast in light of these recent development trends. As detailed on Table 2, much of the growth forecasted in the early years of the 1990-2015 period has not occurred.

The August 1997 RTP Amendment was analyzed for the required air quality conformity for the threshold years of 1999, 2005, and 2015, each of which utilized a population and employment forecast. Interpolating a straight-line rate of growth between the 1990 figures and the 1999 forecasts in the RTP Amendment yields a "forecasted" 1996 figure. This may be compared with the 1996 estimates prepared for the August 1997 SJ Travel Demand Model ("Estimated" Population and Employment, Table 2) as a gauge on the rate of growth in the early years of the forecast.

The column in Table 2 labelled "%E/F" shows the percentage of population or employment growth forecasted from 1990 to 1996 that has actually occurred, according to the most recent estimates. The analysis reveals that just over 62 % of the forecasted population growth, and only 15.1 % of the predicted employment growth has taken place. In light of this slower or "later" growth, it can be concluded that year 2015 forecasts may reasonably be assumed to be valid for 2018.

Tables A-1 to A-4 in the Appendix show the population and employment figures for 1990, 1999, 2005, and 2015 by municipality originally included in the August 1997 RTP Amendments.

### **System Performance and Problem Areas**

Given that the demographic inputs into the travel demand and air quality models are unchanged from the 1997 Plan amendments, the conclusions on vehicle miles travelled, speed, etc. remain valid. Likewise, the problem areas described in the 2015 RTP will remain the same for this Plan update. Tables 3 and 4 indicate the capacity-based problem areas identified via the South Jersey Highway Model, and those identified through further involvement by stakeholders and the public.

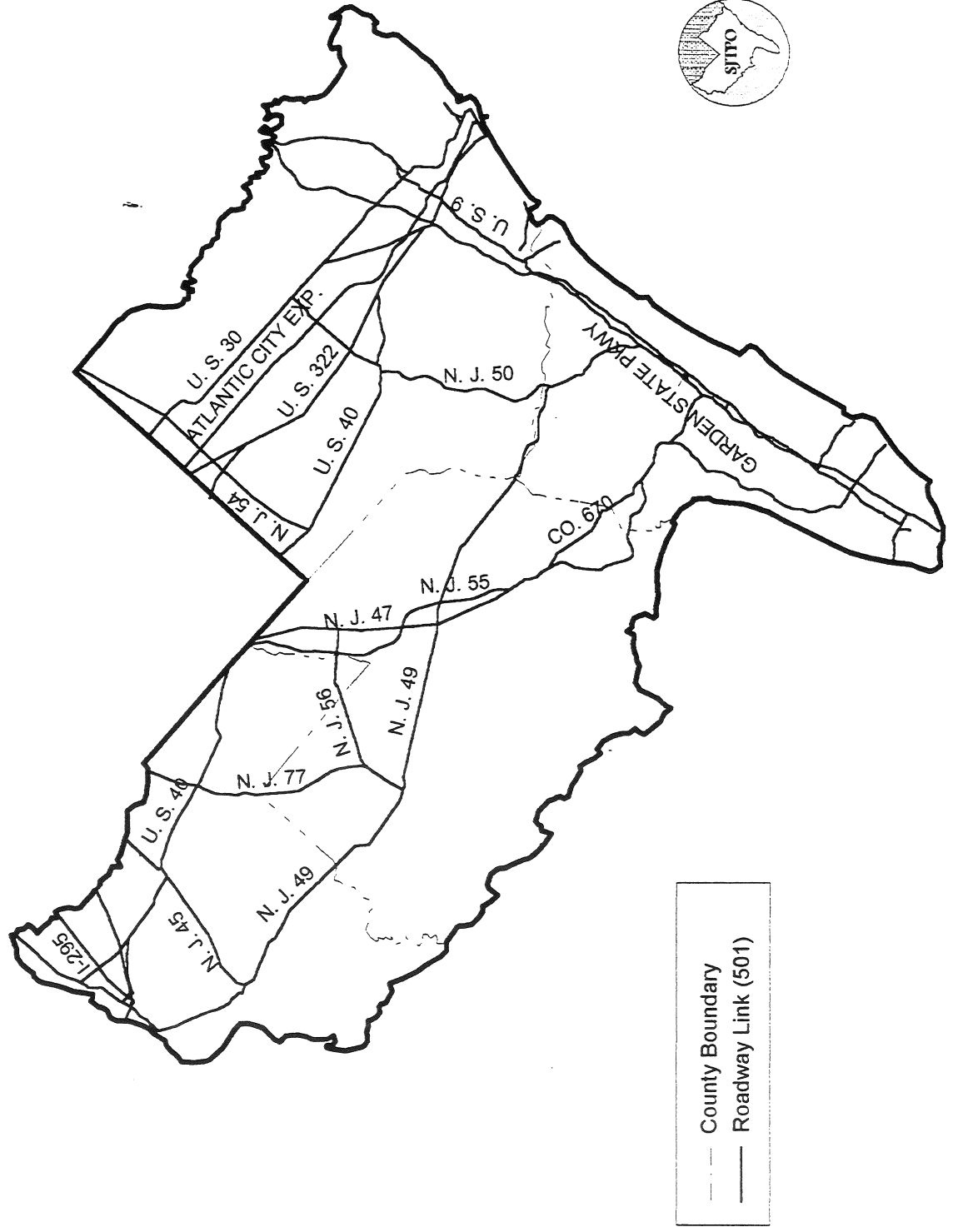
A major enhancement to SJTPO's ability to identify problem areas is taking place with the development of the SJTPO Congestion Management System. The South Jersey CMS is a computer program which analyzes highway and rail network files encompassing the region, consisting of state highways and other important local facilities (see Figure 2). This analysis tool will have the capability to evaluate multimodal performance, identify the location and causes of congestion, and identify and evaluate the performance of both traditional and non-traditional measures.

