

ROUTE 18
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

**COMMUNITY
PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**ROUTE 18 CPT
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION TASK FORCE
MEETING NO. 1 REPORT
REVISED January 15, 2004**

DATE: December 12, 2003
TIME: 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Middlesex County Planning Dept. Conference Room,
Elks Building, City of New Brunswick, NJ
ATTENDEES: Listed at the end of the report

1. PURPOSE OF MEETING

To establish the Task Force; provide an overview of the construction staging and traffic plans; discuss and prioritize public information and awareness issues; develop communication networks and outreach mechanisms to inform the public in the construction phase; and to make recommendations to be presented to the Steering Committee for consideration. (Agenda attached)

2. MEETING SUMMARY

Martine Culbertson opened the meeting welcoming new members and asking participants to introduce themselves and the organization they represent. She presented information on the Community Partnering Team and explained that this Task Force is a subset of the CPT, responsible for establishing a communications network to provide information to the project team and the public during each stage of construction. Another goal of the Task Force is to identify tools to assist in sharing information such as web site, flyers, press releases and telephone information line. Martine reviewed the agenda for meeting and then introduced Kiran Patel who is the new NJDOT Project Manager replacing Bill Birch.

Kiran Patel provided an overview of the project status and schedule. A contract enhancement team has been established to examine the types of contract specifications, which could benefit this project regarding enhancements to maintain the construction schedule and to ensure quality. The project is to let in April with the construction award date to be in June 2004. Steve Lavelle, NJDOT Program Manager, noted the key steps to successful implementation of the design plans are a good contractor, quality step documents under a quality review process, traffic management and an effective communication plan. This Task Force is to develop that plan. Problems will occur given the size and complexity of this project but they can be addressed and add to the success of the project through a sound communication plan and coordination with all CPT members.



Darryl Johnson, Gannett Fleming Deputy Project Manager, presented an overview of the design improvements for the Route 18 corridor and the traffic management plans for eight stages of construction. He then presented information the flow charts and mechanisms used on other projects in the area to inform the public proactively in advance of certain traffic flow changes and also how to inform the public reactively when an incident may arise during a construction activity which requires a sudden change in traffic flow.

Martine then asked participants to provide input on communications or tools to assist in providing information to the public during construction. The following issues were noted on newsprint and have been reorganized by category:

ISSUES

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- School bus flow in stage 2 - bus turnout available, right turn in/out, maintain access
- Stage 2 - will be reduced from three lanes to two lanes which is a congestion concern
- City doubles in workday congestion in the neighborhoods
- A.M. peak weekday 6:30-9:30 a.m.- 287 ---- divert -- alt. route to exits
- Utilities, delays - role in field - Jan. advance work (movement impacts), utility repair work
- Weather delays - use seasonal estimate, not exact dates

CONGESTION RELIEF

- Vehicles make U-turns at Paulus Blvd., so U-turn signs on Rt. 1 would help to send vehicles to Ryders Lane (would eliminate vehicles from backing up at Paulus. The signage should go up now to encourage that movement prior to construction)
- Encourage mass transit to reduce traffic
- Transcom – is a consortium of various transportation agencies – can help coordinate during construction
- Representative for Middlesex County EMS is John Ferguson
- Use specific messages to divert - where/when
- Gym classes - go to Boyd Park so school district must be aware of change in access to the Park
- Exit 9, 10, 287 is now a level of service F (failure) - already congested cannot divert traffic there at peak hours
- Stage 2 will cause great backups - accelerate if possible - do major closures at night
- The peak "pm" rush hour is from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. due to schools, hospital shifts, employers and Rutgers
- Parking issues - where to move, possible jitney service to parking lots to assist employers and schools
- Examine lane closures (not in daytime), Stage 2
- Create rapid transit route alternative for buses and car pools, jitney lots - parking & employees
- Snow removal mechanisms - critical priority

AGENCIES - NETWORK

- Turnpike currently use tools to inform motorists and will assist in providing information: web site, radio 1610, 1-800-336-NJTPK (traffic)
- KMM (Keep Middlesex Moving) - agency has network- web, flyers, radio, email, fax
- School District - helpful to provide information in writing, a form for parents in both English and Spanish
- NJDOT Traffic Ops will look to use cameras, NJcommuters.com site
- Rutgers recommends list servers where student and the general public may sign up to receive notices online
- St. Peter's Hospital - has website, email, flyers
- Middlesex Co. jurors, lawyers - mail, jury notices (important)- J&J parking lots avail.

