

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Public Comment Period: Tuesday, June 16, 2015 – Friday, July 17, 2015
Public Meeting: Monday, June 29, 2015

1. **COMMENT:** What is the main budgeting under the Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding source; what does SJTPO have to spend? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *NJDOT and SJTPO – Each year, NJDOT receives \$100 million in CMAQ funds from the Federal Government. Of that \$100 million, \$50 million is allocated to NJ Transit, and the remaining \$50 million is sub allocated to State or Local projects that are ready for federal authorization of funds. SJTPO receives \$1.9 million annually to develop projects the reduce congestion and/or improve air quality. As these planned projects advance into the design and construction phases-of-work, NJDOT provides additional CMAQ funds to SJTPO.*
2. **COMMENT:** Will the intersection of Garden Road and Mill Road be similar to the intersection of Landis Road and Mill Road, once the proposed improvements funded through the Local Safety Program are implemented? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *SJTPO – The intersection improvements at Garden Road and Mill Road include the installation of a traffic signal to include dedicated left-turn lanes on all four approaches to the proposed traffic signal. A single lane for the through and right-turning movement is proposed. In contrast, two approach lanes are provided along Landis Avenue at Mill Road, with no dedicated left-turn lanes. A single lane is provided along Mill Road at the signalized intersection.*
3. **COMMENT:** There is no conformity to the placement of stop bars at intersections. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *SJTPO – Stop bars are typically placed within 10-feet of the extended curb line at an intersection. However, placement of the stop bar can differ from one location to another to accommodate the truck turning radius. At a signalized intersection, the stop bars for a left-turn lane may be set back further than the stop bars for the through or right lane to better accommodate the turning radius of a larger truck to avoid encroachment of the truck into the turning lane when making their turning maneuver.*
4. **COMMENT:** The radii at intersections, particularly in downtown areas, are not designed for a 53-foot long truck. There is an example of an insufficient radius at the intersection of Main Road and Oak Road in the City of Vineland. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – This is a common issue in older developed areas which is not simply addressed due to limited ROW widths and building setbacks; radii are generally enlarged to the maximum extent practical on a case by case basis.*
5. **COMMENT:** Another example, of insufficient radius to accommodate larger trucks, is the intersection of Route 40 and 540, coming off the approach to the New Jersey Turnpike; a left-turning vehicle routinely encroaches. **Patrick Bomba; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Salem County**
RESPONSE: *NJDOT – NJDOT’s “Intersection Improvement Program” provides for the implementation of safety and operational improvements at intersections that have a significant safety problem; the “Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program” funds construction of pedestrian safety enhancements at intersections, sidewalk installation, and traffic calming measures; and the “Congestion Relief, Operational Improvements (Fast Moves Program)” funds low-cost, quick-turnaround capital improvements at intersections. NJDOT staff will work with SJTPO to investigate the best approach for this intersection.*

6. **COMMENT:** The WaWa distribution center is along the westbound approach to the intersection Corsons Landing Road and Route 40. Due to trucks routinely tracking over the curb and into the grass area a 2-foot deep and 4-foot wide hole has been created on the northeast corner. **Patrick Bomba; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Salem County**
RESPONSE: NJDOT – NJDOT’s “Intersection Improvement Program” provides for the implementation of safety and operational improvements at intersections that have a significant safety problem; the “Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program” funds construction of pedestrian safety enhancements at intersections, sidewalk installation, and traffic calming measures; and the “Congestion Relief, Operational Improvements (Fast Moves Program)” funds low-cost, quick-turnaround capital improvements at intersections. NJDOT staff will work with SJTPO to investigate the best approach for this intersection.
7. **COMMENT:** Is there an opportunity to take advantage of the increase of freight rail trains through southern New Jersey for commuter rail? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: NJ Transit – There are additional safety concerns in instances where freight and commuter trains interact on the rail system. As the level of freight train traffic increases, the ability to provide commuter train service on the same rail lines necessitates that safety issues (as well as capacity and other issues) related to the mixing of freight and commuter trains must be addressed.
8. **COMMENT:** Would “Open Access” of the rail lines be something that could be considered, similar to Europe which has now smaller trains interacting on the rail lines? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: NJ Transit – “Open Access” would need to be addressed by Federal regulation and access to the freight rail system would be controlled by the freight industry and not something NJ Transit has the ability to dictate. With respect to cities and towns in Europe, many have very compact centers, higher densities, or smaller towns with the train station serving as the center of the town – all of which are conducive to public transit. Here in the United States, many places are much more suburban and in less dense areas without a critical mass of people to carry, public transportation suffers.
9. **COMMENT:** The public has a very negative perception of the rail line on the northeast corridor, particularly because of how dirty the rail line is. There has yet to be seen a train with a vacuum cleaner on the back, similar to a truck that would have a mechanism to collect trash and leaves in a city. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: NJ Transit – NJ Transit seeks to separate the right-of-way (of the train tracks) from all other activities for the sake of safety. Debris left on the tracks or other acts of vandalism could derail a train. NJ Transit tries to keep people and their activities isolated from the rail line for their safety and the safety of the train passengers and crews.
10. **COMMENT:** Has NJ Transit done any research or applied the concept of Fuel Cell? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: NJ Transit – NJ Transit has done work in the area of energy efficiency. Each year, NJ Transit consumes approximately 37 million gallons of diesel, mostly in the bus fleet and diesel locomotives. The NJ Transit bus system uses clean diesel now to reduce emissions. NJ Transit also has a small fleet of compressed natural gas buses that require special fueling facilities. Also, NJ Transit is introducing hybrid technology into their bus fleet.