In addition, the CMS tool provides the techniques for a multimodal screening of all reasonable travel demand reduction and operational management strategies within corridors. This screening is an initial evaluation step that assesses the applicability of a broad range of strategies to a congested corridor. The strategies are applied across five levels that range from eliminating vehicle trips, shifting from auto to other modes, shifting from Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) to High Occupancy Vehicles, improving highway operations, and finally, adding SOV capacity. The CMS tool provides information supporting the implementation of actions while it evaluates, over time, the efficiency and effectiveness of implemented actions.

The integration of CMS within the SJTPO planning process supports effective congestion management, and augments the TIP, Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), project selection, and technical studies. Also, CMS activities will help to direct limited resources for infrastructure renewal projects, economic development, safety improvements and other highway and non-highway projects that do not have a congestion focus.

Figure 2

# The SJTPO CMS Roadway Network



**TABLE 2****Interim Demographic Analysis - February 1998****POPULATION**

<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>Forecast 1996</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated 1996</u></b>	<b><u>Forecast 1990-1996</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated 1990-1996</u></b>	<b><u>% E/F 1990-1996</u></b>
522,763	554,469	542,469	+31,706	+19,706	+62.2 %

**EMPLOYMENT**

<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>Forecast 1996</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated 1996</u></b>	<b><u>Forecast 1990-1996</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated 1990-1996</u></b>	<b><u>% E/F 1990-1996</u></b>
260,839	286,533	264,730	+25,694	+3,891	+15.1 %

**SOURCES**

1990 POP/EMP - US Census

1996 POP/EMP, FORECAST - Interpolated 1990-1999 Forecast Derived from 1999 POP/EMP, August 1997 RTP Amendment

1996 POP, ESTIMATED - Extrapolated from U.S. Census 1995 Estimates

1996 EMP, ESTIMATED - Garmen Associates, SJ Travel Demand Model, 9/22/97 Technical Memorandum

**TABLE 3**

**Capacity-Based Problems Identified via the SJ Highway Model**

**ATLANTIC COUNTY**

A1	Atlantic City Expressway and the Garden State Parkway interchange
A2	<del>East-west corridor (ACE, US 30, US 40/322) leading into Atlantic City</del>
A3	US 9 corridor from Laurel Drive to US 30
A4	US 9 and Delilah Road intersection
A5	US 9 and US 30 intersection
A6	US 40/322 and Delilah Road intersection
A7	US 30 and Mill Road (CR 651)
A8	US 40/322 and Shore Road (CR 585) intersection
A9	Delilah Road and Shore Road (CR 585) intersection
A10	Junction of US 30, NJ 157 and Shore Road (CR 585)
A11	US 40 at Somers Point-Mays Landing Road (CR 559) - Sugar Hill Circle
A12	US 40, CR 559 (Weymouth Road)
A13	US 40 and Lincoln Ave. (CR 655) corridor in Buena
A14	US 30 and CR 575 (Pomona/Wrangleboro Road)
A15	NJ 54 corridor between US 322 and US 30
A16	US 9 and Ocean Heights Avenue intersection
A17	US 40/322 and Tilton Rd. (CR 563) and Washington Ave. (CR 608) - Cardiff Circle
A18	NJ 50 corridor between ACE and Moss Mill Road
A19	US 40 and CR 552 (Bears Head Road)
A20	Weymouth-Malaga Road (CR 690) in Buena
A21	Junction of Tilton Road (CR 563), CR 585 (Shore Road) and Mill Road (CR 662)
A22	CR 585 (Shore Road) and NJ 152 (Maryland Avenue)

**CAPE MAY COUNTY**

CM1	US 9/GSP corridor from NJ 147 and GSP interchange 12S, to Cape May City
CM2	NJ 47 and US 9
CM3	Individual Congested Locations along NJ 47, Sea Isle Blvd., NJ 50, and Roosevelt Blvd.
CM4	NJ 47 and Bay Shore Road (CR 603)
CM5	NJ 47 and Pacific Avenue
CM6	US 9 and Court House-South Dennis Road (CR 657)
CM7	NJ 49 and NJ 50 intersection
CM8	Inbound Roads to Ocean City
CM9	NJ 50 and Dennisville-Petersburg Road (CR 610)

**CUMBERLAND**

CU1	NJ 47 Corridor between Almond Rd. and NJ 49 in Millville
CU2	NJ 49 west of NJ 47
CU3	NJ 49 and NJ 77
CU4	NJ 77 around Bridgeton
CU5	NJ 47/CR 347/CR 681
CU6	NJ 47 (Delsea Drive) and Landis Avenue (CR 622) in Vineland

**SALEM COUNTY**

S1	NJ 45 and US 40 in Woodstown
S2	NJ 49 and NJ 45 in Salem City
S3	US 40 west of CR 553
S4	US 40 interchanges with NJ 49/US 130

**TABLE 4**

**Problem Areas Identified External to the SJ Highway Model**

**ATLANTIC COUNTY**

A23	GSP from ACE to south end of county
A24	Wrangleboro Rd. from US 40/322 to US 30
A25	Tilton Road and Delilah Road - Airport Circle
A26	NJ 52 and Shore Rd. (CR 585) and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road (CR 559) - Somers Point Circle
A27	Jimmie Leeds Rd. (CR 561) and the GSP
A28	US 322 and NJ 50
A29	US 9 and Tilton Road (CR 563)
A30	US 40/322 and Wrangleboro Rd. (CR 575)
A31	US 40/322 and English Creek Avenue (CR 575)
A32	Tilton Road (CR 563) and Fire Road (CR 561)
A33	Fire Road (CR 651) and Washington Avenue (CR 608)
A34	Wrangleboro Rd. (CR 575) and Tilton Road (CR 563)
A35	Shore Road (CR 585) and Washington Road (CR 608)

**CAPE MAY COUNTY**

CM10	NJ 347 to NJ 47 throughout the county
CM11	GSP from north end of county to Sea Isle Blvd. (CR 625)
CM12	US 9 from north end of county to CR 550 (Woodbine - Ocean View Rd.)
CM13	GSP (milepost 0) and NJ 109
CM14	NJ 47 and Fulling Mill Rd. (CR 654)
CM15	NJ 47 and Dennisville-Petersburg Rd. (CR 610)

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

CU7	NJ 47 from NJ 55 south to NJ 347 (summer)
CU8	NJ 55 (summer)
CU9	The Boulevards between CR 552 and CR 674
CU10	NJ 47 and NJ 55 (both points of intersection, summer)

**SALEM COUNTY**

S5	US 130 between US 40 and north border of Penns Grove
S6	NJ 48 between US 130 and Broad Street (CR 607)
S7	NJ 49 in Pennsville
S8	NJ 48 and US 130
S9	NJ 77 and US 40



Since the adoption of the 2015 RTP, several of these problem areas have been addressed and are described in Table 5, below.