COMMUNICATION

- NJDOT should maintain leadership - maintain sole information site, which can then link to other sites on web, telephone and hard print, list servers
- Feedback mechanism to fix
- Communication - must use multiple channels, multiple times
- Hispanic Community - churches - literacy issue
- List of events from all stakeholders to make announcements in advance and plan effective staging efforts
- Provide early warning, provide more time
- Groups look for collector lots with mass transit or potential jitney routes to get employees to/from work
- Construction - noise ordinances - notify residents 10 p.m. - 6 am
- Notify Middlesex Co. College, and Rt. 1 businesses, County AWTS, UNJDM medical school
- Sheriff Dept. - Middlesex Co. hotline - office to communicate to regional lines

TOOLS

- Web site – There is a web site currently available that shares real time information, not necessarily for RT 18, but for the whole state. The web site that was to be available in February was the RT 18 2F project-related web site. The communication group should be working on that one. That web site will have all the information for this project, as well as a link to the real time information web page.
- Utilize the highway radio: 1610 am - encourage use of regional alternates
- Utilize the highway advisory toll free numbers - NJDOT Traffic ops: 1-800-352-4848
- Utilize VMS signs where effective
- Web site links to other sites
- Flyers were effective at jughandles to warn of closures
- Cable channels - communicate to cable channel and have cable add to other information sources
- Web cams - TV viewing, live coverage
- Shadow Traffic - Channel 7 - contact broadcasting, WCTC - New Brunswick
- Online map - progresses as the detours change
- Rt. 18 Edgewater Rd. - temp highway advisory radio and camera site
- 1-877-NJROADS - ability to setup - daily update, communicate with public liaison
- Generate monthly events schedule - email, web - Public Events Coordinator

MAJOR BENEFITS of the Route 18 Project

- Operational improvement - vehicles will travel more efficiently and safer
- Collector distributor roadway - will separate local motorists from the regional through traffic
- Move through Route 18 corridor faster and safer
- Move efficiently around city
- Safer crossing for pedestrians and for cyclists
- Park enhancements will create usable park, improved waterfront access
- Safer, effective bus stops

GROUP DISCUSSION - COMMUNICATIONS

- Need to develop flow chart for effective information exchange

STATE Level

Field team, Communications team - bilingual, tech. expertise, public speaker, const., design, communication

REGIONAL AGENCY Level

Court, KMM, other counties, Dave Champion

GENERAL PUBLIC Level

Residents, businesses, churches - civic groups - arts

- Point person assigned - information approval - keep logs to record incidents
- Contractor - NJDOT to conduct Staging preview - one month notice to inform stakeholders
- Presentations to stakeholders

1 - Point person for administration of all communication

2 - Onsite communication team

3 - PP answers to resident

4 - Bi-directional network

5 - Press communication must be cleared w/comm. office and cc: PM

6 - Daily reaction log to comm. office at NJDOT

7 - Contractor - maintenance - utility - police -

Resident (NJDOT) state police -

CI - team (Construction) -

CSS - team (designer) -

Comm. team - language, programmer, writer, speaker

Courts

Transit - NJTP/Co./City-hospitals (statewide transport contact hosp.)/Rutgers/KMM/EMS

(police, fire)/med. cntr./ambulance

8 - Presentation in advance of progress/staging traffic shifts/changes

(1 mo.) contract enhancement?

9 - Bilingual PP - beeper

10 - Network in place by Jan. (advanced work)

11 - Contingency plan for 24/7

12 - Reverse 911/tele. bulletin board

13 - Network (tier) acknowledge/receipt of info

14 - Reevaluation/lessons learned at milestone (periodic or after major phase) - quarterly

15 - Resident (reaction) control directly to impacted stakeholder (in daily log to Trenton)

GROUP DISCUSSION - TOOLS

- One web site – other sites can link to it. The web site will have two sections: one with standard project information and another with real time capability.
- Camera on each end - need to see real time - bring into web site
- Point person connected to traffic ops in constant contact
- Signage - up early, revise as needed
- Timely pre-construction mayor'/freeholder press conference
- Let people know that work is beginning - Jan. announcements
- Highlands bridge, Boyd Park - 2 months notice before stage change, so people can adjust
- Projects coordination - identify sources for other projects to minimize confusion: Devco, school, Rutgers
- Regional signs to prevent increase in congestion
- Push email, list serv for updates, tie to one real time source
- Network database of contacts - who, what, when
- Fax transmittals from field office to City, County, police, fire, EMS
- Flow charts
- Phone chains for emergency calls and to connect to one information line, which can receive multiple calls
- Postcards indicating traffic flow changes for each stage with map and contact info for web site and phone
- Feedback evaluation - phone, web form or paper form to provide comments back to the project for refinements
- sole document source
- List of Public Information Tools:
 - web site
 - flyers
 - brochure
 - poster
 - information line
 - radio
 - TV, cable
 - list server
 - newsletters
 - TV cam, web cam
 - advertisement, feature articles
 - press releases
 - speaker's bureau, presentations
 - public liaison
 - detour maps: flyers or postcards

In summary, Kiran noted the completion of the final design submission is February, 2004 and Traffic Management Plans must be submitted by January 15, 2004, so both task forces must meet in early January to resolve issues. Steve Lavelle presented the following steps:

NEXT STEPS

1. Technology, web site (CS), develop icon link/logo (NJDOT)
2. Network communications plan (details) - agenda for next meeting - early Jan. (CPT, MAC)
3. PI materials and notice public, NJDOT stamp for materials (later)
4. Items for Traffic Mgmt Task Force:
 - Incident mgmt. plan (TMTF)
 - Busing, business jitney (TMTF)
 - Bike/people - mobility (TMTF)

To close, Martine thanked participants and reminded members to provide information to the project managers on websites to link, news sources, and special events to take into consideration. Participants will receive meeting minutes and updated contact information. They will also receive notices of the CPT task force meetings to be scheduled next month. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

3. ACTION ITEMS

- CPT Task Force Members review materials with their constituents and continue to provide input on special events in the area, newsletters and links for websites.
- NJDOT and Gannett Fleming will develop communication flowchart and refine traffic management and incident management plans.
- Martine Culbertson will provide task force meeting report, revised list of task force members, assist with coordination and scheduling of next set of task force meetings to be held in early 2004.

4. NEXT CPT COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE MEETING

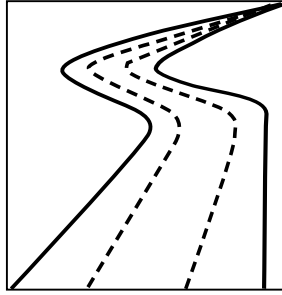
Date: January 9, 2004
Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Location: Middlesex County Planning Conference Room
Elks Building, New Brunswick, NJ

5. LIST OF ATTENDEES

ATTENDEES:	REPRESENTING	PHONE/FAX #s
Members		
Morteza Ansari	KMM	732-745-2326
Bob Belvin	N.B. Historical Society	732-745-5271
Steve Buente	NJTPA	732-247-0900x5240
Doug Campbell	RWJUH, Robert Wood Hospital	732-937-8526
Diane Chierchie	NJTPA, Operations	732-565-5913
Donna Davison	MCESC	732-777-9848
Marc Della Pia	N.B. Bd. of Education	732-745-5300x5458
Michael Drulis	Office of Mayor Cahill	732-745-5004
John Ferguson	Middlesex Co. OEM	732-316-7104
Linda Hunter	Phelps/Carpender	732-249-7730
Richard Jannarone	N.B. Bd. of Education	732-745-5300x5410
Chief Bill Kloos	N.B. Police Dept.	732-247-0922x320
Jerry Kraft	NJTPA	732-247-0900x5401
Paul Morrissett	Newell Avenue	732-828-7458
Jim Podeszewa	Middlesex Superior Court	732-981-2168
Cassie Salter	Middlesex Ed. Svcs. Comm.	732-777-9848x335
Louis Sasso	RWJUH	732-937-8728
Ed Seemon	St. Peter's Univ. Hospital	732-745-6649
Sean Sheehy	NJDOT, Construction	732-308-4077
Cpl. Jeffrey Temple	Metuchen Police Dept.	732-632-8546
George M. Ververides	Middlesex County Planning	732-745-3013
Sgt. Bob Vornlocker	Franklin Twp. Police Dept.	732-873-7226
Matt Weismantel	Rutgers University	732-932-9342
Frank Wong	Rutgers University	732-445-2430
Steering Committee		
Steve Lavelle	NJDOT, Div. of Project Mgmt.	609-530-2546
Kiran Patel	NJDOT, Div. of Project Mgmt.	609-530-2498
Steve Mikulak	NJDOT, Community Relations	609-530-6558
Darryl Johnson	Gannett Fleming, Inc.	908-755-0040
Thomas Loughlin	City of New Brunswick	732-745-5007
Martine Culbertson	M. A. Culbertson, LLC	856-795-8485
Project Support		
Dennis Motiani	NJDOT	201-797-7314
Camille Sinclair	NJDOT, Communications	609-530-2126
Fran Daly	NJDOT, Communications	609-530-3681
Phyllis St. Onge	M. A. Culbertson, LLC	

Report prepared by:

Martine Culbertson, CPT Facilitator



ROUTE 18
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

**COMMUNITY
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CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**CPT COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
TASK FORCE MEETING No. 1**

AGENDA

December 11, 2003

Middlesex County Planning Dept. Conference Room, Elks Building, New Brunswick, NJ

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Objective: To establish the Task Force; provide an overview of the construction staging and traffic plans; discuss and prioritize public information and awareness issues; develop communication networks and outreach mechanisms to inform the public in the construction phase; and to make recommendations to be presented to the Steering Committee for consideration.

I. Welcome and Introductions

- o Project Overview and Status
- o Agenda and CPT Review

II. Public Information and Communication

- o Rt. 18 Transportation Improvements
- o Overview of Construction Staging
- o Public Information/Communication Issues
- o Group Discussion and Recommendations

III. Summary and Close

- o Action Items / Next Steps
- o Closing Comments



State of New Jersey Department of Transportation

Division of Project Management