



# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2050

***MOVING SOUTH JERSEY FORWARD***

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**South Jersey  
Transportation  
Planning Organization**

782 South Brewster Road, Unit B6  
Vineland, New Jersey 08361

**WWW.SJTPO.ORG**

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## SJTPO and the Regional Transportation Plan

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for southern New Jersey. MPOs are required in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more people and ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (“3-C”) planning process. Formed in 1993, SJTPO replaced three smaller MPOs while incorporating other areas not previously served. Covering Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties, SJTPO serves as a technical resource, provides access to funding, and works to provide a regional approach to address transportation planning and engineering issues.

Learn more about SJTPO at [www.sjtpo.org/about](http://www.sjtpo.org/about).

The Regional Transportation Plan, RTP 2050 is SJTPO’s federally required long-range plan that guides investment decisions about the region’s transportation network. The RTP is updated every 4 four years. RTP 2050’s predecessor, Transportation Matters: *A Plan for South Jersey* (RTP 2040), was adopted in 2016.

RTP 2050 details how over \$5.0 billion in federal transportation funds will be spent in the region over the next 30 years. While not all of this money is currently programmed into specific projects, much of this money will go towards projects that preserve the system and keep it operating smoothly. This is due to extensive system maintenance needs, tight fiscal constraints as well as strict environmental constraints that make system expansion very difficult. While municipalities and the state fund a good portion of the transportation improvement projects throughout the SJTPO region, federal funds constitute an even larger component of the overall funding package.

Without an RTP in place, the region would not receive the federal transportation funds necessary to keep the transportation network in order.

The overarching vision that guides RTP 2050 is:

*A transportation system based on regional collaboration that moves people and goods in a safe and efficient matter, inclusive of all modes and users.*

The vision represents the ultimate outcome of what SJTPO and its partners would like the transportation system to look and operate like in the year 2050.

## Goals and Strategies

Underlying the vision is a series of 10 goals. The goals are a series of broad statements that will help to achieve the vision. Each of SJTPO’s goals is based on Metropolitan Planning Factors, based on the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the current federal transportation legislation that governs metropolitan planning nationwide. Underlying each of SJTPO’s 10 goals are strategies, which are actions that SJTPO could take to achieve its goals. The strategies for the RTP 2050 were developed in partnership with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the public. The 10 goals and accompanying strategies are below.

1. **Promote accessibility and mobility for the movement of people and goods**
  - a. **Evaluate transit service:** Work with public transportation providers to evaluate transit service availability in all



- communities, but disadvantaged communities in particular, as those areas are likely to have limited vehicular access.
- b. **Include all users in projects:** Evaluate all transportation projects that receive funding through the SJTPO process for their inclusion of complete streets elements, including bicycle, pedestrian, disabled, transit, and freight accommodation.
  - c. **Advance transit for the transportation disadvantaged:** Work with regional partners to advance recommendations of the Access for All Transit Plan, formally referred to as Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.
  - d. **Promote transportation alternates:** Promote public awareness of alternative transportation options and services, such as rideshare, carpooling, electric vehicles, walking, bicycling, transit, etc., and support agencies that provide these alternatives.
  - e. **Improve truck routes:** Work with regional partners to identify and evaluate truck routes and other critical freight corridors for accessibility, reliability, safety, and other system performance measures in order to develop and prioritize projects.
  - f. **Promote new connections between travel modes:** Identify and promote the development of locations where better intermodal facilities and infrastructure are needed in order to promote intermodal connectivity.
  - g. **Improve truck routes:** Work with regional partners to identify and evaluate truck routes and other critical freight corridors for accessibility, reliability, safety, and other system performance measures in order to develop and prioritize projects.
  - h. **Ensure projects have equitable benefits and burdens:** Evaluate all transportation projects that receive funding through the SJTPO process to ensure that the burdens of the transportation network do not fall disproportionately on racial minority, low-income, or other disadvantaged populations and that the system provides equal benefit to these populations.
  - i. **Inclusiveness of all users:** Identify groups that represent freight, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit, and evaluate ways to expand their representation into the MPO planning process.
  - j. **Reduce barriers to job access:** Evaluate data from the Ladders of Opportunity effort and other sources to identify transportation barriers to employment access and work with regional partners to reduce or eliminate those barriers.
- ## 2. Mitigate traffic congestion and promote efficient system operation
- a. **Promote transportation alternatives:** Promote public awareness of alternative transportation options and services, such as rideshare, carpooling, walking, bicycling, transit, etc., and support agencies that provide these alternatives.
  - b. **Promote technology in transportation:** Promote the implementation and deployment of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies, such as smart traffic signals, dynamic message signs, vehicle detection systems, and connected vehicle technology.
  - c. **Measure congestion impact of projects:** Utilize the South Jersey Travel Demand Model (SJTDM) and other tools to evaluate impacts of future projects related to congestion and delay.