**TABLE 5**

**Status of Active Problem Locations**

**ATLANTIC COUNTY**

A2	The reconstruction of US 40/322 leading into Atlantic City is under construction.
A6	Pursuant to a developer's agreement, the intersection of US 40/322 and Delilah Road has been realigned and signalized.
A12	The intersection of US 40 and CR 559 (Weymouth Road) has been signalized.
A17	US 40/322 at CR 563 (Tilton Road) and CR 608 (Washington Avenue) - the Cardiff Circle - is scheduled on the FY 1998-2002 TIP for construction in FY 2000.
A25	The Airport Circle project - involving signalization and geometric improvements -has "graduated" from SJTPO's Local Scoping program and will be included in the FY 1998-2000 TIP for construction in FY 2000.
A26	The intersection of NJ 52 with CR 585 (Shore Road) and CR 559 (Somers Point-Mays Landing Road is scheduled in the FY 1998-2002 TIP for construction in FY 2001).
A28	The intersection of US 9 and CR 563 (Tilton Road) entered the SJTPO Local Scoping Program.

**CAPE MAY COUNTY**

CM2	The intersection of NJ 47 and US 9 is a portion of the NJ 47 project scheduled in the FY 1998-2002 TIP for construction in FY 2002.
CM 10,14,15	In 1997, SJTPO established the Shore Connection Committee, and ad-hoc group charged with the task of identifying a menu of improvements to the NJ 55/47 corridor that would be supported by the community and could proceed to project development. The conclusions of the Committee should be available for inclusion in the August 1998 Plan Update.

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

CU 1	The NJ 47 corridor between Almond Road and NJ 49 includes the NJ 47/NJ 55 interchange project (construction scheduled for FY 2000).
CU 7,8,10	See Shore Connection Committee discussion, above.

## **V. FUTURE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES**

The 2015 RTP presented focal issues and driving forces as a means to think more systematically about the type of future transportation desired and needed in the SJTPO region. These issues and forces were reviewed and found to be valid; thus, the strategies of the 2015 addressing highways, transit, passenger intermodal, bicycle pedestrian and freight are still relevant and appropriate today.

Many of the focal issues in the region promoted mobility and transportation choices:

- ▶ There is a need for special services transit to be integrated with conventional and rural transit.
- ▶ There is sparse public transit service in the region, the exception being within Atlantic County, particularly within Atlantic City.
- ▶ There are limited travel choices in the region.

Other focal issues called for the need to address specific highway needs or deficiencies, keeping in mind environmental issues:

- ▶ Extensive maintenance or reconstruction is needed on bridges in the region, especially in Cape May County.
- ▶ Environmental problems in the Borough of Woodstown's historical district, which is located in an area of high truck volumes that cause detrimental noise and vibration problems.
- ▶ There is strong public support for the completion of NJ 55, with a recognition of major environmental concerns deterring completion and a recognition of the need to identify a range of workable actions to alleviate the severe seasonal congestion problems in Port Elizabeth and other towns along NJ 47.

Finally, some focal issues concentrated on the government's and the transportation system's role in the region:

- ▶ There is a lengthy and bureaucratic process to improve the region's transportation system - there are many players and many roles.
- ▶ There is a need to balance development and environmental concerns.

In addition to the above mentioned focal issues, regional driving forces were identified in the 2015 RTP. These are described below:

- ▶ There is strong travel demand in and around Atlantic City and Atlantic County as compared to the rest of the region.
- ▶ Tourism is a major industry in Atlantic and Cape May counties, and is very important economically to the State of New Jersey.
- ▶ There is a newly developing eco-tourism in Cumberland and Salem counties.
- ▶ The four counties all have rail freight services provided by private lines that are not used to their maximum capacity. A majority of goods movement is done by trucks.
- ▶ Per capita income in all four counties is low and well below the state average, especially in Cumberland and Salem counties.
- ▶ Since 1960, the-highest rate of population growth was in Cape May County, with a 96 percent increase in population. The second highest increase was in Atlantic County, at 39 percent (albeit over a much larger base). Cumberland had a 29 percent growth and Salem had a 11 percent growth.
- ▶ Population shifts have been noted in Atlantic and Cape May counties from the barrier islands to mainland areas. Barrier islands are substantially built-out with little or no available land.
- ▶ Atlantic County is by far the most populated and the most densely populated county in the region. Within the county, however, there are significant differences between the mainland and beach resort areas.
- ▶ Like Atlantic County, Cape May has varied population densities. Cape May has the highest density of housing units in the region and this reflects the importance of residential land use in the county. A full 20 percent of Cape May County residents commute to Atlantic County, while 72 percent work in Cape May County.
- ▶ Cumberland County has the second highest population in the region but has experienced lower growth rates, and the density is relatively low. Again, similar to other counties in the region, population is concentrated in a few centers, namely Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland. About 78 percent of Cumberland residents work in Cumberland, while 9 percent work in Atlantic County and 2 percent travel to Cape May County.
- ▶ Salem County is the least populated county in the region, has the lowest population density, and has experienced the lowest growth rate. The population is centered in a few areas. Only 60 percent of Salem's residents work in the county. Most other residents are bound for other areas of New Jersey, and a full ten percent work in Delaware.
- ▶ In all four counties, there has been a shift from manufacturing to service industries.
- ▶ Growth in the region has been largely auto dependent and has led to increases in auto traffic. The increase in both congestion and suburban and rural travel demands, plus the pervasive presence of lower income households (within Atlantic City and within Cumberland and Salem Counties) have given rise to requests for more transit services which are difficult to provide efficiently in suburban and rural markets with traditional transit services.