11. **COMMENT:** The intersection of Route 130 and Hollywood Avenue in Carneys Point is currently being considered for a potential roundabout. Is there any way that Bianca Avenue could be tied into the roundabout itself? There is a concern for the speed of traffic coming into the residential area of Bianca Avenue from Route 130. **Jeff Kehr; Citizen –Carneys Point, Salem County**

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – While the comments are appreciated, incorporating them into the effort will be unlikely. The Route 130/Hollywood Avenue project is the outcome of a preceding Route 130/49 Corridor Study (June 2005), which was sponsored by Salem County and SJTPO). The corridor study identified safety problems at the Route 130 and Hollywood Avenue (CR 618) intersection in Carney's Point, Salem County, and developed a set of improvement concepts for the intersection. Following the study, Salem County and Carney's Point Township recognized the intersection as a priority need and supported efforts to improve the intersection. NJDOT has advanced the project within the project delivery process to the current phase of Preliminary Engineering (PE).*

The PE phase is intended to establish the project impacts and obtain the necessary clearances for project advancement. The current design will address the many concerns listed. Specifically, the roundabout will significantly slow the speeds along Route 130. Additionally, the design will close the driveway access to the store on Route 130 minimizing the conflicts that it currently causes. Pedestrian movements will be accommodated at the new roundabout where vehicular traffic is required to yield to pedestrians before entering. Vehicles exiting the roundabout will do so at a slower speed than they were previously able to do, improving the rate that they enter the neighborhood.

Currently the project design requires minimal ROW impacts and avoids impacts above stormwater management thresholds. A potential connection into the nearby residential development would have greater ROW Impacts, including possible environmental justice implications, and because of the increased disturbance, the project would exceed stormwater management thresholds. Additionally, the project would be required to restart the PE phase as the proposed alternative would require analysis and review.

12. **COMMENT:** The power routing in the area needs to be further investigated at the intersection of Route 130 and Hollywood Avenue in Carneys Point. There is at least one business that would need to be relocated as part of the proposed traffic circle to be tied into the residential development as discussed by Mr. Kehr. **Patrick Bomba; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Salem County**

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – Funds will be for all right-of-way (ROW), inclusive of easement. There are seven parcels out of which two are easements, two are S Parcels and three partial take.*

13. **COMMENT:** What is the difference between right-of-way and an easement? **Nancy Ridgway; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – “Easement” means “an interest in real property that conveys a right to use a portion of an owner’s property or a portion of an owner’s rights in the property.” “Right-of-Way” is a “general term denoting land, property, or interest therein, usually in a strip, acquired for or devoted to transportation purposes.”*

14. **COMMENT:** Is there any plan to install electric vehicle charging stations in the southern New Jersey area? Could this be incorporated as part of a CMAQ project? **Matt Von Der Hayden; City of Ocean City**

RESPONSE: *SJTPO – Electric vehicle charging stations are CMAQ-eligible. From Section VII.F.17 of the federal CMAQ Guidance: “Except as noted below, establishing publicly owned fueling facilities and other infrastructure needed to fuel alternative-fuel vehicles is an eligible expense, unless privately-owned fueling stations are in place and reasonably accessible. Fueling facilities can dispense one or more of the alternative fuels identified in section 301 of the 1992 Energy Policy Act or biodiesel, or provide recharging for electric vehicles.”*

15. **COMMENT:** Is there a difference between right-of-ways for city, county, and state roadways? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *SJTPO – The right-of-way of a particular roadway does differ between the different jurisdictional agencies and often times even within the same jurisdiction depending on the hierarchy of the particular roadway.*
16. **COMMENT:** The medical facilities along Sherman Avenue are quickly expanding with the traffic volume increasing, potentially causing a concern for future widening. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – The County is aware of the development along Sherman Avenue (CR 552) and looking into possible improvements regularly.*
17. **COMMENT:** A new school is being built on College Drive, on the north side of Route 55. The school will be a high school (9-12) and a part-time vocational school with significant amounts of bus traffic being added to the immediate area roadways. The school will be opening September, 2016. We need an access to Route 55 from College Drive. **Nancy Ridgway; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *NJDOT – NJDOT recommends that concerned citizens meet with local officials and planners involved in the development of the new school to discuss this concern. An existing study addressing vehicular circulation may be available for public review. A new access road to Route 55 from College Drive would be a major undertaking for the Department, requiring potentially significant Right-of-Way acquisition, environmental investigations and mitigation. Funding and jurisdiction for a new road would need to be identified.*
18. **COMMENT:** The intersection of Sherman Avenue and Orchard Road is not aligned, making it difficult to maneuver. The priority of the intersection is to support emergency vehicles traveling through. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – Comments have been taken under advisement by the County.*
19. **COMMENT:** The sign for the emergency room at the Inspira Medical Center Vineland is located on a hill, when exiting looking towards Sherman Avenue sight distance is limited. **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – The sign is owned and maintained by the medical center and is located outside of County jurisdiction.*
20. **COMMENT:** After the TIP is approved, how are changes made? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *SJTPO – There is a formal TIP amendment or modification process that SJTPO must follow. Minor changes involving funding sources, project limits, project descriptions and the like can be approved under the signature of the Executive Director. If a project is deleted or added to the TIP, there is a formal process to amend the TIP that requires the public to be advised of the change with the ability to provide comment. The amendment is taken to the Technical Advisory Committee; the Citizen Advisory Committee is informed of the action to be taken before the Policy Board. Once the amendment is approved by the Policy Board, the amendment is sent electronically to NJDOT and forwarded on to NJ Transit or Federal Highway Administration, as appropriate.*