- d. **Develop congestion/air quality projects:** Work with subregional planning partners to develop projects to be funded through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program.
- e. **Identify congested locations:** Utilize the Congestion Management Process (CMP) to identify congested locations and analyze available data to inform project development at the regional level.
- f. **Include all users in projects:** Evaluate all transportation projects that receive funding through the SJTPO process for their inclusion of complete streets elements, including bicycle, pedestrian, disabled, transit, and freight accommodation.
- g. **Reduce summer congestion/delay:** Collect data that demonstrates the added needs of the region due to unique seasonality of travel patterns and work to identify transportation needs and secure additional funding based upon those needs.

### 3. Restore, preserve, and maintain the existing transportation system

- a. **Infrastructure that supports businesses:** Evaluate needs and support the investment in the infrastructure necessary to serve the region's businesses, including highways, freight rail, transit, ports, and airports.
- b. **Prioritize system maintenance:** Consistent with established project selection criteria, prioritize maintenance of the existing system over the expansion of system facilities.

- c. **Improve pavement conditions:** Assist subregions with pursuing federal funding for pavement preservation projects through funding programs administered by SJTPO.
- d. **Prioritize greatest needs:** Develop systems that assist local governments in prioritizing projects based on greatest need and greatest efficiency in use of funding.

### 4. Support the regional economy

- a. **Improve truck routes:** Work with regional partners to identify and evaluate truck routes and other critical freight corridors for accessibility, reliability, safety, and other system performance measures in order to develop and prioritize projects.
- b. **Expand role of businesses in MPO process:** Identify major employers and non-profit sectors that represent regional economic interests and expand their representation into the MPO planning process.
- c. **Promote new connections between travel modes:** Identify and promote the development of locations where better intermodal facilities and infrastructure are needed in order to promote intermodal connectivity.
- d. **Infrastructure that supports businesses:** Evaluate needs and support the investment in the infrastructure necessary to serve the region's businesses, including highways, freight rail, transit, ports, and airports.
- e. **Reduce barriers to job access:** Evaluate data from the Ladders of Opportunity effort and other sources to identify transportation barriers to employment access and work with regional partners to reduce or eliminate those barriers.



- f. **Projects that support the economy:** Continue to work extensively with subregions as well as local and regional economic development agencies to ensure that transportation investments promote conditions conducive to economic activity.
- g. **Projects that enhance tourism:** Continue to work extensively with subregions and allied agencies, to ensure that transportation improvements enhance opportunities for travel and tourism within the SJTPO region.

