

2021

South Jersey
Transportation
Planning Organization



Access for All Transit Plan

Executive Summary

Adopted, March 22, 2021

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Reducing
inefficiencies and
unmet needs for the
transportation-
disadvantaged
population.

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782 South Brewster Road, Unit B6 • Vineland, New Jersey 08361
P: 856-794-1941 • F: 856-794-2549

LEONARD DESIDERIO, CHAIRMAN • JENNIFER MARANDINO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACS	American Community Survey
ACTU	Atlantic County Transportation Unit
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security
CATS	Cumberland Area Transit System
CBG(s)	Census Block Group(s)
CCAM	Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility
CCCTMA	Cross County Connection Transportation Management Association
CHSTP	Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
FFT	Cape May Fare Free Transportation
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GBAT	Greater Bridgeton Area Transit
HSTP	Human Services Transportation Plan
MASCEC	Mid-Atlantic Career and Education Center
NHTS	National Household Travel Survey
NJ JARC	New Jersey Job Access Reverse Commute
NJ TRANSIT	New Jersey Transit
NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation
PRAC	Puerto Rican Action Committee
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SCDRTAP	The Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program
SJTA	South Jersey Transportation Authority
SJTPO	South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
US DOT	United States Department of Transportation

1. Introduction

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) has prepared the Access for All Transit Plan, more widely known as a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) for the SJTPO counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem. The Access for All Transit Plan focuses on facilitating transportation services for a segment of the population that needs and depends on the services, a segment of the population commonly referred to as the **transportation disadvantaged** population. **Human services transportation** refers to the services provided to the transportation disadvantaged population, which for various reasons is unable or not permitted to operate a motor vehicle. This can include senior citizens, persons with disabilities, persons of low-income, and underage youths. The transportation disadvantaged population needs a means of transport to get to important destinations, such as places of employment or job training, medical appointments (including dialysis and physical therapy), shopping or other destinations.

Human services transportation is a fundamental need, and in times of scarce fiscal resources, governments and private providers need to work closely together to coordinate efforts and ensure that transportation services are being provided as cost-effectively as possible. Effective solutions for meeting the needs of human services transportation within these constraints is one of the main objectives of the Access for All Transit Plan.

Aside from the overall assessment of the transportation system and identification of needs, funding is also tied to the Access for All Transit Plan. Applications for human services transportation funding or vehicles under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) [Section 5310 Program – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities](#), must show proposals are responding to an unmet need or recommendation included in a CHSTP, or that the proposal relates to an existing service identified in the CHSTP (i.e., satisfying the goal of maintaining the existing system). For some of the other human services transportation funding programs, while the application does not have to be specifically listed in the CHSTP, if it addresses an unmet need or recommendation in the CHSTP, the application is often given priority.

As required by federal law, a CHSTP must include the following elements for the four-county region:

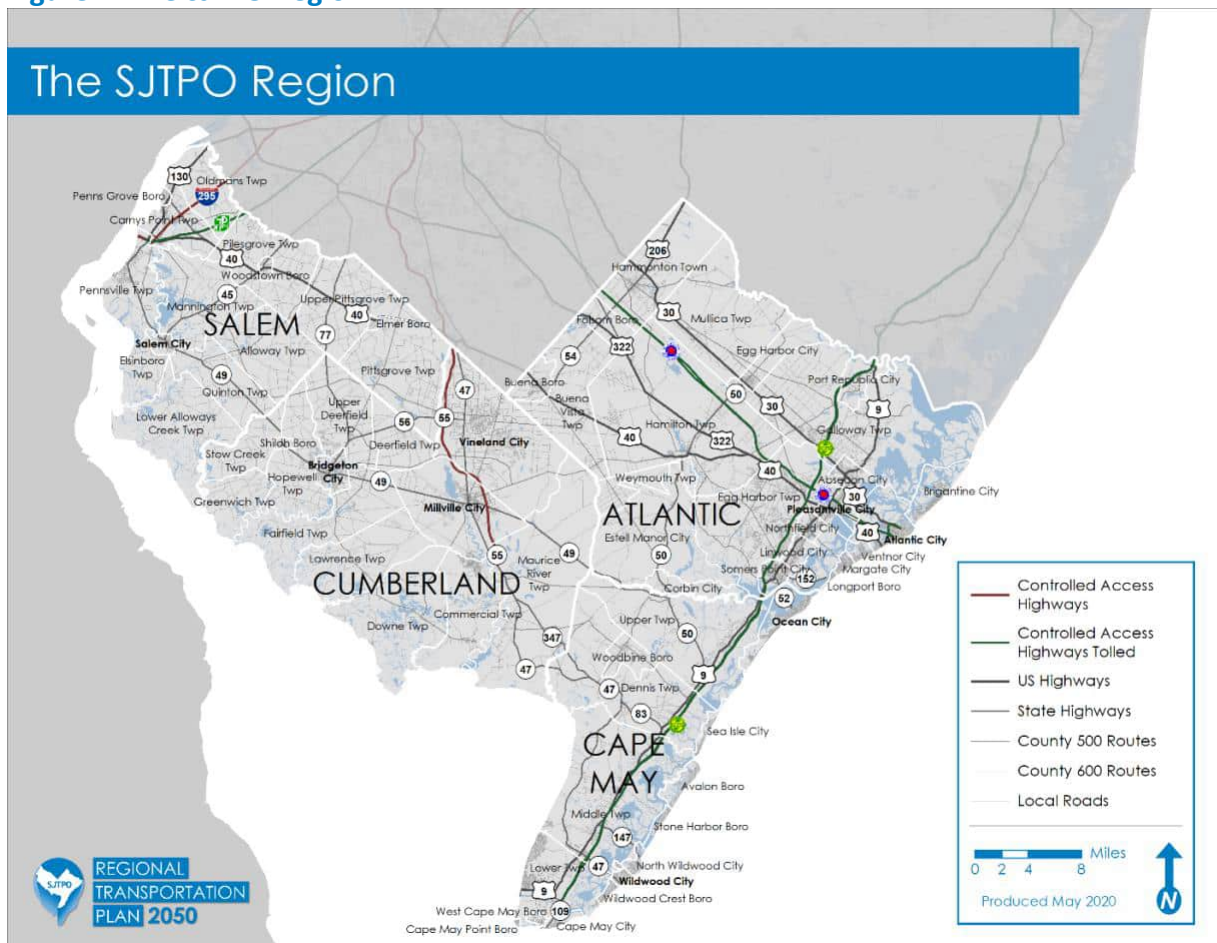
- Demographics of the transit dependent population (profile and location) and of significant desired transportation destinations for this segment of the population (i.e., shopping centers, major places of employment, hospitals and medical facilities)
- A list and description of current transit and human services transportation services, including state, county, municipal and private transit services
- Identification of needs of the transit-dependent population not met by the current transit or human services transportation
- Identification of inefficiencies in the range of services provided in the region, including duplication of services and potential for service coordination and recommendations for

dealing with unmet needs and reducing inefficiencies in the provision of current and planned human services transportation

2. Regional Profile

SJTPO covers a region comprised of 68 municipalities in the four counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem. The region is about 1,778 square miles in total area, accounting for nearly 20 percent of New Jersey’s total area. Most of the developed areas in the region are in the Vineland and Millville area (central portion of the region), the Atlantic City urbanized area and shore area in the east, and the small, urbanized areas along the western portion of the region. There are also extensive sparsely developed rural areas and scattered urban clusters and small towns in the region, creating problems and challenges for providing mass transit or human services transportation services to those in these areas that need it. [Figure 1](#), below, shows the four counties and the developed and sparsely developed areas in the region. [Figure 1](#)

Figure 1: The SJTPO Region



The SJTPO region has been losing population over the past several years. Despite this population decline, SJTPO's RTP 2050 forecasts a modest population growth of approximately 3.3 percent between 2020 and 2050, or 0.11 percent per year, as seen in [Table 1](#).

Table 1: SJTPO Region, Population Projections, 2020 to 2050

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change	Change Percentage
Atlantic County	266,141	270,296	274,746	279,268	13,127	4.9%
Cape May County	92,386	91,565	91,761	91,958	- 428	- 0.5%
Cumberland County	151,412	154,899	159,523	164,285	12,873	8.5%
Salem County	62,198	60,064	57,724	55,475	- 6,724	- 10.8%
	572,148	576,957	583,937	591,002	18,855	3.3%

Age Distribution

Relative to the rest of New Jersey and the country as a whole, the percentage of population aged 65 and older within the SJTPO region is higher. Over 25% of Cape May County's population is aged 65 and older, a higher percentage than the State as a whole (15.5%), as well as the United States (24.8%). Both Atlantic County and Salem County have a higher percentage of population aged 65 and older than the State as a whole. This information is displayed in [Table 2](#), below.

