

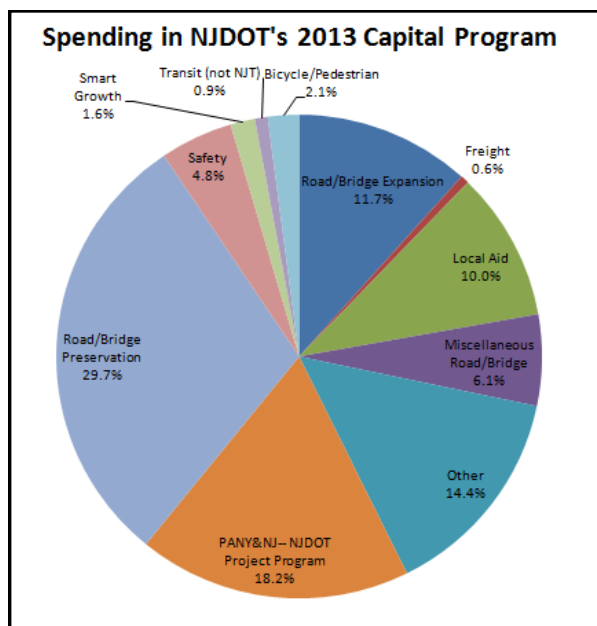
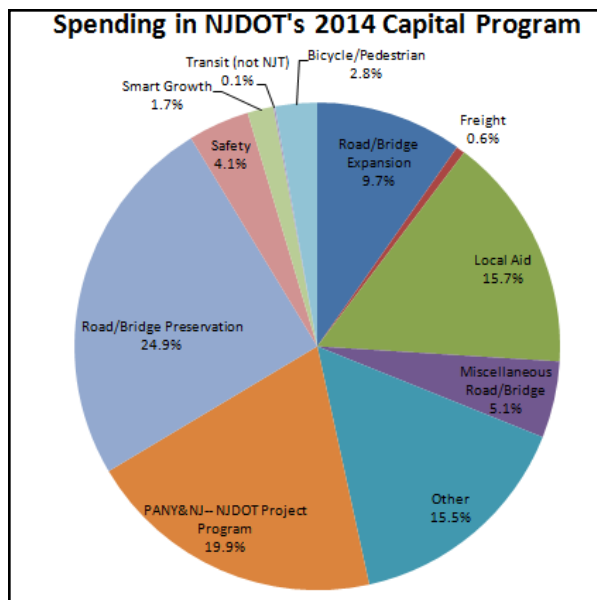
Looking Ahead and Looking Back: An Examination of NJDOT's and NJT's 2014 Capital Program

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) and New Jersey TRANSIT's (NJT) Transportation Capital Program for Fiscal Year 2014 outlines the State's planned transportation capital investments for the year. Tri-State Transportation Campaign's yearly analysis of the Capital Program sheds light on NJDOT's and NJT's priorities in the upcoming year, as well as tracks the State's progress towards sustainable and equitable transportation policies.

The total Capital Program is \$3.98 billion, with \$2.754 billion allocated to NJDOT and \$1.228 billion for NJT. Due to federal reporting requirements, the NJDOT portion includes projects undertaken by agencies other than NJDOT, such as the Port Authority's Goethals Bridge replacement and its Bayonne Bridge Navigational Clearance Project. These non-DOT projects total almost \$863 million, or about 22 percent of the entire Capital Program. TSTC's analysis excludes these projects because the Department has no discretion over them.

Findings

TSTC's line-by-line examination of the 2014 Capital Program reveals some positive trends continuing from the 2013 Program as well as some worrisome trends that move the State away from smart transportation investment.



Source: TSTC analysis of the NJDOT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2014 and Fiscal Year 2013*.

Positive	Negative
<p>The percentage of dollars going to projects that significantly expand New Jersey's roadways and bridges has decreased by 16.5 percent. The NJDOT portion of the 2014 Capital Program dedicates \$184.6 million to expansion, or 9.7 percent of its dollars.</p>	<p>The percentage of funds dedicated to expansion projects is still high. In the NJDOT portion of the 2014 Capital Program, expansion projects comprise almost a quarter of all dollars going towards road and bridge work (preservation, expansion and miscellaneous road/bridge projects).</p>
<p>The percentage of dollars going to projects that make the streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists has increased by 34 percent. The NJDOT portion of the 2014 Capital Program dedicates \$52.6 million, or 2.8 percent of its dollars.</p>	<p>The percentage of dollars going to projects that maintain the State's roads and bridges has decreased by 16.2 percent. The NJDOT portion of the 2014 Capital Program dedicates \$471 million to preservation projects, or 24.9 percent of its dollars.</p>
<p>The percentage of dollars going to NJT has increased by 5.5 percent. The 2014 Program dedicates \$1.228 billion, or 39.3 percent of the total Capital Program's dollars to NJT.</p>	<p>A little over 30 percent of the NJT portion of the 2014 Capital Program will go towards funding for buses, yet in fiscal Year 2012, bus trips made up almost 60 percent of NJT's average weekday unlinked passenger trips.</p>

