



**BPAC Design Subcommittee Meeting  
May 15, 2025 10:30 am to 11:10 am  
Online Zoom Meeting**

**Attendees:**

- Denise Nickel, Middlesex County
- Mike Viscardi, NJ TRANSIT
- Mike Manzella, City of Jersey City
- Polli Schildge, Asbury Park Complete Streets Coalition
- Danielle Baer, Urban Engineers
- Michael Russo, McCormick Taylor
- David Verdia, NV5
- Chris Townley, Greater Mercer TMA
- Thomas DiBiase, Michael Baker International
- Joseph Milanese, Dewberry
- Kamal Saleh, Union County
- Gregory Woltman, VTC
- Nikita Soni, VTC
- Michael Dannemiller, Middlesex County
- Mohammad A. Islam, NJDOT
- Ramond Joseph, NJDCA Local Planning Services

**Discussion Topics**

**Goals for 2025**

The subcommittee discussed priorities for 2025, with a focus on improving roadway safety, reducing vehicular speeds, enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, and aligning design practices with Target Zero objectives. Participants emphasized a need to combine physical infrastructure improvements, enforcement, and political support.

**Target Zero Action Plan Discussion Summary**

**Key Concepts for Inclusion in the Action Plan**

- NJ TRANSIT highlighted that many residential roads are posted with excessively high speed limits (e.g., 35 mph zones where drivers routinely travel at 45 mph). It was suggested that reducing speed limits is an accessible strategy but stressed that it should be paired with enforcement and traffic calming interventions. Reducing vehicle speeds was framed as a critical element of fatality prevention.
- New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition recommended updating crosswalk signage to replace "Yield to Pedestrians" with "Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalk," which reflects current state law. They noted that many drivers are unaware of pedestrian rights and called for stronger enforcement and a public education campaign to address the issue.
- Asbury Park Complete Streets Coalition noted their city-wide 25 mph limit encountered initial resistance, but overall supported a "20 is plenty" approach. They emphasized that enforcement alone is insufficient to change behavior and advocated for redesign tools such as curb extensions, narrowing of roadways, and addition of bike lanes. They also recommended removing outdated or negative signage like "Share the Road" and "Bike Lane Ends," and replacing them with positive affirmations such as "Bikes Allowed."
- Rutgers-VTC and Asbury Park Complete Streets Coalition discussed how many engineers generally support roadway safety upgrades but often face political constraints. They emphasized that buy-in from municipal leadership is essential. It was stated that a holistic safety approach requires coordination among education, engineering, enforcement, and political leadership.
- Michael Baker International encouraged a comprehensive, multi-agency approach through the Target Zero Commission. They suggested that expanding successful safety initiatives statewide and increasing collaboration across departments would maximize impact.

#### **Questions or Topics to Explore in Future Working Group Meetings**

- Asbury Park Complete Streets Coalition asked whether the 85th percentile speed rule is still used as the basis for setting speed limits. While the rule may no longer be mandated, they noted it remains a common reference in practice.
- New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition raised concerns about the lack of a system that allows municipalities to report signage problems on state-owned roads. They recommended creating a centralized reporting system to streamline communication with NJDOT.

#### **Additional Policy Considerations for the Action Plan**

- Asbury Park Complete Streets Coalition proposed two key policy additions: eliminating right turns on red statewide to increase pedestrian safety, and decriminalizing jaywalking. They emphasized that in many contexts, mid-block crossings may be safer than intersections.

#### **Project Updates**

##### **Middlesex County Greenway Plan**

- Middlesex County shared updates on its ongoing planning initiatives, including a right-of-way management plan, greenways plan, and a walk-and-roll active transportation strategy. These plans aim to enhance walkability, increase access to safe cycling infrastructure, and expand countywide trail connectivity.

- The subcommittee anticipates future updates from Middlesex County as implementation progresses and coordination with other jurisdictions advances.