



2022 in the Rear View



Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti

As we usher in 2023, I would like to wish a very Happy New Year to our stakeholders and welcome those of you who may be receiving this newsletter for the first time. My hope is that you see this newsletter as not only an informative look into the work we do every day at the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), but also as a valuable resource to share with your constituents, communities, and business partners so they can make the most of the services we offer.

NJDOT's Commitment to Communities initiatives have never been stronger. Whether it is through efficient grant program administration, the application of simple fix solutions to improve local transportation challenges, or the amazing generosity of NJDOT employees to address the needs of the less fortunate, communities are at the heart of what we do.

The start of a new year is a time to reflect on what we've accomplished. I would like to use this first newsletter of 2023 as an opportunity to do just that.

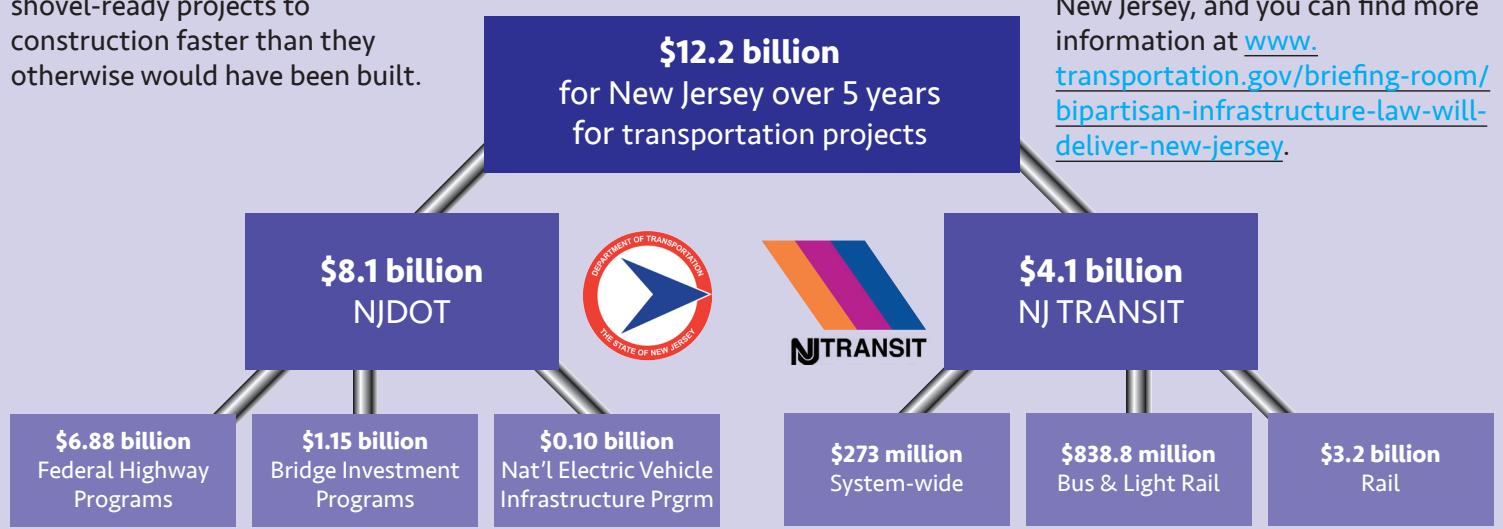
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Most likely you have heard some news about the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that was enacted in 2021. The federal funding made possible by IIJA will have a significant impact on New Jersey's infrastructure for decades to come and will allow NJDOT to fund more design-ready projects, as well as, advance shovel-ready projects to construction faster than they otherwise would have been built.

This bill allows NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT to receive \$12.2 billion of funding over the next 5 years which includes \$2.6 billion in new, additional funding for the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

IIJA Funding at a Glance

The graphic below gives an overview of how this funding breaks down for New Jersey, and you can find more information at www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/bipartisan-infrastructure-law-will-deliver-new-jersey.



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Local Aid & Economic Development

Fiscal Year 2023 has already been a record-breaking year for Local Aid & Economic Development, and we're only halfway through. Our Municipal Aid program awarded \$161.3 million to 553

applicants, marking the first time every municipality that applied was awarded a grant.

In December, Governor Murphy and NJDOT announced an additional \$24

million in funding for our Bikeways, Safe Streets to Transit, and Transit Village grants. These three programs work together to improve the quality of life for residents by encouraging people to get out of their cars to walk, bike, and use mass transit. The increased funding means a

record number of towns are receiving grants. For FY23 alone, there are 45 different municipalities and two counties receiving a total of 56 grants through these programs.

Grants Awarded for FY23

Municipal Aid - 553 grants totaling \$161.3 million
 Local Bikeway - 17 grants totaling \$8.4 million
 Safe Streets to Transit - 29 grants totaling \$13.4 million
 Transit Village - 10 grants totaling \$2.9 million

This summer we will announce \$47.3 million in grants for the FY23 Local Bridges Fund program and \$161.3 million in grants for the FY23 County Aid

program. I encourage every municipality and county to visit NJDOT's Local Aid Resource Center at www.njdotlocalaidrc.com to learn which grants you may be eligible for and take full advantage of this funding. We are here to assist you.