## 5. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation infrastructure, particularly along the Atlantic and Delaware Bay shorelines

- a. **Prioritize evacuation projects:** Evaluate evacuation and other critical routes and prioritize roadway maintenance projects on these routes.
- b. **Emergency preparedness plans:** To the maximum extent possible, ensure coordination, as well as appropriate integration with transportation plans of emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans, strategies, and policies amongst SJTPO subregions and planning partners.
- c. **Emergency preparedness education:** Educate the public about emergency preparedness efforts.
- d. **Improve transportation vulnerability:** Analyze the vulnerability of the transportation system to determine where adaptation strategies are most appropriate.
- e. **Resiliency partnerships:** Participate in regional and statewide resiliency planning initiatives.
- f. **Support resiliency funding:** Serve as a technical resource to partner agencies in pursuing funding opportunities to

improve resiliency and reliability of transportation infrastructure.

- g. **Resiliency education:** Educate the public on the worsening vulnerabilities of the regional transportation network with the resulting increases in flooding and storm severity.
- h. **Stormwater management:** Assess strategies appropriate to address stormwater management.

## 6. Increase and enhance opportunities for travel and tourism

- a. **Advance South Jersey Trails:** Continue to advance conversations and build a coalition of regional partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors to develop and implement a vision for the South Jersey Trails regional trail network to connect major attractions within the region and to neighboring regions.
- b. **Reduce summer congestion/delay:** Collect data that demonstrates the added needs of the region due to unique seasonality of travel patterns and work to identify transportation needs and secure additional funding based upon those needs.
- c. **Projects that support the economy:** Continue to work extensively with subregions as well as local and regional economic development agencies to ensure that transportation investments promote conditions conducive to economic activity.
- d. **Projects that enhance tourism:** Continue to work extensively with subregions and allied agencies, to ensure that transportation improvements enhance opportunities for travel and tourism within the SJTPO region.

- e. **Identify congested locations:** Utilize the Congestion Management Process (CMP) to identify congested locations and analyze available data to inform project development at the regional level.

## 7. Improve transportation safety

- a. **Promote safety countermeasures:** Educate the public and stakeholders about the benefits of the Federal Highway Administration’s Proven Safety Countermeasures, including roundabouts, road diets, and others that offer major safety benefits, but may be subject to misinformation and work to include them in SJTPO projects.
- b. **Safety in all projects:** Evaluate all transportation projects that receive funding through the SJTPO process to ensure they identify and address the safety needs of all roadway users.
- c. **Bicycle and pedestrian safety projects:** Work with regional partners to develop and prioritize projects that improve safety on the bicycle and pedestrian network.
- d. **Reduce barriers to safety:** Continue and expand state and regional partnerships to identify and reduce barriers to safety project advancement, including offering design assistance support to better ensure projects reach construction.
- e. **Align safety with state priorities:** Ensure that safety investments are aligned with priorities established with the State’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which was developed in collaboration with New Jersey’s MPOs and other statewide partners.

- f. **Safety outreach and education:** Improve the safety of roadway user behavior through the continued dissemination and development of safety education programs.
- g. **No roadway death is acceptable:** Guide all transportation decision-making to incorporate the Vision Zero philosophy, which states that any loss of life on our roadways is unacceptable and preventable.

## 8. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system

- a. **Evaluate transit service:** Work with public transportation providers to evaluate transit service availability in all communities, but disadvantaged communities in particular, as those areas are likely to have limited vehicular access.
- b. **Advance transit for the transportation disadvantaged:** Work with regional partners to advance recommendations of the Access for All Transit Plan, formerly referred to as the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.
- c. **Promote new connections between travel modes:** Identify and promote the development of locations where better intermodal facilities and infrastructure are needed in order to promote intermodal connectivity.
- d. **Evaluate connections between travel modes:** Evaluate the performance of existing intermodal connections within the region to ensure they are still functioning effectively and evaluate the existing gaps within and between modes to identify and plan for projects that make new intermodal connections.
- e. **Transit oriented development:** Investigate and establish an appropriate role for SJTPO in supporting the NJDOT Transit



Village Initiative as well as Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in the region.

