

Appendix B. Summary of Significant Public Comments and Responses

Public Comment Period: Monday, July 15, 2019 – Wednesday, August 21, 2019

Public Meeting: Thursday, August 15, 2019

SJTPO opened a public comment period on Monday, July 15, 2019 for the Draft FY 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a list of projects and programs scheduled to be implemented over a period of at least four years (ten years in New Jersey). Transportation projects must be included in the TIP to receive most types of federal funding. The TIP provides a mechanism for locally-elected officials and agency staff to review the region's capital programming. It represents a consensus among MPO members and other major transportation interests in the region as to what improvements should have priority for available funds.

The Final FY 2020-2029 TIP is available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/tip). Hardcopies are available at the SJTPO office (782 South Brewster Road; Unit B6; Vineland, NJ 08361).

1. **COMMENT:** Is there any way that transportation can be implemented with one or two trips a day from the Atlantic City hub from Cape May City and Cape May County? There is a bus from Cape May to Atlantic City, but it is a three-hour ride with multiple stops. An express bus with minimal stops could improve mass transportation.

RESPONSE: NJ TRANSIT - *This request will be forwarded to the appropriate NJ TRANSIT department for consideration. In any request for new service, ridership demand would need to be determined, as would the costs of operation and identification of funding to subsidize the operation. The current trip time from end to end on the #552 bus line between Cape May and Atlantic City is 2:15 to 2:20. Also, if SJTPO is interested, 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.*

2. **COMMENT:** Hammonton Township requests the below list of project locations be reviewed and considered for future project funding eligibility.
 - Curb and sidewalks along the northeast side of Central Avenue (County Route 542) extending Park Avenue northeast to the White Horse Pike (State Route 30).
 - Curb and sidewalk along Broadway Avenue (County Route 680) from Central Avenue (County Route 542) to the White Horse Pike (State Route 30).

- Curb and sidewalk replacement along Egg Harbor Road (County Route 561) from New Jersey Transit train station and extending northwest to the center of town (State Route 54).
- Curb and sidewalk improvements along White Horse Pike (State Route 30) at the following locations:
 - i.* Walmart Shopping Plaza southeast to Plymouth Road
 - ii.* Central Avenue (County Route 542) and extending southeast across the Hammonton Lake property frontage to connect the existing sidewalk on the southerly side of the lake
 - iii.* White Horse Pike (State Route 30), both sides of the roadway in front of the Cedar Branch stream crossing
- Pedestrian bump outs at various downtown intersections along Bellevue Avenue (State Route 54) to increase pedestrian safety.

RESPONSE: *Atlantic County – Improvements at these locations may be eligible for the following funding sources:*

- *Transportation Alternative Program (TAP); administered by NJDOT in partnership with SJTPO. More information may be found here: <https://www.sjtpo.org/tap/>*
- *Safe Routes to School (SRTS); administered by NJDOT in partnership with SJTPO. More information may be found here: <https://www.sjtpo.org/srts/>*

Atlantic County supports pursuing improvements at the locations listed and would provide approval of applications made for improvements to County Highway locations.

3. **COMMENT:** When reviewing the draft FY 2020-2029 TIP, there were no projects for Cape May County's Ocean Drive bridges or the bridge into Stone Harbor, all of which need much work. Perhaps these bridges are covered in DBNUM 03304, which covers \$1 million for each year 2020 to 2028 and \$24 million for 2029. Regardless, \$1 million in the near years is woefully inadequate.

RESPONSE: *Cape May County – The county is currently preparing a comprehensive bridge plan to address the replacement of the original Ocean Drive bridges in addition to the Great Channel bridge and 96th Street Bridge that leads into Stone Harbor. An RFP for the replacement of the entire bascule span, the electrical and mechanical components of the 96th Street Bridge is being advertised this fall. The intent is to design the replacement bascule span for an eventual replacement within 5 years. The approach spans that were built in the late 1980s will remain. The remaining Ocean Drive bridges will have a phased replacement beginning in 5 years. The county has already begun the process of establishing a fund that will be available enabling bonding capacity to start the first planned replacements, Middle Thorofare, Mill Creek, and Upper Thorofare Bridges. The design of these bridges is intended*

to begin sometime in late 2020. The remaining bridges will be prioritized from there. In the interim, the county has already addressed priority repairs on Townsends Inlet, Mill Creek, and Upper Thorofare bridges and planned priority repairs are scheduled for Middle Thorofare this year. Our annual 3.1 million-dollar Local Bridges Future Needs grant will be utilized to target priority work on the other bridges until their eventual replacement.

4. **COMMENT:** What is the status of the Atlantic County Bikeway West (from the Atlantic County Institute of Technology to Buena Borough)? Instead, we would be ecstatic if the bikeway could be completed from Atlantic County Institute of Technology to Knights Avenue in Harding Lakes Housing Complex in Mays Landing.

