



NJ BPAC General Meeting

December 6, 2023, 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Zoom Online Meeting

Executive Committee:

Elise Bremer- Nei (NJDOT) | Leigh Ann Von Hagen (Rutgers-VTC) | Andrea Lubin (NJTIP) | Cassidy Boulan (DVRPC) | John Boyle (BCGP) | Jen Buison (NJT) | Michael Dannemiller (Middlesex County) | Keith Hamas (NJTPA) | Anne Heasley (Sustainable Jersey) | Alan Huff (SJTPO) | Debra Kagan (NJBWC) | Loretta Kelly (NJDOH) | Peri Nearon (NJHHS) | Byron Nicholas (Hudson County) | Jessica O'Connor (NJMVC) | Mackenzie Piggott (NJDEP) | Linda Rapacki (RideWise TMA) | Mike Viscardi (NJT) | Open Position (DHTS) | Open Position (Environmental Justice/Equity)

Subcommittee Chairs:

Aimee Jefferson, Chair, Safety Subcommittee, ajefferson@njtpa.org
Thom Stead, Chair, Design & Infrastructure Subcommittee, tstead@dvrpc.org
Hailey Graf, Chair, Policy Subcommittee, hgraf@njtransit.com

General Meeting Notes:

The meeting began at 9:30 am with **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** welcoming everyone and summarizing the agenda.

Elise Bremer-Nei shared updates from the NJ Department of Transportation on the following topics:

- 1. The 2023 New Jersey Complete Streets Summit:** The event was held on November 1 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The key takeaways are as follows:
 - The theme of the Summit was Complete Streets for Complete Communities.
 - A special thanks goes out to the teams that organized the event, especially VTC and Civic Eye Collaborative and the entire summit organizing committee.
 - Overall attendance and participant engagement were high, making for a successful event.
 - Feedback from attendees appears to be overwhelmingly positive.
 - The Summit provided a venue for special recognition to the Complete Streets Champions and Excellence Award winners.
 - The [Summit Agenda, including links to all slides](#), and a [Recap Blog Article](#) are available on the NJ BPRC website.

2. **The New Jersey Safety Summit 2023:** The event was held on October 24 at The College of New Jersey in Ewing. The key takeaways are as follows:
 - The theme of the Summit was Practical Collaboration: Uniting Efforts for Tangible Results.
 - A special thanks goes out to the teams that organized this event, especially HDR staff and Khalid Shaikh at NJDOT.
 - Sessions were well received by participants who expressed an interest in continued participation with safety initiatives in NJ.
 - If anyone would like to sign up to be part of a NJ safety action team, please reach out to Elise at elise.bremer-nei@dot.nj.gov, and she will connect you to the appropriate people.

Updates from DOT:

1. **Local Bike/Ped Planning Assistance:** The NJDOT Bureau of Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs' on-call planning consultants, under the management of Bill Riviere, are wrapping up a bike and pedestrian planning study in Palmyra, a Complete Streets implementation plan in Long Branch, a bicycle master plan in Paterson, and a Vision Zero action plan in West Orange. New projects may kick off soon in the Borough of Clayton and the City of Newark. If a town would like help with bike and pedestrian planning, please point them towards [NJDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Assistance Program](#).
2. **Grant Applications to NJ Safe Routes to School Program:** Bill Riviere is assisting the Division of Local Aid with the review of New Jersey Safe Routes to School infrastructure grant applications.
3. NJDOT has released a **new PSA about children's safety near driveways**. It explains how best to avoid conflicts between young people and motorists near driveways. The [video is available here](#).
4. **Safe Routes Recognition Program:** Solicitation for this program is now open. If your school or town is involved in New Jersey Safe Routes to School, they can be nominated for recognition by themselves or by a Safe Routes regional coordinator. High schools are also now eligible. More information on recognition awards [can be found here](#). Applications are due January 31st, 2024.
5. **NJDOT's Bicycling Tour Guides:** New Jersey bike tour guides are available on the [BPRC website here](#). They include turn-by-turn instructions for more than 25 routes through New Jersey.
6. **Grant Awards Announced for [Safe Streets to Transit](#), [Transit Villages](#), and [Bikeways](#):** NJDOT's Safe Streets to Transit program is providing \$13.4 million to improve access to transit facilities. Bikeways grants are funding \$8.4 million to promote cycling, and the Transit Villages program has awarded \$2.9 million to redevelopment projects near transit.
7. **Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grants:** On October 27th USDOT announced 235 SS4A planning and demonstration projects that will receive grants for FY 2023, totaling \$82 million. More grants are to be announced this month, and applications for FY 2024 are opening in February 2024. More information [can be found here](#).
8. NJDEP has announced that the **first phase of the NJ Greenway** will break ground in 2024. The first phase is slated to open in 2025. [More is available information here](#).

