

CHAPTER 1 – PLAN OVERVIEW

About the Plan

This updated Hunterdon County Transportation Plan (the Plan) will combine a traditional approach of transportation needs analysis with a more holistic approach of land use and transportation. The Plan will evaluate existing conditions of County transportation corridors and bridges and recommend future improvements accordingly. There will also be a ‘Smart Growth’ approach to transportation management planning which includes planning for all users of the County transportation network. The Plan will examine select roadway corridors within the County for a variety of user groups, including bicyclists, pedestrians and corridor residents as well as an assessment of the current public transit system and potential enhancement. The Plan will also give consideration to infrastructure needs in addition to aesthetic, historic and environmental concerns. There will be strategy and action recommendations which will help achieve the Plan’s management strategies. Many of these recommendations were generated from public and stakeholder comments regarding current transportation issues in the County. Finally, the Plan will include a traffic safety study that identifies priority County intersection and road segment locations for counter-measure safety improvements.

The Plan will build and expand on the transportation policies detailed in the *1993 Hunterdon County Transportation Plan* which was prepared by the Hunterdon County Planning Board. The goals and objectives of the 1993 plan addressed the transportation needs in the County and provided a process and format for public involvement in the design of improvements. Using the Transportation Plan element of the *2007 Hunterdon County Growth Management Plan* as a framework, this Plan will serve as a consensus document among the County and local communities and as a potential action plan for transportation implementation strategies.

The Plan recommends a variety of Smart Growth planning techniques to accommodate future growth and facilitate movement throughout the County’s transportation network. These techniques expand transportation opportunities and provide an efficient and economical way to allow new growth to occur while limiting the consumption of agricultural land and environmentally sensitive resources. This type of Smart Growth land use planning results in an emphasis on more multi-modal transportation opportunities in order to reduce the prevalent use of the single-occupancy automobile. Growth is directed primarily to areas already served by central water and sewer systems, community facilities and services, and having a

high level of accessibility. The majority of the residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development is planned to take place within designated growth areas.

Steering Committee

A Transportation Plan Steering Committee, led by the Hunterdon County Planning Board, was created to help guide the effort in developing this plan. See Appendix A for a listing of members on the Steering Committee.

Public Input

The development of the Plan included integration of comments and feedback gathered from municipal stakeholders and members of the public through the use of a web-based survey as well as two regional stakeholder meetings. The results and comments from this public input process had a major influence on the Plan's future strategy recommendations.

Public Information Meetings

Two Public Information meetings were held in 2008. The first meeting took place at the Route 12 County Complex in Flemington on February 26th and the second meeting in the Town of Clinton municipal building on February 27th. The focus of these meetings was to expand on the transportation issues and areas of concern identified through the Transportation Plan Survey by requesting feedback from the meeting participants that could be incorporated into the Plan. See Appendix B for a list of all comments that were gathered at these two meetings.

Survey Summary

As part of the process of updating the Plan, it was important to collect information on existing conditions (real or perceived) and the concerns of local representatives with regard to current transportation issues. In August 2007, an Internet-based survey was developed by the Hunterdon County Planning Board staff and the Transportation Plan Steering Committee. The purpose of the electronic survey was to gather information from municipal representatives regarding a variety of local transportation related issues and conditions. Official representatives of all twenty six (26) Hunterdon County municipal governments (Mayor, Clerk, and Planning Board Chair) were notified electronically and asked to complete the survey. The survey was crafted to collect feedback from municipal officials in order to collect information and opinions on the following:

- Local Transportation planning efforts and or documents
- Areas of concern related to local roads, County roads, state/interstate roads
- Status of Public transportation services
- Status of bicycle and pedestrian accessibility
- Future Planning priorities

There was a 100% response rate with all twenty six (26) municipalities responding to the survey. The summary report of all survey results was prepared by HART Commuter Information Services. The results can be found in Appendix C.

County Traffic Safety Study

To incorporate information on County Road and Intersection areas of safety concerns, the County employed the consulting services of The RBA Group to produce a report on safety issues on County roads and intersections. The scope of their study included completion of the following tasks:

- Collect crash records on all 500 and 600 series Hunterdon County road and intersections on the County Road system for the period of 2004-2006.
- Provide detailed tables of existing Crash patterns on County Roads.
- Identify the 20 intersections on the County Road system that have the highest number of crashes associated with them.
- Identify the 25 segments of the 42 County Roads with the highest ‘opportunity costs’. An opportunity cost is the value of reduced costs as a result of a reduction of the crash rate for a specific road segment.
- Estimate average annual daily traffic and peak hour turning movement volume for the 20 high crash intersections.
- Calculate crash rates per million entering vehicles for the 20 high crash intersections
- Determine Levels of Service and Capacity analysis for the 20 high crash intersections
- Prepare a summary report that describes methodology uses, and clearly identifies intersections and County road segments with high crash rates and capacity deficiencies. This report will also provide counter-measure solutions for the top identified 20 intersections and 25 road segments.

The results of this safety study were integrated into the Plan in order to recommend strategies and action items concerning safety issues on the County’s roadway system.

See Appendix D for the recommended Counter-Measures for the top identified 20 intersections and 25 road segments.