21. **COMMENT:** If there a major change or an increase in the federal budgets is there the ability to seek the additional funds or reprioritize the existing projects? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *SJTPO – Over the last several years, NJDOT Capital Programming has been very gracious in providing additional funds for projects that are “ready to go”. The SJTPO region has been very successful and has greatly benefited, receiving more money than our annual federal allotment of funds. This has meant that more projects have been funded than was originally anticipated, whether or not that is a new project added to the TIP or adding funds to an existing project.*
22. **COMMENT:** At a lot of our shopping centers, there are often buses traveling along the State Highway, with no sidewalks provided. At Laurel Plaza along Route 77 in Upper Deerfield, there is a lack of defined crosswalk at the intersection. **Nancy Ridgway; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *NJDOT – NJDOT’s “Intersection Improvement Program” provides for the implementation of safety and operational improvements at intersections that have a significant safety problem; the “Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program” funds construction of pedestrian safety enhancements at intersections, sidewalk installation, and traffic calming measures; and the. “Congestion Relief, Operational Improvements (Fast Moves Program)” funds low-cost, quick-turnaround capital improvements at intersections. NJDOT staff will work with SJTPO to investigate the best approach for this intersection.*
23. **COMMENT:** A similar issue to what Nancy described, a lack of defined crosswalk, exists at the Pennsville Shopping Center, along NJ Route 49. **Patrick Bomba; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Salem County**
RESPONSE: *NJDOT – NJDOT’s “Intersection Improvement Program” provides for the implementation of safety and operational improvements at intersections that have a significant safety problem; the “Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program” funds construction of pedestrian safety enhancements at intersections, sidewalk installation, and traffic calming measures; and the. “Congestion Relief, Operational Improvements (Fast Moves Program)” funds low-cost, quick-turnaround capital improvements at intersections. NJDOT staff will work with SJTPO to investigate the best approach for this intersection.*
24. **COMMENT:** Does the NJ Transit subsidize private railroad lines? **Michael Hajec; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cape May County**
RESPONSE: *NJ Transit – NJ Transit does not subsidize private railroad lines.*
25. **COMMENT:** What is the process for NJ Transit to determine the need for a new route? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *NJ Transit – If a new service is proposed a study must be undertaken on the operational and other characteristics of the proposed service as well as the ridership demand for the service. NJ Transit does complete ridership surveys to track origin and destination of the existing riders to get an understanding of where demand is.*
26. **COMMENT:** Is there an update as to the status of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), providing stops along Route 55? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**
RESPONSE: *NJ Transit – Current budget constraints necessitate that BRT improvements be made incrementally. The first stage of programmed improvements for this BRT project includes improvements to the existing Park and Ride in Avandale. There is still an environmental process going on for the study.*

27. COMMENT: There should be an express bus from Vineland to Philadelphia, beginning at the Cumberland Mall area. The existing bus services stops at several small towns along the way.
Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County

RESPONSE: NJ Transit – NJ Transit has is not currently contemplating such a service. It would need to be determined if there exists sufficient demand for express bus service, and NJ TRANSIT must be careful to evaluate the operating cost impact of any potential service changes. NJ TRANSIT would be willing to provide technical support, as we are able, to a SJTPO-led effort to study potential ridership demand for such a service. Any such effort should include an analysis of the costs of providing the service.

28. COMMENT: If a new location for a bus stop is selected, what entity is responsible to install the concrete pad? **Richard Morton; Member of Citizen Advisory Committee – Cumberland County**

RESPONSE: NJ Transit – There are several steps in the creation of a new bus stop; the first of which is the determination of need. Often times an issue is brought to the attention of NJ Transit. NJ Transit will work with the municipal engineer or official to determine the best location for the new bus stop. Factors such as ridership demand, frequency of service, and proximity to other stops are considered in determining if a new bus stop will be added along an existing service.

Once a feasible location is determined for the proposed bus stop, the information is brought to the municipality for their consideration. The municipality must pass an ordinance before NJ Transit can legally erect a bus stop sign. NJ Transit will install the sign, at their expense, and in some instances a bus shelter is installed and turned over to the town for maintenance.