Recommendations

While the Capital Program has already been adopted for Fiscal Year 2014 (which began in July), TSTC recommends the following guidance for future Capital Programs:

- *Shift away from expansion projects as congestion relief and instead, focus on alternative modes to provide congestion relief*
- *Increase funds for fix-it-first to maintain and repair existing infrastructure*
- *Increase funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects*
- *Increase transparency in the Capital Program by identifying all project component costs including the cost of bicycle or pedestrian accommodations on road and bridge projects and identifying compliance to or exemption from NJDOT's Complete Streets policy*
- *Increase funding for bus capital and operations*

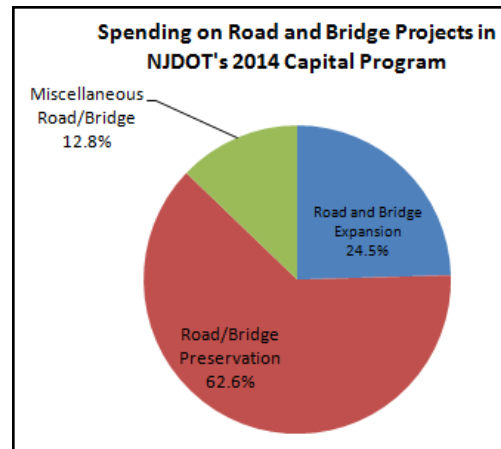
In addition, Governor Christie and the State Legislature should:

- *Create and approve new, dedicated revenue sources to replenish the Transportation Trust Fund*

Spending on Expansion Down, but Still too High

TSTC’s analysis of NJDOT’s portion of the Capital Program shows that in fiscal year 2014 NJDOT plans to spend roughly 10 percent of its dollars on projects that significantly expand the State’s road and bridge network. The share of dollars going to these projects is down slightly from the 2013 Capital Program, where almost 12 percent went to expansion projects.

While dedicating less money to expansion projects is a good trend, the State still spends too much on these kinds of projects. In the 2014 Capital Program, as in the 2013 Capital Program, almost a quarter of the dollars going towards road and bridge projects (preservation, expansion and miscellaneous road/bridge projects) went to expansion.



Source: TSTC analysis of the NJDOT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2014*.

Large expansion projects are expensive and use considerable amounts of NJDOT’s limited resources. These types of projects do little to relieve congestion. Studies have shown that wider roads and bridges encourage people to drive more, adding vehicles to roadways and further causing congestion. Moreover, U.S.PIRG’s August 2013 report, *Moving Off the Road*, shows that New Jersey residents are driving less, calling into question the long-term need to expand road and bridge capacity. *Moving Off the Road* found that the annual per person vehicle miles travelled from 2005 to 2011 was down 2.14 percent in New Jersey.¹

- **10 percent** of NJDOT-maintained bridges are not in acceptable condition.²
- **41 percent** of NJDOT highway pavements are not in acceptable condition.³
- Each New Jersey motorist must spend **\$601 additional** per year due to driving on roads needing repair.⁴

Investment in Road and Bridge Maintenance Drops

Almost a quarter of the dollars in NJDOT’s portion of the 2014 Capital Program are dedicated to projects that maintain or fix New Jersey’s existing roads and bridge infrastructure. This is a drop from the 2013 Capital Program, where close to 30 percent of the dollars went to road and bridge maintenance projects.

Though investment in maintenance has slipped from 2013, NJDOT is still dedicating the majority of the dollars going to road and bridge projects to maintenance. In both 2013 and 2014, over 62 percent of the funds for road and bridge projects (preservation, expansion and miscellaneous road/bridge projects) went or will go towards preserving and fixing existing infrastructure. Still, with roads and bridges across the State in need of repair, the State must increase – not decrease – funding to meet these needs.

Slight Increase in Support for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Bicycle and pedestrian projects receive 2.8 percent of the dollars in the NJDOT portion of the Capital Program. While bicycle and pedestrian improvements comprise only a small share of the Capital Program, NJDOT has slightly increased its commitment to these projects since the previous Capital Program, where 2.1 percent of the dollars went to these kinds of projects.