Table 2: Population Aged 65 and Over, SJTPO

	2020 Plan		2015 Plan		Change 2015-2020	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Atlantic County	45,459	16.9%	39,305	14.3%	6154	15.7%
Cape May County	23,572	25.2%	21,113	21.8%	2,459	11.6%
Cumberland County	22,325	14.6%	19,936	12.7%	2,389	12.0%
Salem County	11,182	17.7%	10,036	15.2%	1,146	11.4%
NJ	1,376,863	15.5%	1,196,090	13.6%	180,773	15.1%
US	49,238,581	24.8%	40,671,441	13.2%	8,567,140	21.1

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS). [2015 Plan \(2012 ACS 5-Year Estimates\)](#).

Income Levels

In addition to the SJTPO region skewing older, it is also poorer, relative to the rest of New Jersey and to the United States, as a whole. As depicted in [Table 3](#), on the following page, except for Cape May County, SJTPO's counties have a higher rate of population falling below the poverty

level than the rest of New Jersey. Further, Atlantic and Cumberland Counties have a higher rate of population falling below the poverty level than the United States.¹ **Error! Reference source not found.** also shows that the overall percentages of people living at or below the poverty line has increased from the 2015 Plan. As with old age, these lower-than-average income levels lead to a greater need and dependence on human services transportation.

Table 3: Poverty Status of SJTPO Counties, 2020 and 2015 Plans

Area	2020 Plan		2015 Plan	
	# Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	# Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level
Atlantic County	37,471	14.3%	34,002	12.4%
Cape May County	10,140	11.1%	9,186	9.5%
Cumberland County	24,830	17.6%	23,460	15%
Salem County	8,067	13.0%	7,296	11%
NJ	904,132	10.4%	850,559	9.9%
US	44,257,979	14.1%	44,852,527	14.9%

Source: 2014-2018 ACS, 2015 Plan.

In addition to the higher rate of poverty levels within the SJTPO region relative to the rest of New Jersey and the Country, the SJTPO region has a higher percentage of people with an ambulatory disability. An individual is classified as having an “ambulatory disability” if he/she/they have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. The SJTPO region’s higher-than-average percentage of people with a disability leads to a greater need and dependence on human services transportation.

Zero-Vehicle Households

Another major determinant of households’ dependent on human services transportation is the percentage of households without a vehicle. Atlantic County and Cumberland County have a higher percentage of households with zero vehicles, compared to the country. As depicted in **Error! Reference source not found.**, at 13.2%, Atlantic County tops both New Jersey and the United States.

¹ Per the federal poverty guidelines for 2018, the poverty threshold for a family/household of one person was \$12,784; for a family/household of four, it was \$25,701. At: [US Census Bureau Poverty Thresholds](#).

Table 4: Percentage of Households with Zero Vehicles, SJTPO Counties, 2020 vs. 2015

Area	2020 Plan Number	2020 Plan % without vehicle	2015 Plan Number	2015 Plan % without vehicle
Atlantic	13,137	13.2	13,530	13.4%
Cape May	3,014	7.6	3,969	9.1
Cumberland	5,188	10	5,378	10.6
Salem	1,849	7.7	2,317	9.3
NJ	372,608	11.7	374,008	11.7
US	10,424,934	8.7	10,405,375	9.0

Source: 2014-2018 ACS. 2015 HSTP (2012 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

Major Desired Destinations

There are many destinations throughout the SJTPO region that users of human services transportation need routine access to, including Food Banks, Adult Day Care Centers, Hospitals and Clinics, and human services agencies (i.e., vocational centers and training facilities for persons with disabilities). Although many of these services are concentrated in the major cities of Vineland and Atlantic City, many are located in less accessible parts of the region and require a reliable means of transportation for users to access. In addition to trips to the doctor or social services, destinations of human services transportation also include employers, as those without vehicles or some sort of disability often continue working regular jobs and need access to work.

3. Existing Transportation Services

The inventory of existing fixed-route and demand-responsive transportation services in the SJTPO region includes a range of services from the regional transit bus system provided by NJ TRANSIT to the municipal, community, and private agency services targeting the needs of the transportation-disadvantaged population. The inventory lists the current transportation services available, which should be maintained and supported.

County Government-operated Human Services Transportation

There are four (4) demand responsive systems run by the county departments providing services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons of low income, and a deviated fixed-route service – a combination of five (5) separate routes in Cumberland County operated by the County. These county services include [Atlantic County Transportation Unit \(ACTU\)](#), [Cape May Fare Free Transportation \(FFT\)](#), [Cumberland Area Transit System \(CATS\)](#), [Cumberland To-Work](#)

[Shuttles](#), Salem County SCOOT, and the [shuttles operated by South Jersey Transportation Authority](#) (SJTA).