The 2015 RTP then presented low-and high type-highway improvements to correct capacity-based deficiencies, and these served as the basis for the subsequent financial analysis. The 2015 RTP also discussed bus, passenger rail, non-traditional and specialized transit services, and noted areas where attention needed to be focused in the future.

Notable progress has been made on a key finding of the 2015 RTP, that specialized, rural, and traditional transit services should be integrated to enhance mobility for underserved markets and achieve better operating efficiencies. This is the chief goal of the Statewide Work First New Jersey program led by NJDOT and the NJ Department of Human Services, and fully developed county level plans are expected by mid-1998. A detailed technical analysis of future transit needs will be conducted for the RTP Update scheduled for August 1998 using the South Jersey Travel Demand Model.

Planning for non-motorized modes has also advanced in the SJTPO region. Since the 2015 RTP, SJTPO has advocated pedestrian/bicycle compatibility via the Citizens Advisory Committee, and each SJTPO County is now undertaking a specific bike-ped planning project in its Unified Planning Work Program. These include varying degrees of pedestrian facility inventories in the four counties, plus a Cumberland County survey to identify bicycle facilities. Cape May County also recently completed its bicycle master plan under its FY 1997 Work Program.

In other areas as well, SJTPO has made progress on key initiatives outlined in the 2015 RTP through its Technical Studies Program. SJTPO has funded studies for three State highway corridors - NJ 49 in Pennsville, Salem County, NJ 56 in Upper Deerfield Township, Cumberland County, and NJ 49 in Salem City. SJTPO has also funded transportation needs assessments for the Port of Salem, and the vicinity of the Atlantic City International Airport, both important intermodal facilities in South Jersey.

SJTPO's Local Lead (scoping) program has also produced scoping "graduates" for inclusion in the SJTPO Transportation Improvement Program. The first two are the Kelly's Saw Mill Bridge (Salem County) reconstruction, currently set at \$1.0 M in FY 1999 and the Atlantic City Airport Circle (Atlantic County) reconstruction scheduled for FY 2000 for \$2.04 M. These will be followed by several other projects, which will be programmed in the future as resources permit.

These activities all support the SJTPO policy framework articulated in the 2015 RTP, shown on Table 6. These goals and policy statements remain valid today, and continue to guide SJTPO's planning programs.

**TABLE 6**

**SJTPO Policy Framework**

**GOAL**

**POLICY STATEMENTS**

Improve Safety	Ensure the safety and security of users of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and freight systems.
Support the Regional Economy	Advance projects to interconnect the transportation system.  Improve access to areas of major employment and tourism.
Reduce Congestion	Optimize the efficiency of the existing transportation system.  Invest in new highway capacity only if it can be shown that other measures are not able to address existing and projected need.
Promote Transportation Choices	Expand other (non-auto) transportation systems as needed: aviation, rail, marine, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit.  Provide for affordable mobility options to all segments of the transportation disadvantaged (young, elderly, handicapped and poor).
Protect and Improve the Environment	Encourage the use of alternative transportation modes that have a lesser environmental impact than SOVs.  Minimize environmental impacts of transportation improvements.
Restore, Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System	Ensure that key elements of the transportation system are restored, preserved, and maintained.
Secure Dependable, Reliable Sources of Funds	Pursue all avenues for transportation funding.
Recognize the Interrelationships Between Transportation and Land Use Plans	Concentrate development in existing or planned centers or corridors.

## VI. CONFORMITY

The SJTPO Regional Transportation Plan and all amendments and updates must demonstrate conformity with Federal Clean Air Standards established by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Failure to demonstrate this conformity jeopardizes State and Federal funds.

As discussed earlier, a conformity "freeze" is set to begin in April 1998, after which no conformity determinations may be made on MPO TIP's or Plans in New Jersey. Thus, the most recent conformity determination - from the August 1997 Plan amendments - were reviewed for any changes that would render it invalid for this Plan Update.

In order to develop accurate estimates of future mobile source emissions, it was necessary to first predict with some confidence future traffic volumes and operating conditions, the demographic forecasts shown in Tables A1 to A4 in the Appendix were used. The South Jersey Highway Model covers the six southern New Jersey Counties, including the four SJTPO Counties. It has been developed and progressively refined over the last twelve years and has achieved an acceptable level of calibration and validation as a result.

A conformity analysis for ozone must show that the action (i.e. build) scenario results in less VOC and NOx emissions than:

- ▶ the base line scenario in each of the analysis years
- ▶ the budget, if established, for that year or any previous year, and
- ▶ the base submission in 1990

Table 7 shows the VOC and NOx emissions for Baseline and Action conditions for each analysis year (1999, 2005, 2018) and summarizes the results of the conformity analysis. As indicated, the Action scenario for each analysis year does meet the standards of the conformity demonstration as outlined above.

A conformity analysis for carbon monoxide must show that emissions for Atlantic and Salem Counties from the action scenario are within the budgets in the attainment maintenance plan. Table 8 shows that the carbon monoxide emissions for the Action condition and summarizes the results. As indicated, the Action scenario for each analysis year is less than the applicable budget for each county.

The conformity determination for the August 1997 Plan amendments was approved by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration on November 18, 1997. For more details, please refer to the August 1997 Conformity Determination and the Technical Memorandum "Application of the South Jersey Transportation Model to SJTPO FY 1998 SIP/Plan Conformity Analysis" of June 27, 1997 by Garmen Associates.