- f. **Include all users in projects:** Evaluate all transportation projects that receive funding through the SJTPO process for their inclusion of complete streets elements, including bicycle, pedestrian, disabled, transit, and freight accommodation.
- g. **Support connectivity projects:** Serve as a technical resource to partner agencies in pursuing funding opportunities for improving the connectivity of the transportation system.
- h. **Advance South Jersey Trails:** Continue to advance conversations and build a coalition of regional partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors to develop and implement a vision for the South Jersey Trails regional trail network to connect major attractions within the region and to neighboring regions.

## 9. Protect and enhance the environment and complement land use planning

- a. **Promote transportation alternatives:** Promote public awareness of alternative transportation options and services, such as rideshare, carpooling, electric vehicles, walking, bicycling, transit, etc., and support agencies that provide these alternatives.
- b. **Educate about environmental impacts:** Educate the public about the impacts of transportation on the environment and provide information on how to mitigate those impacts through changes in daily behavior.

- c. **Projects that reduce emissions:** Promote projects that reduce emissions on the roadway, such as ITS, signal optimization, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transit, or roundabouts.
- d. **Incorporate land use in transportation:** Work to incorporate existing land use and livability plans, policies, and principles throughout the region into the MPO planning process.
- e. **Transit oriented development:** Investigate and establish an appropriate role for SJTPO in supporting the NJDOT Transit Village Initiative as well as Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in the region.

## 10. Improve security

- a. **Prioritize evacuation projects:** Evaluate evacuation and other critical routes and prioritize roadway maintenance projects on these routes.
- b. **Emergency preparedness plans:** To the maximum extent possible, ensure coordination, as well as appropriate integration with transportation plans of emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans, strategies, and policies amongst SJTPO subregions and planning partners.
- c. **Emergency preparedness education:** Educate the public about emergency preparedness efforts.
- d. **Advance security planning:** Promote conversations among federal, state, and regional partners to define what transportation security means in the SJTPO region and how SJTPO can work to advance security planning.

## Critical Issues

Over the course of several years, there have been a number of recurring issues that have arisen in SJTPO's transportation planning process. These issues make it difficult for SJTPO to help its member jurisdictions advance projects. The critical issues are as follows:

### 1. Funding Imbalance

The amount of transportation funding to jurisdictions in the SJTPO region is not in proportion to its population, seasonally adjusted population, vehicle miles travelled, roadway mileage, or persons in poverty. SJTPO looked at five different metrics - population, population adjusted for the influx of seasonal visitors and residents, vehicle-miles travelled, miles (centerline) of roadway, and the percentage of population in poverty - and found that SJTPO does not receive a share of transportation funding in proportion to these indicators.

#### How SJTPO Will Work to Help

- Work to promote awareness of the issue among the public and elected officials
- Work with partners to focus discussions on more equitable funding formulas in New Jersey
- Work with national partners to ensure there are conversations focusing on the need for greater funding equity for rural areas
- Work to merge roadway and transit funding conversations, so all trip needs are considered

### 2. Major Projects

Despite vast state revenue generated by Shore areas in Atlantic and Cape May Counties, localities face a heavy lift moving major shore-

oriented infrastructure investments forward and are often left to bear the full costs of these improvements.

The New Jersey Shore has a tremendous economic benefit to the SJTPO region, in the form of local property tax revenue, employment, and increased outside investment. However, this economic activity does come at a cost. Among other costs, the infrastructure needed to provide access to these millions of users poses a large burden on local governments. In addition, due to the unique nature of many of these shore communities, in particular being situated on barrier islands, many of the infrastructure solutions greatly exceed the cost of typical infrastructure solutions. For example, bridges that connect the mainland to the barrier islands must cross very wide waterways and do so in ecologically sensitive environments, such as wetlands.