Municipal Transportation Services

Five (5) municipalities in Atlantic County operate, with one exception, their own demand-responsive transportation services for targeted transit-dependent persons. These include the City of **Atlantic City** (for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and persons of low-income), the **City of Brigantine** (for senior citizens age 62 and over), the **City of Pleasantville** (for senior citizens age 65 and over and persons with disabilities), **Margate City** (for senior citizens age 60 and over and persons with disabilities), and **Ventnor City** (for senior citizens age 60 and over and persons with disabilities).

Agency Client Transportation

There are numerous, primarily nonprofit, organizations and agencies in the SJTPO region that provide transportation to specific client groups or target populations that need transportation. These services can include transportation from place of residence to an important destination (i.e., medical facilities, grocery stores, etc.) determined by the service user, or to a specific destination, such as the facility (i.e., hospital, day care facility) operated by the agency providing the service. Some of the major, and mostly multi-county, nonprofit organizations that provide transportation services to their clientele include [Pearl Transit](#), [Easter Seals of New Jersey](#), [Active Day](#) (formerly Senior Care), [Shirley Eves Development and Therapeutic Center](#), and the [Arc](#).

State-run Human Services Transportation

New Jersey provides two (2) federally mandated services for a segment of the transit-dependent population (i.e., persons with disabilities and Medicaid recipients) in the SJTPO region as well as the entire State. The two (2) services include [NJ Access Link](#) and [Medicaid Transportation](#) (LogistiCare).

New Jersey Transit Fixed-Route Bus Services

[New Jersey Transit](#) (NJ TRANSIT) operates a network of intercity and interstate routes within the SJTPO area, which interconnect the SJTPO region's urban and developed areas with each other and with other destinations in New Jersey and beyond. Though this fixed-route, fare-based system does not offer the same conveniences to the transportation-disadvantaged as the demand-responsive services provided by the counties and others, it is a crucial link in the interconnected transportation system serving this segment of the population. [Table 5](#) displays the intercity bus service routes, whereas [Table 6](#) displays the interstate bus routes.

Table 5: Intercity Bus Service Routes

Route Number	Routes
468*	Penns Grove – Woodstown
501	Atlantic City – Brigantine Beach
502	Atlantic City – Hamilton Mall – Atlantic Cape Community College
504	Bungalow Park – Chelsea Heights - Ventnor Plaza
505	Atlantic City – Margate – Longport
507	Atlantic City – Ocean City
508	Atlantic City – Richard Stockton University – Hamilton Mall
509	Atlantic City – Somers Point
510	Cape May – Wildwood Shuttle (summer only)
552	Atlantic City – Cape May
553	Atlantic City – Upper Deerfield
554	Atlantic City – Lindenwold PATCO
559	Atlantic City – Lakewood

Source: NJ TRANSIT. Note: *Operated by Salem County Transit under contract with NJ TRANSIT.

Table 6: NJ TRANSIT Interstate Bus Routes

Route Number	Routes
313	Philadelphia – Wildwood – Cape May via Route 47
315	Philadelphia – Wildwood – Cape May via Black Horse Pike
316	Philadelphia – Wildwood – Cape May Express (summer only)
319	New York – Atlantic City – Wildwood – Cape May
401	Philadelphia – Salem
402, 410, 412	Philadelphia – Woodbury
408	Philadelphia – Millville
410	Philadelphia – Bridgeton
551	Philadelphia – Atlantic City

Source: NJ TRANSIT.

Passenger Rail Service

NJ TRANSIT operates the Atlantic City Rail Line, a daily commuter service between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. In Atlantic County, the train stops in Absecon, Egg Harbor City, and Hammonton. The train operates seven days a week from early morning to early afternoon. At some locations, trains are met by shuttle buses (i.e., from the Atlantic City train station to downtown Atlantic City and casinos and hotels). Although the Atlantic City Rail Line only serves a relatively narrow corridor within Atlantic County and the region in general, it does provide a means of transporting potential workers in this corridor to the Atlantic City job market and conversely, to jobs in the Philadelphia area.

4. Unmet Transportation Needs

Unmet transportation needs consist of gaps in service where there is a viable travel demand between two (2) or more locations. A service duplication or redundancy can be indicative of an opportunity where a need is being met but may also indicate an opportunity for greater efficiency. Funding, more frequent service, and accommodations for wheelchairs and other mobility aids are additional needs, which are described in more detail, below.