This is a positive trend, but more money must be dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects. Relatively low cost improvements such as adding high visibility crosswalks, sidewalks and bike lanes save lives and improve streets for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike. Nashville, Tennessee's metropolitan planning organization devotes 15 percent of its funds to active transportation and 70 percent to multi-modal transportation. Given NJDOT's leadership on Complete Streets such as increase would expedite Complete Streets implementation.

New Jersey's award-winning Complete Streets policy encourages the needs of all road users to be taken into consideration when redesigning a roadway. According to TSTC's analysis, a little over 9 percent of all road projects include bicycle or pedestrian elements, such as adding sidewalks while replacing a bridge.

Incorporating these elements into an existing road or bridge project often is less expensive than retroactively incorporating them after a project is completed. As NJDOT Commissioner Simpson notes in his op-ed published in November 2011, "The advantage of inserting a dialogue about all users at the earliest stages of project development is that it provides the designers and engineers the best opportunity to create solutions at the best price."⁶

- Five New Jersey roadways are in TSTC's top ten *Most Dangerous Roads for Walking* list.
- From 2009 to 2011, **27 percent** of all recorded traffic-related deaths in New Jersey were **bicyclists or pedestrians**.⁵
- **A little over 9 percent** of all road projects include bicycle or pedestrian elements, such as adding sidewalks while replacing a bridge.

Additional transparency in the Capital Program will enable a more comprehensive examination of New Jersey's commitment to Complete Streets.

NJDOT can increase transparency in the Capital Program by:

- Providing detailed project descriptions which clearly describe all the elements of a project
- Including a breakdown of the cost of each element in a project
- Noting whether the project went through the Complete Streets Checklist and whether the project has been exempted

Funding Gaps Ahead

At \$376 million, the Port Authority Project Program makes up almost one fifth of the NJDOT portion of the Capital Program. These Port Authority funds represent funds from the canceled *Access to the Region's Core* (ARC) project. NJDOT uses this money to pay for five NJDOT projects, Route 7 Hackensack River (Wittpenn) Bridge, Route 139 (Hoboken and Conrail Viaducts), Route 1&9T Extension, Route 1&9 Pulaski Skyway and Route 1&9 Pavement. From 2012 through 2016, the Port Authority will give NJDOT a total of \$1.8 billion.

The Port Authority one-shot payments are only one unsustainable measure NJDOT is using to fill the gaps and fund its Capital Program. Other measures include transfers from the general fund and borrowing. These yearly stop-gap funding maneuvers point to a larger concern: New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund, which was created to fund the State's transportation infrastructure investment, is broke with all revenue going towards debt service. New revenue sources to pay for transportation projects must be found. With the Port Authority Project Program funds ending in 2016, there will be a multi-million dollar gap in New Jersey's Capital Program if new and sustainable funding sources are not identified.

Increase in Funding for Public Transportation

NJT's share of the total Capital Program dollars has increased from 2013, from slightly over 37 percent of the Capital Program's dollars in 2013 to a little over 39 percent of the Capital Program's dollars in 2014.

This is a positive trend that must continue in future Capital Programs. After all, financial support for public transportation is imperative in New Jersey where:

- Across the State, approximately 12 percent of households lack access to a vehicle;⁷
- Almost 11 percent of New Jersey workers 16 years and older use public transportation to get to work;
- In Essex County, almost one out of 5 workers 16 years and older commutes by public transit; and
- In Hudson County, over 39 percent of workers 16 and older commute by public transportation.⁸

This year, TSTC took a more refined look at the NJT portion of the Capital Program. Each project is categorized as railroad, bus, railroad and bus, or other (not relating specifically to either railroad or bus). In addition, each project was slated into as many other categories as it appeared to fit. For example, a project that included railroad track maintenance and fixed station platforms so they were compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act was categorized as a rail project, a rail maintenance project and an access to transit project.

Funding dedicated to buses comprise a little over 30 percent of NJT's Capital Program, yet in fiscal year 2012, bus trips made up almost 60 percent of NJT's average weekday unlinked passenger trips, with even higher percentages for Saturday and Sunday trips.

With ARC's cancellation in 2011 and Amtrak's proposed Gateway tunnel completion far into the future, increasing support for bus transit will allow for an increase in much-needed Cross Hudson capacity in the short term.