#### How SJTPO Will Work to Help

- Work to promote awareness of the issue among the public and elected officials
- Work with partners to identify funding opportunities for megaprojects
- Work to better quantify the revenues generated in Shore communities and communicate that effectively to the public and elected officials

### 3. Inequitable Access

Relative to the rest of the state, vulnerable communities in the SJTPO region generally have limited access to mobility for their daily needs and face heavy burdens to improve mobility. It is equally important to note that the SJTPO region, made up of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties, is a disadvantaged region relative to the state as a whole, with great barriers related to mobility. There is a dearth of public transit, especially compared to the rest of the state.



Further, overall incomes are lower, even relative to cost of living, access is lower, traffic fatalities are higher, poverty is higher, educational attainment is lower, social issues associated with poverty are more pronounced, health outcomes are worse, and ultimately lifespan is lower.

#### How SJTPO Will Work to Help

- Work to promote awareness of the issue among the public and elected officials
- Work with partners to remove barriers and/or provide assistance when that is not possible
- Work with NJ TRANSIT to identify transit concerns and better incorporate equity into service decisions

#### 4. Regulatory Burden

Environmental regulations, especially in the Pinelands, are disproportionate to the impacts of projects and often make low-impact safety and quality of life projects difficult to advance. The SJTPO region largely falls under one of two very important environmental regulatory areas, the Pinelands and Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) of 1973. The Pinelands Area is a million-acre mosaic of forests, farms, and towns that lies above trillions of gallons of water. The CAFRA is administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and covers waterfront development, freshwater wetlands, coastal wetlands, flood hazard areas, and tidelands that extend from Middlesex County down to the coastal areas of Salem County. While these stringent environmental regulations make the SJTPO region an attractive place to live and work, they incur many additional costs and burdens on the municipalities and the counties in the area, which makes it difficult to advance transportation projects.

#### How SJTPO Will Work to Help

- Work to promote awareness of the issue among the public and elected officials
- Convene a gathering of Pinelands jurisdictions to discuss issues and sensible solutions

#### 5. Infrastructure at Risk

Sea level rise, increased storm severity, and increases in precipitation – all the result of climate change – put aging, already taxed infrastructure in the SJTPO region at great risk. Most scientists and researchers believe that the average intensity and frequency of storms in terms of maximum wind speed and rainfall is likely to increase, which can be expected to result in more flooding. Although many of SJTPO's subregions have engaged in effective adaptation measures, such as armoring coastlines with bulkheads or revetment walls, they are expensive and highly regulated, slowing the opportunity to proactively address these issues.

#### How SJTPO Will Work to Help

- Work to promote awareness of the issue among the public and elected officials
- Continue to promote projects and plans that reduce vehicle emissions
- Work to advance mitigation and adaptation efforts
- Work with partners on emergency preparedness planning and education as well as stormwater management.

## Project Evaluation Process

Another key component in SJTPO's performance-based planning approach is SJTPO's newly updated Project Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Process, a holistic process intended to prioritize projects that will help the region meet RTP 2050's goals as well as its performance-based targets. The process consists of two core elements: a Pre-Evaluation Process as projects come in to determine if there are reasonable ways to enhance projects, as well as a Scoring Process which looks at final project candidates and determines which projects will be funded. While the process will be carried out primarily by SJTPO staff, it will include input and oversight by the TAC and Policy Board.

## Funding

As mentioned, RTP 2050 will help to guide transportation investments of over \$5.0 billion over the next 30 years. RTP 2050 includes more than \$1.9 billion in funding for committed projects through Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2029, as well as over \$1.2 billion in unfunded critical needs projects. As has been the case for some time now, the needs far exceed the actual funds. Further, most of the projects within the SJTPO region fall within System Preservation and Maintenance, as opposed to Expansion. While system expansion or capacity enhancement projects are a potential solution to some of the problems on the current system, such as congestion, most of the committed funds in RTP 2050 go towards System and Roadway Preservation projects. While not as "flashy" as a new highway or rail transit line, these System Preservation projects, which include roadway resurfacing, drainage, and capital maintenance, are critical to a safe and functional transportation system.