**TABLE 7****Summary of Ozone Conformity Demonstration**

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>VOC</u>	<u>NOX</u>	<u>1990 Emissions Test</u>	<u>Budget Test</u>	<u>Action/ No Action Test</u>
1990 Base	29.25	36.79	---	---	---
1999 Budget	17.44	29.53	---	---	---
1999 Baseline	17.75	28.80	---	---	---
1999 Action	17.31	28.78	PASS	PASS	PASS
2005 Budget	17.44	29.53	---	---	---
2005 Baseline	12.21	23.53	---	---	---
2005 Action	11.21	23.52	PASS	PASS	PASS
2015 Budget	17.44	29.53	---	---	---
2015 Baseline	12.30	23.86	---	---	---
2015 Action	11.29	23.75	PASS	PASS	PASS

**TABLE 8**

**Summary of Carbon Monoxide Conformity Demonstration**

19	<u>Year</u>	<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Atlantic County</u>	<u>Salem County</u>	<u>Comment</u>
	1999	Budget	80.38	41.50	
		Action	74.70	29.73	PASS
	2005	Budget	80.38	41.50	
		Action	50.38	24.42	PASS
	2015	Budget	59.13	31.11	
		Action	51.08	25.42	PASS



## VII. FINANCING PLAN

The 2015 RTP Financing Plan compared future improvement needs to reasonably available revenue sources over the time horizon of the Plan. It concluded that the price tag for both the low and high improvement type scenarios for highway capacity problems appear to fall within SJTPO's resource limits. It should be noted that other important capital programming elements, such as system preservation or non-highway mobility improvements, were not directly accounted for in the assessment. However, the analysis allows for a macro-level baseline comparison of future needs to resources by concluding that the capacity improvement costs would be well below anticipated revenues.

The 2015 RTP utilized data from the preceding four fiscal years (FY 1992 through FY 1995) to estimate future resources available to SJTPO. For this report, SJTPO updated that analysis to include programmed funds from the same categories for FY 1996, FY 1997, and FY 1998. Table 9 shows the updated funding information. The highway projects from the FY 1997-2001 and FY 1998-2002 SJTPO Transportation Improvement Programs are illustrated on Figures 3 and 4.

Even without including any SJTPO share of funding from Statewide programs, the average actual programmed dollars for FY 1996 and FY 1997 approximate the revenue the 2015 RTP estimated for FY 1996 and future years. After subtracting an "exceptional" capacity improvement project as dictated by the 2015 RTP analysis, the actual programmed FY 1998 dollars still exceeds the 2015 RTP estimate. This suggests that the original conservative conclusion of the 2015 RTP regarding future funding holds - namely that baseline needs (including ordinary capacity improvements) can be met with expected revenues, but extraordinary needs will require expanded or new funding sources.

One major factor in this financing plan that has not been forecasted is the impact of the successor to the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (or ISTEA), which is the primary vehicle for federal transportation funding. Numerous reauthorization proposals have been made, ranging from complete devolution of financing authority to the states, to major increases in transportation funding.

As of this writing, ISTEA has been extended to March 31, 1998, and the wide range of outcomes and potential for further extensions beyond May suggest that the most prudent forecast would be one that assumes relatively stable levels of post-ISTEA resources. This is likewise consistent with the 2015 RTP analysis, and therefore also supports its conclusions.

**TABLE 9**  
**New Jersey's Capital Program Funding for SJTPO**

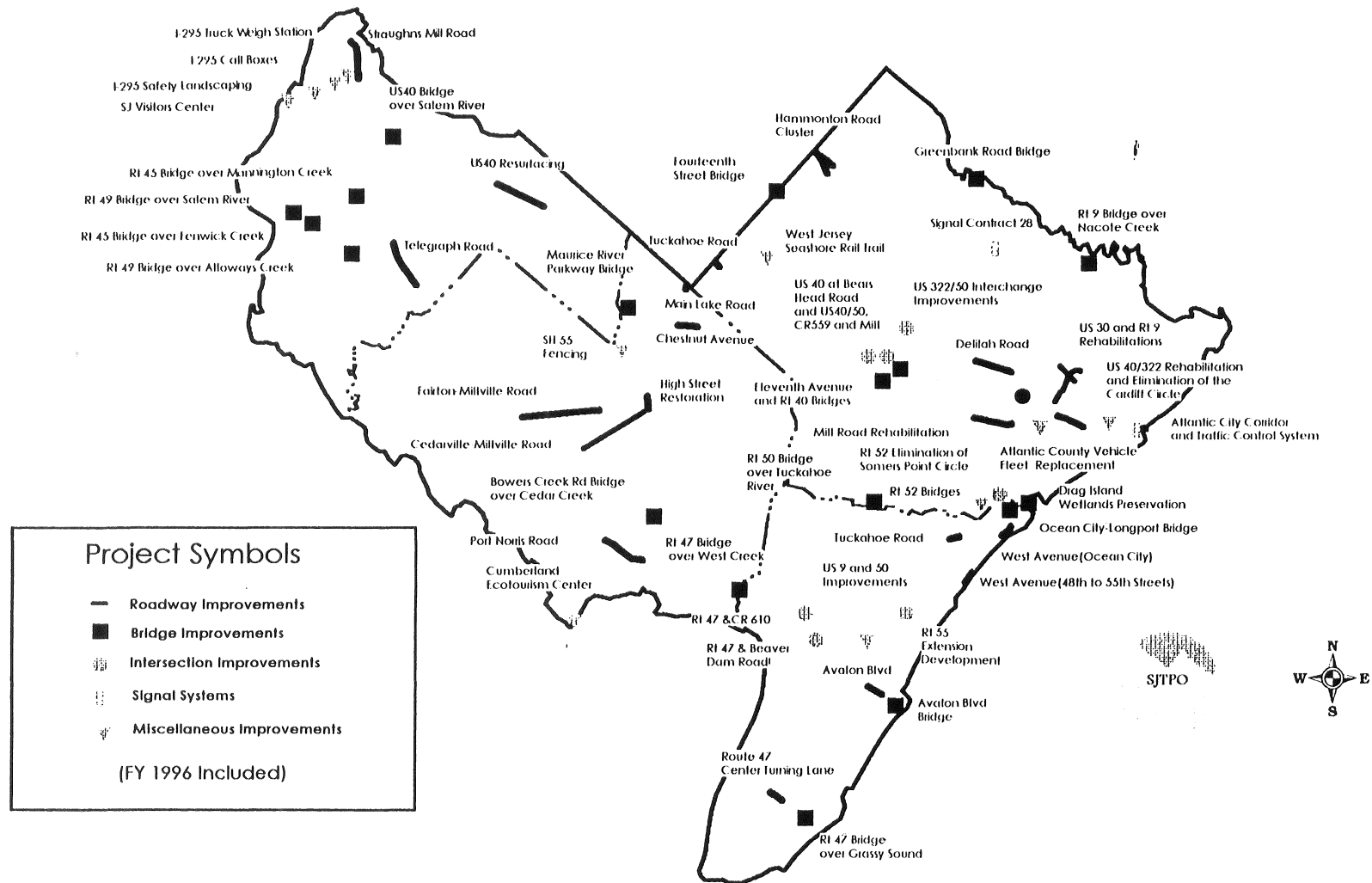
<b>Fund Category</b>	<b>95 Plan Estimated Annual Funding FY 1996-2015 Dollars (millions)</b>	<b>Actual FY 1996 Programmed * Dollars (millions)</b>	<b>Actual FY 1997 Programmed * Dollars (millions)</b>	<b>Actual FY 1998 Programmed * Dollars (millions)</b>
Air Safety	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bridge	4.408	4.944	18.191	3.450
Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality	0.326	0.780	1.600	0.000
Demonstration	0.250	2.000	0.290	1.700
Federal Aviation Administration	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Federal Transit Administration	10.675	4.856	3.828	3.846
Highway Program Research	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interstate Completion	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interstate Dedesignation	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interstate Maintenance	2.077	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interstate Transfer	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
National Highway System	5.443	4.790	3.000	1.700
Other	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Partner	0.330	0.000	1.000	0.000
State	11.509	12.792	39.239	57.59 #
State-Match	1.349	0.000	0.000	0.000
Surface Transportation Program	24.464	10.879	11.188	15.585
Various Federal	0.000	0.000	0.600	0.600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60.832</b>	<b>41.041</b>	<b>78.936</b>	<b>84.471 #</b>