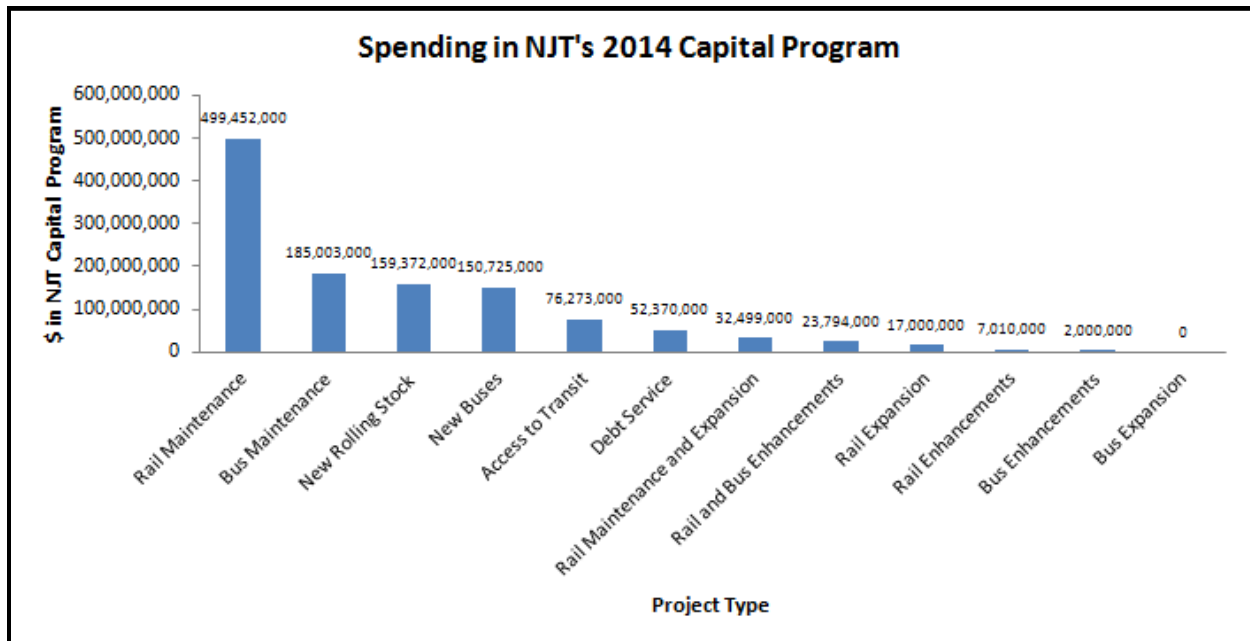
Unlinked Passenger Trips, Fiscal Year 2012						
	Average Weekday Trips	Percent of Total Trips	Average Saturday Trips	Percent of Total Trips	Average Sunday Trips	Percent of Total Trips
Bus <i>includes NJT bus and contract carriers</i>	535,168	59.7	279,340	67.2	182,191	63.3
Rail <i>includes Metro North West of Hudson service</i>	281,576	31.4	98,143	23.6	78,509	27.3
Light Rail	72,345	8.1	36,740	8.8	25,963	9.0
Total Trips <i>includes Demand Response and Vanpool trips, not shown in chart</i>	896,214		415,879		287,689	

Source: "NJ Transit Facts at a Glance Fiscal Year 2012 — Draft." NJ Transit. <<http://www.njtransit.com/pdf/FactsAtaGlance.pdf>>.

Brief Findings:

- Almost two-thirds of the dollars in the NJT portion went to rail projects
- Slightly over 30 percent of the dollars were dedicated to bus projects
- Rail maintenance projects comprised almost 41 percent of NJT's dollars
- Bus maintenance projects received a little over 15 percent of NJT's funds
- New rolling stock and new buses made up 13 percent and approximately 12 percent respectively of NJT's dollars

NJT's 2014 Capital Program		
	Capital Program Dollars	Percent of Total Dollars
Rail	769,109,000	62.6
Bus	371,051,000	30.2
Rail and Bus	30,590,000	2.5
Other (not Rail or Bus)	57,358,000	4.7
Total Dollars	1,228,108,000	



Source: TSTC analysis of the NJT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2014*.