It is also important to note that while federal funds are administered through a myriad of programs, SJTPO has discretion over only a handful of these programs. These programs include:

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ):** This program funds projects that improve air quality and/or relieve congestion without adding new highway capacity.
- **Safety:** This includes work that is designed to improve safety for the traveling public on the existing highway system. Program categories within this classification includes safety improvements, safety management, and safety capital maintenance.
- **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP-SJTPO):** This is a federal-aid funding category for NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT. STBGP funding may be used on highway projects, bridge projects, transit capital projects, planning and research programs, and a variety of other eligible project types. STBGP funding is suballocated to areas of New Jersey based on their relative share of the state's population.
- **Transportation Alternatives (TA):** Formerly called "transportation enhancements," this program funds projects such as on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities; infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for the planning, design or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.



## System Performance

In accordance with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the FAST Act's emphasis on performance-based planning and programming, there is a heavy focus on system performance within RTP 2050, mainly with regard to assessing how well the region is doing in meeting each of the 10 goals. With guidance from both the TAC and the public, SJTPO has crafted a number of proactive strategies to meet each of these goals. Further, many of the programs and projects included within RTP 2050 meet each of these goals. RTP 2050's System Performance Report details each of SJTPO's recommended performance measures and targets required under the FAST Act, as well as performance in these areas since the establishment of these targets. SJTPO has also included some non-federally required performance measures as well and will continue to monitor the system on a regular basis.

## Transportation Equity

As a recipient of federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), SJTPO must comply with federal Title VI, Environmental Justice (EJ), and other nondiscrimination requirements as mandated by these agencies. As mentioned, much of the SJTPO region is socioeconomically disadvantaged, especially relative to the other parts of the state. However, the amount of transportation funding to jurisdictions in the SJTPO region is not in proportion to its population, seasonally adjusted population, vehicle-miles travelled, roadway mileage, or persons in poverty. Furthermore, many of the vulnerable communities within the SJTPO have limited access to mobility for their daily needs and face heavy burdens to improve mobility. In summary, there are significant equity issues with regards to transportation funding and the needs of the SJTPO region. RTP 2050

presents some initial strategies to help address this ever-prevalent issue.

## Air Quality

As is the case with every RTP that SJTPO releases, as a Nonattainment Area for 8-Hour Ozone, pursuant to Federal regulations, SJTPO must complete an air quality conformity determination to ensure that all projects conform to National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as set by the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Transportation conformity is demonstrated when future planned, federally funded, highway and transit projects are determined not to cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS. RTP 2050 conforms with the 2015 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS.

While SJTPO did not do a specific greenhouse gas emissions analysis specifically for RTP 2050, it is of note that greenhouse gas emissions in the State of New Jersey has been declining over the past several years, and emissions levels continue to remain below the 2020 limit set by the Global Warming Response Act. SJTPO will continue to plan and program projects to meet the much more stringent 2050 goal of 25.4 MMTCO<sub>2e</sub>, 80% below the 2006 levels.

## RTP 2050 Public Outreach Efforts and Outcomes

As with all of SJTPO's planning initiatives and core documents, RTP 2050's development involved coordination and consultation with federal, state, and local partner agencies, Indian Tribal nations, and the public. This section summarizes each phase of the public outreach effort behind RTP 2050 and the ensuing outcomes.

Phase I of public outreach was held in the summer of 2019. During this phase, members of the public were asked to prioritize goals, as well as rank the underlying strategies to meet the goals. Four in-person public meetings were held throughout the region; one taking place in each county. The results were compiled and led to a ranking of goals from highest to lowest priority. The results of this exercise, as well as a comparison to results from a similar exercise done for Transportation Matters: *A Plan for South Jersey* (RTP 2040), completed four years earlier, are depicted in Table 1, below.