\* Does not include funding from Statewide programs.

# Excludes "exceptional" capacity improvement project for \$84 million.

# Figure 3

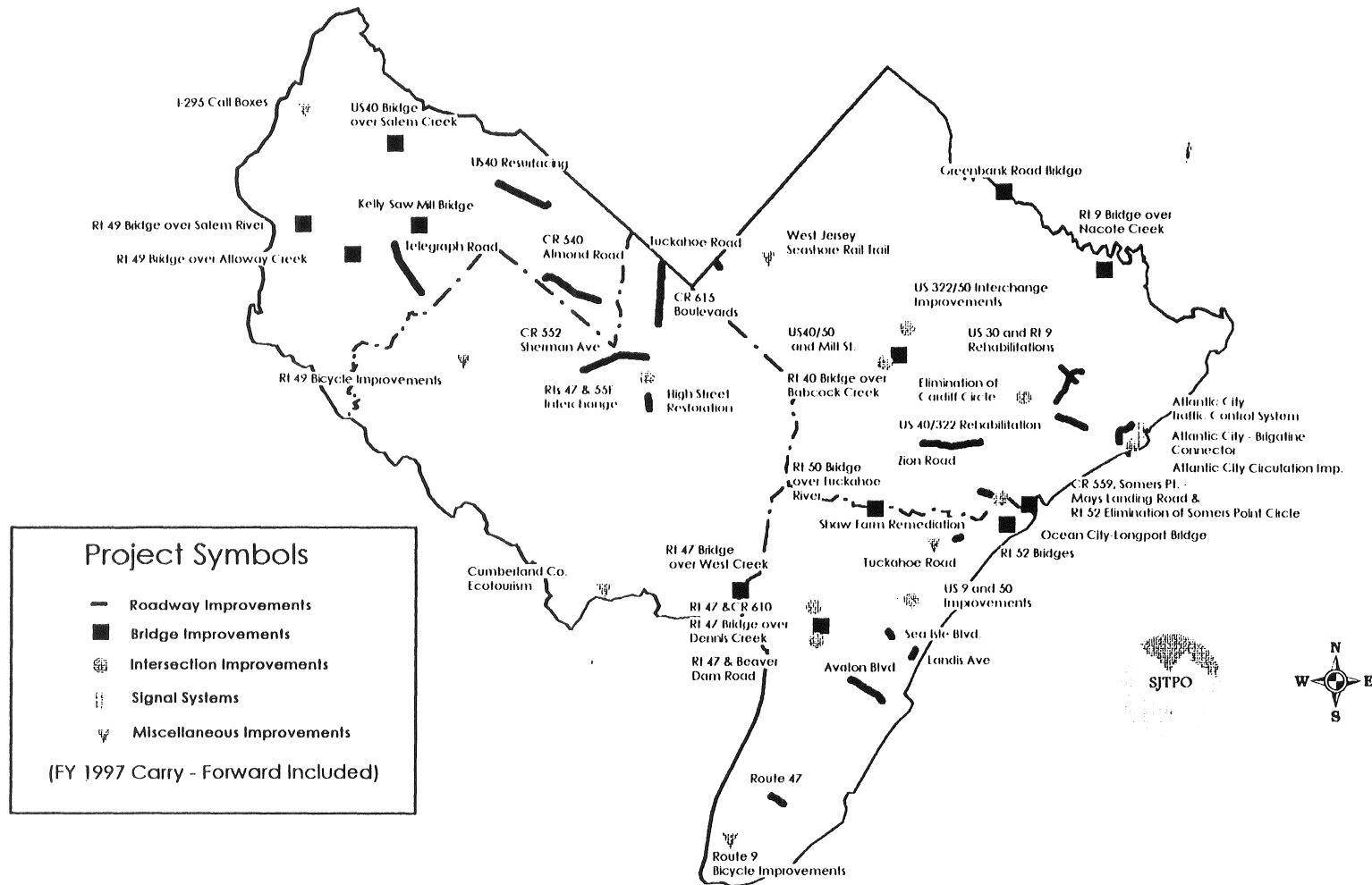
## FY 1997 - 2001 Transportation Improvement Program - Highway Projects



South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

Figure 4

# FY 1998 - 2002 Transportation Improvement Program - Highway Projects



South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

## **VIII. SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

This 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Update has reviewed the assumptions of the 2015 RTP, transportation trends, development in the area, air quality considerations, system characteristics, and the extension of forecasts to 2018. It has also reviewed the federally-approved conformity determination for the August 1997 Plan amendments, and found those conclusions to remain valid today.