The **BPAC Executive Committee** welcomed Andrea Lubin from NJTIP at Rutgers as a new executive committee member. She is replacing Karen Alexander as the representative working to improve access to transportation for people with disabilities.

Peter Bilton announced that the fourth round of applications is open for the NJTPA Technical Assistance Program, which provides funding for small projects in municipalities to help conceptualize a Complete Streets plan in their town. More information [is available here](#).

Complete Streets and Neurodivergence Presentation

Sam Rosenthal, Laura Torchio, and Jim Elliott gave a presentation on Complete Streets for Neurodivergence, which is an ongoing research project between VTC, NV5, and Toole Design Group. They provided an overview of the project and summarized findings to date. [The presentation slides are available here](#).

At 10:20, **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** invited everyone to join one of the three subcommittee breakout groups.

At 11:10, the three subcommittees returned to the main meeting and their chairs **Hailey Graf, Thom Stead,** and **Aimee Jefferson** reported back on the main topics of each subcommittee meeting as well as the top goals for their subcommittee in 2024.

Hailey Graf reported back on the Policy Subcommittee's main discussion on the need to classify trails as for transportation rather than for recreation only, including which state agencies should have the authority and responsibility to designate transportation trails. There was also a conversation about additional maintenance needs of trails for transportation. Transportation trails will likely require different standards for lighting, pavement, ADA compliance, and winter maintenance. The discussion included an example of an unnamed trail that was kept open during COVID-19 because it was designated as a transportation corridor. Committee members could not remember which trail this was, but they thought looking into that more could be helpful as The Greenway, formerly known as the Essex-Hudson Greenway, moves forward.

The Policy Subcommittee is interested in pursuing various new goals in 2024. This includes:

- Identifying new best practices for e-bikes and e-scooters, especially in light of recent backlash.
- Involvement in statewide trail planning.

Thom Stead reported that the Design & Infrastructure Subcommittee's discussion primarily focused on successful activities in 2023 and progress made in the state this year. This included the NJTPA Regional Active Transportation and presentation to the subcommittee. In 2023, NJTPA announced funding for comprehensive Safety Action Plans for the eight counties in their region that do not already have one adopted or funded through SS4A. McCormick Taylor implemented multiple TAP projects in the state, including in Pennsauken in Burlington County, Morristown in Morris County, and Leonia Borough in Bergen County. Middlesex County is working on their County Greenway Plan, and the Safe Routes to School Resource Center is working on expanding Safe Routes programs to high schools.

The subcommittee had a couple of ideas for topics to discuss in 2024:

- Installing pedestrian bridges instead of at-grade crossings.
- Opportunities for permeable pavers for sidewalks, in light of new NJDEP stormwater regulations.
- New strategies for bicycle protection, signaling, and detection.
- The many changes to Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
- Design speeds and how they dictate roadway design.

- Limitations of level of service (LOS) as a metric versus new possibilities for determining roadway design, such as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and pedestrian level of service (PLOS).

Aimee Jefferson reported back on the Safety Subcommittee breakout, which began with a discussion of NJDOT’s Bicycle Touring Guides, including how they can be made more useful with new technology such as map-based applications. The subcommittee also reflected on the presentations and discussions of the past year before moving onto goals and topics for 2024. This includes:

- PROWAG requirements and their impacts, noting that this could be a general meeting topic if multiple subcommittees are interested
- Ongoing check-ins on standing subcommittee goals, such as educational efforts and coordinating with the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission
- Speed cameras and automated speed enforcement or red light enforcement in the state
- E-scooters and safety needs and best practices for these devices
- Coordination between comprehensive safety action plans and their task forces in New Jersey

Additional announcements:

NJ TRANSIT mentioned its GIS tool [Transit to Trails](#) and announced the agency’s interest in collaborating with other organizations to improve the tool and make it more useful. To provide feedback, email Hailey at hgraf@njtransit.com.