Sustainability and Resiliency

As part of Governor Murphy's vision for a cleaner, greener New Jersey, the Department advanced several sustainability and resiliency initiatives in 2022 that will continue to benefit our beautiful Garden State for years to come. To address climate change and its effect on our infrastructure, NJDOT is finalizing a Climate Hazard Visualization tool to identify areas vulnerable to sea level rise, increased precipitation, and projected heat levels. This tool will enable NJDOT to build climate resiliency into the design of future projects.

We are also taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint through our commitment to replace 40 percent of our light duty fleet with plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). So far, NJDOT has purchased 51 PHEVs with another 10 on order. Our aim is to purchase a total of 144 PHEVs by the end of 2025, and I'm proud to say we are well on our way to meeting that goal.

Last but not least, small actions – and the smallest animals – can have a big impact on sustainability. This is certainly the case when it comes to protecting pollinator species in the Garden State. In 2022, we created four new pollinator habitat locations along our highways. These patches of native wildflowers and shrubs provide essential food, pollen, and shelter that bees, butterflies, and other pollinators need to survive and thrive.



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Awards

This past fall, the I-495, Route 1&9/Paterson Plank Road Bridge project earned NJDOT AASHTO's 2022 America's Transportation Award for the Northeastern Region and was one of 12 national finalists. This \$98 million project was a top priority for NJDOT, because the bridge serves as a major artery to and from midtown Manhattan via the Lincoln Tunnel. The biggest challenge was restoring the bridge while keeping 150,000 vehicles and 2,000 commuter buses moving through the crowded corridor every day. We anticipated and planned for significant congestion and prepared motorists for delays. However, I am thrilled to report that we were able to successfully avoid severe traffic conditions, due in large part to the exceptional work of NJDOT crews and contractors, and a strong communications plan.

NJDOT was also awarded AASHTO's 2022 America's Transportation Award for Best Use of Technology & Innovation for implementing Drivewyze on 647 miles of NJ's highways. This app uses crowdsourced data to deliver real-time information to commercial vehicle operators, alerting them to potentially hazardous road conditions. Advanced warnings of sudden slowdowns or congestion gives commercial drivers more opportunity to slow their speed or seek alternate routes, improving highway safety and efficiency.

NJDOT's Route 1 Hard Shoulder Running Program in South Brunswick, which improved congestion and



Pictured: Route 1 Hard Shoulder Running Program

reduced carbon emissions along the roadway, was rightfully recognized as Best Project Winner and Overall Winner at AASHTO's 2022 Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Awards.

Finally, rounding out a year of multiple recognitions for the Department, Wasif Mirza, NJDOT's Director of the Division of Mobility Engineering, was named the Intelligent Transportation Society of New Jersey's (ITSNJ) 2022 Public Agency Official of the Year for his significant contributions to advancing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in New Jersey.

Charitable Giving



Pictured: School Supply Drive

The generous spirit of NJDOT employees continued to shine throughout 2022, and they continue to go above and beyond their daily responsibilities to help where there is a need. Seeing that commitment in action at NJDOT is a powerful reminder that we play an important role in serving our communities beyond our everyday work duties. I'm inspired by the charities we partner with throughout the state and proud of our employees for helping them fulfill their missions.

4,609 food items donated during our 9th Annual Winter Season of Service

3,700 items donated for School Supply Drive

621 food items donated for the Summer Season of Service

205 toys donated to Toys for Tots

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Attracting Top Talent

It is a well-known fact that the strength of any organization or business lies in its employees, and NJDOT is no exception. When there are jobs to fill, we seek the best and brightest. In 2022, we announced 148 public job postings and our recruitment team processed 5,107 applications. Our talent acquisition team participated in 34 recruitment and outreach events at colleges, universities, vocational schools, and community organizations. These events focused on

recruiting women, minorities, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups. Our goal is to continue to grow a talented pipeline of candidates that reflects the diversity of the State of New Jersey and the customers we serve each day. We strive to be a Department where people want to work and use their skills to make a difference, so we were honored to be recognized as the New Jersey Institute of Technology's 2022 Best Public Sector Partner.

2022 by the Numbers

- 461 lane-miles of pavement preserved or repaved
- 159,000 potholes fixed
- 79% (or 6,746 of 8,539) of NJDOT's lane miles were in fair or good condition at end of FY21
- 90.5% of the 2,590 state-owned bridges were in good or fair condition at start of FY22



In Closing...

When I look back on 2022, I see a year marked by connections. As more COVID restrictions were lifted, we were able to reconnect with each other. We emerged with a new appreciation for the things that connect us to what is most important in our lives. When people think of NJDOT, they may think we just build roads and bridges, but this is simply a means to an end. The true purpose of NJDOT is to connect people and goods from

where they are to where they need to be. This, in turn, connects communities. It is a privilege and an honor as Commissioner to play a role in strengthening these connections and ensuring they remain for years to come. I look forward to sharing more NJDOT news with you throughout 2023 and wish you all health and prosperity, peace and contentment, and joy in your hearts this year.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have questions about any of the information shared or know someone who would like to receive our newsletters, please feel free to contact NJDOT's **Office of Community Relations at 609-963-1982.**