**Table 1 – Goal Prioritization (RTP 2040 vs RTP 2050)**

Goal	RTP 2040	RTP 2050
<b>Accessibility and mobility</b>	Goal 1	Goal 1
<b>Mitigate traffic congestion</b>	Goal 3	Goal 2
<b>Restore, preserve, and maintain existing system</b>	Goal 6	Goal 3
<b>Improve resiliency and reliability</b>	Goal 9*	Goal 4 (4a)**
<b>Travel and tourism</b>	Goal 10*	Goal 5 (4b)**
<b>Support the regional economy</b>	Goal 2	Goal 6 (4c)**
<b>Improve transportation safety</b>	Goal 4	Goal 7
<b>Enhance integration and connectivity</b>	Goal 7	Goal 8
<b>Protect and enhance the environment</b>	Goal 5	Goal 9
<b>Improve security</b>	Goal 8	Goal 10

\*Goal 9 and 10 were added after voting was complete on RTP 2040.

\*\*Initial tally resulted in tie between three goals, TAC feedback served as the breaker.

As seen from the table, “Accessibility and mobility” was the top-ranked goal for both RTP 2040 and RTP 2050. The TAC helped to break a tie between the goals of “Improve the resiliency and reliability,” “Travel and tourism,” and “Support the regional economy.” The order the goals are listed in the full RTP 2050 are

based on the results of this goal prioritization exercise. In addition, the feedback received during this outreach phase helped to guide the writing of the Plan.

Phase II of outreach began when the draft RTP 2050 was released in June 2020 and lasted through mid-December 2020. Members of the public were able to submit their comments via comment form, survey, email, social media (Facebook and Twitter), mail, or fax. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on in-person gatherings, all public meetings held during Phase II were virtual. Virtual meetings hosted in English were held on the morning of Wednesday, August 19, 2020, the afternoon of Monday, August 31, 2020, and the evening of Thursday, September 10, 2020.

Additionally, during Phase II of outreach, a special effort was made to engage non-traditional populations. As 6.2 percent of residents in the SJTPO region speak Spanish or Spanish Creole, SJTPO hosted a consultant-led virtual public meeting in Spanish on Wednesday, December 9, 2020. Further, a survey was offered in the three (3) LEP languages also spoken in the SJTPO region, which are Chinese Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Gujarati. The survey was available on the RTP webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/RTP](http://www.sjtpo.org/RTP)) and distributed to partner agencies to ensure the LEP persons they serve were informed of the input opportunity.

## COVID-19

The draft RTP 2050 was released in June 2020, amid a global pandemic. As much of the content was drafted before the onset of the pandemic, there is not a major focused discussion of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect within RTP 2050. However, interspersed throughout RTP 2050 are a series of callouts, which provide updates,



where applicable, on heavily impacted portions of the RTP 2050 where the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact.

## Conclusion

In summary, building and maintaining a first-class transportation system is not easy, especially with all the different goals the region is striving for and the unique challenges faced. Since the release of *Transportation Matters: A Plan for South Jersey* in 2016, the region has made a number of strides in several key performance areas, including safety, roadway conditions, ambient air quality and bicycle/pedestrian trails. There has been a noticeable decline in the number of fatalities and serious roadway injuries. Further, most of the county roadways within the SJTPO region are in good condition. Ambient air quality within the SJTPO region has improved over the past several years. There has also been a number of new bicycle/pedestrian trails built since the last Plan, particularly in Cape May County. With the advent of the SJ Trails initiative, the foundation for new bicycle/pedestrian trails has been set. Nonetheless, there is still more work to be done and numerous challenges remain. The performance-oriented approach of RTP 2050, along with its actionable, proactive strategies charts a clear course for SJTPO to overcome these challenges and ultimately achieve its vision.



**REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN 2050**

**MOVING SOUTH JERSEY FORWARD**

**South Jersey  
Transportation  
Planning Organization**

782 South Brewster Road, Unit B6  
Vineland, New Jersey 08361

Photo: Route 52 Bridge,  
Ocean City, New Jersey