This Update, and the one scheduled for completion late in 1998, will help to direct region-wide transportation decision-making over the next twenty years. Building upon the goals, plan assumptions, and forecasts of this Update, the next Plan Update will utilize the sophisticated planning tools that will shortly be available. These include the SJTPO Congestion Management System described earlier, as well as the new South Jersey Travel Demand Model. The SJTDM will be especially important to SJTPO's planning activities, as it will capture the travel characteristics unique to South Jersey and previously not accounted for.

Finally, the OSP Population/Employment Distribution Model will permit alternative land use and transportation policy scenario testing, and a review of land development patterns, including those arising from varied employment forecasts. The OSP/PED Model, in fact, has been grafted seamlessly onto the SJTDM, allowing the impacts of those technical and policy variables to be measured in terms of travel demand and air quality.

Two other activities of the NJ Department of Transportation will play a key role in the next update. First, the output of the Management Systems operated by NJDOT will be utilized as a resource. These systems relate to the management of transportation system assets (Bridge, Pavement, and Public Transportation), and performance - the Safety and Intermodal Management Systems.

In addition, the NJDOT may shortly embark on a corridor-based concept development which will generate corridor-specific strategies possibly suitable for inclusion in the next Update.

# **APPENDIX**

**Table A-1 - Population and Employment Forecasts: Atlantic County**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>				<b>Employment</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>
Absecon	7,298	7,385	7,443	7,540	3,254	3,844	4,237	4,892
Atlantic City	37,986	40,185	41,696	44,173	74,652	88,179	97,196	112,225
Brigantine	11,354	12,317	12,988	14,077	1,607	1,898	2,092	2,416
Buena	4,441	4,817	5,080	5,506	1,708	2,017	2,224	2,568
Buena Vista	7,655	8,304	8,757	9,492	1,321	1,561	1,720	1,986
Corbin	412	407	404	399	30	36	39	45
Egg Harbor Twp.	24,544	29,358	32,889	38,469	6,746	7,969	8,784	10,142
Egg Harbor City	4,583	4,972	5,243	5,683	1,870	2,209	2,435	2,811
Estelle Manor	1,404	1,523	1,606	1,741	153	180	199	230
Folsom	2,181	2,366	2,495	2,704	927	1,095	1,207	1,394
Galloway	23,330	27,864	30,312	34,967	6,415	7,578	8,353	9,645
Hamilton	16,012	18,570	20,417	23,354	6,806	8,039	8,862	10,233
Hammonton	12,208	13,244	13,965	15,136	8,364	9,879	10,890	12,574
Linwood	6,866	7,252	7,517	7,951	3,559	4,204	4,634	5,351
Longport	1,224	1,139	1,084	991	298	352	389	449
Margate	8,431	7,831	7,447	6,791	1,620	1,914	2,110	2,436
Mullica	5,896	6,259	6,510	6,919	953	1,126	1,241	1,433
Northfield	7,305	7,043	6,872	6,583	3,732	4,408	4,859	5,611
Pleasantville	16,027	17,387	18,334	19,875	7,398	8,739	9,632	11,122
Port Republic	992	1,068	1,121	1,207	161	190	210	242
Somers Point	11,216	11,558	11,790	12,173	4,708	5,561	6,130	7,078
Ventnor	11,005	10,646	10,411	10,015	1,916	2,264	2,495	2,881
Weymouth	1,957	2,123	2,239	2,427	165	195	215	248
<b>County Total</b>	<b>224,327</b>	<b>243,618</b>	<b>256,620</b>	<b>278,170</b>	<b>138,363</b>	<b>163,437</b>	<b>180,153</b>	<b>208,012</b>

**Table A-2 - Population and Employment Forecasts: Cape May County**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>				<b>Employment</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>
Avalon	1,809	2,279	2,632	3,011	1,437	1,522	1,579	1,674
Cape May City	4,668	4,968	5,175	5,525	4,443	4,961	5,306	5,882
Cape May Point	248	277	298	319	61	63	64	66
Dennis	5,574	6,404	7,000	8,000	1,096	1,373	1,558	1,866
Lower	20,820	23,570	25,530	28,500	2,313	3,640	4,525	6,000
Middle	14,771	17,505	19,500	22,500	8,619	9,632	10,307	11,432
North Wildwood	5,017	5,626	6,059	6,644	1,971	2,013	2,041	2,088
Ocean City	15,512	17,533	18,972	21,283	5,605	5,802	5,933	6,152
Sea Isle City	2,692	3,104	3,401	3,825	1,121	1,234	1,309	1,434
Stone Harbor	1,025	1,171	1,275	1,425	1,248	1,371	1,454	1,591
Upper	10,681	13,019	14,750	17,000	2,547	3,045	3,378	3,932
West Cape May	1,026	1,078	1,114	1,143	151	173	188	213
West Wildwood	453	512	555	595	60	60	60	60
Wildwood City	4,484	4,780	4,985	5,125	4,605	4,463	4,368	4,210
Wildwood Crest	3,631	4,023	4,300	4,750	2,088	2,223	2,312	2,462
Woodbine	2,678	2,876	3,013	3,122	1,780	1,739	1,712	1,666
<b>County Total</b>	<b>95,089</b>	<b>108,725</b>	<b>118,559</b>	<b>132,767</b>	<b>39,145</b>	<b>43,314</b>	<b>46,094</b>	<b>50,728</b>