RESPONSE: *Atlantic County – At this time, Atlantic County is not pursuing the bikeway west plan due to Right of Way conflicts and environmental concerns. In addition, there is a lack of personnel resources while competing with other higher priority departmental transportation projects.*

5. **COMMENT:** Is there any improvement planned for the old Rail Bed that runs from Camden City, New Jersey to Atlantic City, New Jersey? The State should consider making it into a first-rate bikeway/path for locals and visitors to travel and explore. It would be great for local and regional business, for both the City of Camden and City of Atlantic City, and for every town it runs through in between.

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – Please work with the SJTPO to coordinate with the department concerning this issue.*

6. **COMMENT:** In Table 2, funding for SJTPO is listed at \$4.1 million in the first year of the TIP. In the current TIP, this same figure is \$11.7 million. What is the cause of the difference?

RESPONSE: *NJDOT - Officially, the SJTPO region's federal urbanized resources are \$4.1 million per year. The NJDOT provides additional obligation authority from its limited resources to the region and will continue this arrangement in future years. Additional resources will be provided from the under 5k and the between 5k and 200k population federal apportionments.*

7. **COMMENT:** Does New Jersey have a dedicated funding source for disaster relief efforts in the event of another hurricane?

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – The FY 2020 – FY 2029 STIP does not include a dedicated federal funding source for disaster relief.*

8. **COMMENT:** Is there a process by which SJTPO could request additional federal funds to better serve the needs of the region?

RESPONSE: NJDOT – *This is a decision for local officials to petition Congress for increased federal funding. Urbanized funding is established by Congress.*

9. **COMMENT:** Route 40 eastbound to Route 322 near Hamilton Mall has an overhead highway sign for the Atlantic City Expressway misaligned with the roadway causing the right side of traffic contracting curbing.

RESPONSE: NJDOT – *We will forward this comment to the proper NJDOT unit for investigation.*

10. **COMMENT:** Route 40 eastbound between Old Landis Avenue connection and east to Bears Head Road has numerous large trees growing over the roadway.

RESPONSE: NJDOT – *We will forward this comment to the proper NJDOT unit for investigation.*

11. **COMMENT:** Route 40 at the traffic light with Route 54 has both southbound lanes moving into one lane and merging to the left. The right-hand curbing should be relocated to the right and the left lane should be designated as left turn only. This roadway has traffic moving southbound at 55 mph into the intersection.

RESPONSE: NJDOT – *We will forward this comment to the proper NJDOT unit for investigation.*

12. **COMMENT:** Route 559 intersection with Route 559 Alt. has current pavement upgrade, but the right-hand shoulder area of this intersection has major vegetation and a tree line area blocking the view from oncoming traffic during the night time and acclimate weather conditions.

RESPONSE: Atlantic County – *Thank you for bringing this area of concern to our attention. We have forwarded your comment to Atlantic County Department of Public Works.*

13. **COMMENT:** Old Landis Avenue at intersection with Milmay Avenue has westbound roadway misaligned with a large tree blocking the traffic lane.

RESPONSE: Atlantic County – *Thank you for bringing this area of concern to our attention. We have forwarded your comment to Atlantic County Department of Public Works.*

14. **COMMENT:** Sherman Avenue and Orchard Avenue intersection is extremely misaligned at the regional hospital.

RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – Agreed – CR 628 (Orchard Road & College Drive) were constructed as separate roadways at different times where they meet at CR 552 (Sherman Avenue) so their alignment is not perfect, one of many such intersections within the region. Realignment of such a heavily traveled intersection within a developed area can be a difficult endeavor due to existing utilities, right-of-way constraints and many other factors. The current split phasing of the traffic signal, along with striping additions, was instituted due to this issue. While not ideal solutions, these have appeared to minimize user confusion and allow the intersection to function in a reasonable manner.*

15. **COMMENT:** Major roadway interchanges of Route 55 at Garden Road (heavy truck traffic), Landis Avenue (heavy vehicle and truck traffic), and Sherman Avenue near the regional hospital has an urgent need for street lighting.

RESPONSE: *NJDOT – We will forward this comment to the proper NJDOT unit for investigation.*

16. **COMMENT:** The roadway westbound to Sunset Beach with heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic requires major investment into street lighting. Numerous accidents involving both pedestrian and bicycles along the tight roadway following daily evening Flag Ceremonies.

RESPONSE: *Cape May County – Sunset Road from Broadway to the Point beach is under concept development design which includes a separate shared use pathway both contiguous and separated from the existing roadway. The path will be highly visible, and the roadway will be reconstructed. Traffic calming elements will become part of the design including buffered gore areas, high visibility crosswalks, reflectors, signage, and markings to supplement reduced lane widths intended to slow traffic. Area lighting may become an element of the final design.*

17. **COMMENT:** Route 347 Bypass still does not have reflective marking or signage at turns, or clear view from vegetation management around the roadway turns.

RESPONSE: *Cumberland County – This roadway was under construction in the spring and summer of 2019. During construction, there was a temporary absence of pavement markings and roadway signage, which have since been installed. At some of the curves, high friction surface treatment has been installed along with new signage.*