EZ Ride mentioned a temporary demonstration project in the City of Passaic. The project was awarded an [Asphalt Art Initiative grant](#) through Bloomberg Philanthropies. It was one of 25 winners from Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Ridewise TMA asked about available grants for municipalities and counties to get back bicycle lockers at train stations and other locations. In this case, there were bike lockers that were closed due to construction and were then no longer eligible to be reopened because the design at that site is outdated.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign mentioned the Target Zero bill currently in the NJ Legislature ([S2885](#)). The twin Assembly bill passed unanimously earlier this year. They stated that supporters could send a digital letter to their senators. The bill would establish a Vision Zero plan at the state level and set a goal of zero roadway fatalities by 2040. If it does not pass in December, it will have to restart in the new legislative session in 2024.

Based on the Design Subcommittee’s discussion, BPAC would like to invite anyone who considers themselves or someone they know to be a PROWAG expert to reach out to tstead@dvrpc.org to do a presentation at a future BPAC meeting.

NJTPA has kicked off its Comprehensive Safety Action Plan effort following a series of webinars in the fall and an in-person workshop to help local agencies prepare for local safety action plans. Plan development will begin in eight North Jersey counties in 2024. NJTPA is looking to organize diverse groups to form local implementation committees to move these plans forward in their counties.

Somerset County has begun identifying key organizations to form their local implementation committee.

Complete Streets and Autism Spectrum Disorder & Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Video:

As an extension of the earlier presentation, **VTC** shared a video of a **New Jersey Travel Independence Program (NJTIP)** travel training graduate's walk to work. Following the video, the discussion continued. Participants pointed out that the video very accurately depicted many of the conditions on roads in the state. In New Jersey, walking is the second most common mode for people with autism to use for transportation, after being a passenger in a vehicle.

Additionally, the development patterns are a major issue that is magnified by New Jersey being a home-rule state where land use, zoning, and access regulations are primarily a local decision. As such, a potential strategy is targeted education of local zoning boards to make them more aware of the safety and access issues that revisions to their zoning codes could address.

Next BPAC Session is Wednesday, January 31, 2024

Use the link to register for the next BPAC meeting. <https://njbikeped.org/join-the-next-meeting/>

Attendees:

- Elise Bremer-Nei, NJDOT
- Leigh Ann Von Hagen, Rutgers-VTC
- Laura Torchio, NV5
- Jessica O'Connor, NJ MVC
- Surya Jacob, NJ Transit
- Michael Dannemiller, Middlesex County
- Keith Hamas, NJTPA
- Laura Cerutti, Avenues in Motion
- Denise Nickel, Middlesex County
- Jim Elliott, Toole Design
- Samantha Donovan, Sam Schwartz Consulting
- Lyndsey Scofield, City of Jersey City
- Anthony Durante, Michael Baker International
- Daniel Paschal, East Coast Greenway
- Noelle Santos, Brain Injury Alliance of NJ
- Jonathan Engle, Somerset County
- Mackenzie Piggott, NJDEP
- Alan Huff, FHWA
- Daniel Granato, Metuchen Police
- Prateeksha Sehgal, Michael Baker International
- Hailey Graf, NJ Transit
- Siannah Yang, Susan Blickstein LLC)
- Linda Rapacki, RideWise TMA
- Peter Bilton, NJTPA
- Bettina Zimny, NV5
- Andrea Lubin, VTC NJTIP
- Jon Dugan, Rutgers, VTC
- Omeed Rahin, Avenues in Motion
- Sean Meehan, Rutgers VTC
- Delfina Picchio, Keep Middlesex Moving
- Liza Betz, Union County

- Mike Viscardi, NJ Transit
- Adam Bradford, Passaic County
- Anne Heasly, Sustainable Jersey
- Henry Gottschall, Cross County Connection
- Mohammad A. Islam, NJDOT
- Deb Kagan, NJ Bike & Walk Coalition
- Aimee Jefferson, NJTPA
- Lisa Lee, EZ Ride TMA
- Corey Hannigan, Tri-State Transportation Campaign
- Thom Stead, DVRPC