Atlantic County:

- Increase in dialysis medical centers creates a need for transportation to/from treatments
- Funding to replace Pascale Sykes Foundation for two (2) community shuttles – Route (Rt.) 54/40 Community Shuttle and English Creek-Tilton Road Community Shuttle. Pascale Sykes funding is set to expire in 2022. Approximately \$500,000 in yearly funding is needed to continue the service

Cape May County:

- Significant increase in wheelchair clients

Cumberland County:

Cumberland County Office on Aging and Disability Services

- Need for extended and weekend hours still exist
- Need for more transportation in rural parts of the County

Salem County:

- Implement service including NJ TRANSIT feeder service to serve Salem/Pennsville/Penns Grove/Carneys Point corridor

Additional Needs, as identified by stakeholders:

- Bus to Philadelphia
- Rail lines to mid-Jersey and Philadelphia
- Providing job access to the homeless
- Increased service and number of trains on the Atlantic City Rail Line
- More NJ TRANSIT service or procurement of additional vehicles to travel on Mays Landing Road to Vineland, Millville, and Bridgeton during off-peak hours
- Additional bus routes to meet transportation challenged populations

5. Plan Recommendations

The specific recommendations for new or expanded human services transportation services are from the 2015 Plan and were modified or removed if the conditions and assumptions on which they were based have changed, or because of information and ideas received as part of this

Access for All Transit Plan’s public outreach process. These could include changes in the transportation services provided in the region, demographics, and other factors.

Table 7, below, prioritizes the recommendations of the Access for All Transit Plan. There are short or near-term recommendations, which are intended to be implemented within one to three years, as well as long-term recommendations, which are intended to be implemented within three to five years.

Table 7: Prioritization of Recommendations

Short/Near-Term (Next one (1) to three (3) Years)		
	County/Countries	Recommendation
1	Regionwide	Analyze existing services and look for ways to improve efficiency and reduce costs
2	Atlantic & Cape May Counties	Proposed New Bus route from Woodbine to Atlantic City
3	Atlantic & Cape May Counties	New or Expanded Bus Route from Northern Cape May to Atlantic City
4	Cape May County	New Service Bus Route Between Woodbine and the Southern Part of Cape May
5	Cape May County	New or Expanded Service Bus Route Paralleling an Existing NJ TRANSIT Service between Cape May and Vineland
6	Salem County	New or Renewed Service, Salem County NJ 49/US 130 Shuttle Connecting Salem City with Major Employment Locations within and just North of Salem County
Long-Term (three (3) to five (5) Years)		
7	Atlantic County	Expanded Service Extending the Hamilton Mall NJ TRANSIT Bus Route (315) to the Atlantic Cape Community College
8	Cape May County	New Service Bus Route Between Woodbine and the Southern Part of Cape May
9	Cumberland County	New Daily service between Laurel Lake and Commercial Township, including Port Norris
10	Cumberland & Salem Counties	New Daily service between Northwestern Salem County and Bridgeton
11	Salem County	New Daily Service to Wilmington and Elsmere in Delaware
12	Cumberland County	New Feeder Service to Connect Fairton, Cedarville and Port Norris
13	Salem County	New Daily Service from Eastern Salem County, including Elmer and Olivet
14	Regionwide	Expand Feeder Service into NJ TRANSIT Bus and Rail

6. Plan Summary & Next Steps

The Access for All Transit Plan is meant to serve as a starting point, not an endpoint, for improving the region's human services transportation system. Based upon the recommendations cited in this Plan, SJTPO will identify the recommendations that are easier to implement and compile them into a pipeline. This will include an analysis of existing services to identify potential cost reductions and inefficiencies in delivery of service.

In addition to creating a project pipeline, SJTPO will engage in the following actions to help advance as many of the recommendations as possible.

- Convene targeted meetings with appropriate stakeholders to discuss specific barriers to implementation, such as lack of demand, or insufficient funding, as well as possible solutions to overcome these barriers.
- Undertake additional data collection activities or ridership forecasts to help justify the implementation of the recommendations.
- Investigate other funding programs that may help in implementing these recommendations.

The Access for All Transit Plan also recommends the creation of a County Coordinating Committee to help implement the Plan. While SJTPO would likely participate in this committee, the details pertaining to the creation and operation of this committee are unknown at this time.

In summary, the Access for All Transit Plan details that human services transportation planning is a dynamic process that responds to changing conditions and opportunities. Providing services for the transportation-dependent population may be accomplished through a continuing and cooperative approach involving human services transportation providers, stakeholders, and state and regional planning agencies and organizations involved in the planning and decision-making process.