**Table A-3 - Population and Employment Forecasts: Cumberland County**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>				<b>Employment</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>
Bridgeton	18,942	19,751	20,302	22,711	10,552	12,001	12,966	14,576
Commercial	5,026	5,328	5,537	6,289	616	698	753	844
Deerfield	2,933	3,286	3,537	4,193	853	968	1,045	1,173
Downe	1,702	1,696	1,692	1,747	228	258	278	312
Fairfield	5,699	6,236	6,613	7,687	592	671	724	812
Greenwich	911	918	923	874	83	94	101	113
Hopewell	4,215	4,631	4,922	5,590	123	141	152	172
Lawrence	2,433	2,631	2,768	3,145	663	752	811	910
Maurice River	6,648	7,082	7,382	8,386	2,109	2,395	2,586	2,904
Millville	25,992	27,810	29,068	33,193	12,051	13,689	14,782	16,602
Shiloh	408	439	461	524	118	135	146	164
Stow Creek	1,437	1,497	1,538	1,747	154	171	182	200
Upper Deerfield	6,927	7,379	7,690	8,735	1,652	1,875	2,024	2,272
Vineland	54,780	58,672	61,366	69,800	29,735	33,780	36,477	40,972
<b>County Total</b>	<b>138,053</b>	<b>147,356</b>	<b>153,799</b>	<b>174,621</b>	<b>59,529</b>	<b>67,628</b>	<b>73,027</b>	<b>82,026</b>

**Table A-4 - Population and Employment Forecasts: Salem County**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>				<b>Employment</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>
Alloway	2,795	2,902	2,975	3,095	386	393	398	406
Carneys Point	8,443	10,388	11,835	14,096	882	1,258	1,509	1,927
Elmer	1,571	1,509	1,468	1,399	1,701	1,737	1,760	1,799
Elsinboro	1,170	1,293	1,379	1,518	103	104	106	108
Lower Alloway	1,858	1,745	1,672	1,548	3,110	3,236	3,320	3,460
Mannington	1,693	1,780	1,840	1,938	1,574	1,633	1,672	1,737
Oldsmans	1,683	1,565	1,489	1,360	929	1,055	1,139	1,279
Penns Grove	5,228	5,120	5,049	4,930	1,679	1,711	1,732	1,768
Pennsville	13,794	15,137	16,078	17,601	6,798	6,924	7,008	7,148
Pilesgrove	3,250	3,695	4,013	4,522	390	495	565	682
Pittsgrove	8,121	9,311	10,165	11,528	497	587	647	747
Quinton	2,511	2,398	2,325	2,201	168	169	170	171
Salem	6,883	7,299	7,585	8,053	3,571	3,639	3,684	3,760
Upper Pittsgrove	3,140	2,955	2,836	2,633	490	500	506	516
Woodstown	3,154	3,526	3,789	4,212	1,524	1,560	1,584	1,624
<b>County Total</b>	<b>65,294</b>	<b>70,623</b>	<b>74,498</b>	<b>80,634</b>	<b>23,802</b>	<b>25,001</b>	<b>25,800</b>	<b>27,132</b>

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

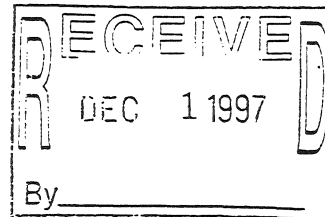
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
REGION II - NEW YORK OFFICE  
26 FEDERAL PLAZA, SUITE 29-40  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10278

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
REGION I - NJ DIVISION OFFICE  
540 BEAR TAVERN ROAD, SUITE 310  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-1019

November 18, 1997

HPL-NJ

Mr. John J. Haley, Jr.  
Commissioner  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
1035 Parkway Avenue  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600



Dear Mr. Haley:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have reviewed the New Jersey FY 1998-2002 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) submitted with your letter on October 3, 1997. Based upon our review, we find that the Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs are based on continuing and comprehensive processes which are carried out cooperatively by the State, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the transit operators in accordance with the requirements of Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

The FHWA and FTA have also determined, based on conformity reports submitted by the Department for each of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and on consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), that the Regional Transportation Plans and FY 1998-2002 Transportation Improvement Programs for the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization are consistent with the Statewide Implementation Plan and are in conformance with the Clean Air Act provisions.

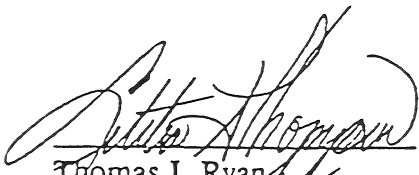
Based on the above, the FY 1998-2002 STIP is approved with the following conditions regarding several items that have been discussed with your staff:


- FHWA and FTA are unable to program projects that increase capacity until they meet the provisions of 23 CFR 500.109, Congestion Management System. Based on consultations with your staff and MPOs, we have developed a mutually acceptable process for meeting this requirement.

- Projects funded with Transportation Enhancement funds will be selected in accordance with the procedures established for this specific purpose.
- \* FHWA multi-year funded projects will be programmed upon our receipt and approval of the financial plan which the Department is currently preparing for these projects.
- \* Due to the assumptions made in the STIP regarding available funding, the Department shall re-examine, within three months following the passage of legislation reauthorizing the FTA and FHWA transportation programs, both the level of funding available and subsequent programming priorities, as well as any STIP revisions that need to be made in order to ensure that fiscal constraint is maintained.
- \* In accordance with 23 CFR Part 450.212, Statewide Planning; the Department shall complete and adopt its public participation procedures.

Amendments and modifications to last year's STIP were more than anyone had expected. We recognize that there has been considerable discussion and effort to make significant improvements in this area and to deliver those projects committed to, especially in the first year of the STIP. We are pleased that, in response to discussions with our offices and the MPOs, the Department has agreed to prepare "line item" progress reports addressing each of the first year projects. This will significantly enhance interagency cooperation and program delivery.

We commend the Department and each of the MPOs for coordinating the many issues and providing timely responses to address critical elements of the transportation program. Working together, we can continue to build on the progress made during this past year to improve the orderly delivery of needed transportation projects.

  
 Thomas J. Ryan  
 Regional Administrator  
 Federal Transit Administration  
 Region II

  
 Dennis L. Merida  
 Division Administrator  
 Federal Highway Administration  
 New Jersey Division

cc: T. Chelius (SJTPD)  
 J. Coscia (DVRPC)  
 T. Ryan (FTA)  
 J. Weiner (NJTPA)