Footnotes

1. Baxandall, Phineas. "Moving Off the Road. A State-by-State Analysis of the National Decline in Driving." U.S. PIRG. August 2013. (23.) <http://www.uspirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/Moving_Off_the_Road_USPIRG.pdf>.
2. "NJ DOT Commissioner James Simpson FY 14 Budget Testimony." Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. Wednesday, April 3, 2013. <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/budget_2014/DOT_Simpson_testimony_SBA.pdf>. (15.)
3. "NJ DOT Commissioner James Simpson FY 14 Budget Testimony." (7.)
4. "2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure." American Society of Civil Engineers. <http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/new_jersey/new-jersey-overview/>.
5. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System Encyclopedia. Total deaths includes unknown person type and unrecorded (blank) person type.
6. Simpson, James. "Complete Streets offers a way toward zero fatalities." *Burlington County Times*. <http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/burlington_county_times_news/opinion/guest/complete-streets-offers-a-way-toward-zero-fatalities/article_b2f67ceb-db50-5b36-81fd-ee304ed78a7b.html?mode=jqm>.
7. Vehicle availability statistic from the American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, 2007-2011, Table DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics.
8. Commuting statistics from the American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, 2007-2011, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics.

Methodology

For its analysis of the NJDOT portion of the Capital Program, TSTC classified each project in one of 12 categories: bicycle/pedestrian, freight, local aid, miscellaneous road/bridge, non-NJDOT and NJT projects, other, Port Authority Project Program, road/bridge expansion, road/bridge preservation, safety, smart growth and transit (not NJT). Projects that are "non-DOT" are not included in the analysis. Road and bridge projects that also included bicycle or pedestrian components in their project descriptions were noted as having "bike/ped components."

For its analysis of the NJT portion of the Capital Program, TSTC classified each project as a rail, bus, rail and bus, or other. TSTC then assigned each project to as many of the categories listed below as the project warranted.

Methodology – cont'

NJDOT

Bicycle/ Pedestrian	Sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian improvements such as bulb-outs and ADA crosswalks. Recreational trails funding and other bicycle/pedestrian lump sums included.
Freight	Funding for NJ's Freight Program and maritime industry.
Local Aid	Funds dedicated to counties, urban areas and metropolitan planning organization for unspecified projects.
Miscellaneous Road/Bridge	Road and bridge projects that do not add to the road network significantly. Projects include operational improvements, intersection improvements such as adding turn lanes, road drainage projects, dams and culvert projects.
Non-NJDOT and NJT projects	Projects undertaken by agencies other than NJDOT or NJT and over which NJDOT or NJT have no control. These projects are listed in the Capital Program due to reporting requirements.
Other	Includes ITS, general funds for planning and research, studies, lump sums for unanticipated needs, etc.
Port Authority Project Program	Port Authority funds represent funds from the canceled Access to the Region's Core project. NJDOT uses this money to pay for five NJDOT projects, Route 7 Hackensack River (Wittpenn) Bridge, Route 139 (Hoboken and Conrail Viaducts), Route 1&9 Extension, Route 1&9 Pulaski Skyway and Route 1&9 Pavement. From 2012 through 2016, the Port Authority will give NJDOT a total of \$1.8 billion.
Road/Bridge Expansion	Significant increase in capacity and/or significant increase in infrastructure to be maintained. Examples: adding to the road network such as a flyover project, extending a road, adding additional lane miles, or adding to the bridge network such as adding additional a lane to a bridge, or creating a new bridge (while keeping an old bridge).
Road/Bridge Preservation	Bridge replacements, rehabilitation without added capacity, road reconstruction, repaving without added capacity.
Safety	Improvements that focus on vehicular safety concerns, including rockfall mitigation, traffic signal replacements and rail-highway grade crossings. This category addresses statewide, county-wide or route-wide safety improvements, and does not include individual projects that NJDOT undertakes for operational and safety reasons (e.g. changes to an intersection to improve safety).
Smart Growth	Projects that link transit and development.
Transit (not NJT)	Transit capital investments, funds for transit improvements, transit vehicle purchases, ferry projects.
Road or Bridge with Bike/Ped	Addition of bike lanes, sidewalks and other bike/ped facilities to roads and bridges, whether in a preservation, miscellaneous or expansion project. Projects described as "proposed to be bicycle and pedestrian compatible" are also included. This category is a sub-category of the expansion, preservation and miscellaneous road/bridge categories.

NJT

Rail Maintenance	Rail station maintenance, rail car maintenance and track work.
Rail Expansion	Expansion of the rail network.
Rail Maintenance and Expansion	Rail projects that have both maintenance and expansion.
Debt Service	Payment for borrowing.
Access to Transit	Improvements that help people use transit, such as park and rides, ADA projects and programs serving vulnerable populations such as the elderly or disabled.
New Buses	New bus purchases or new bus leases.
New Rolling Stock	New rolling stock purchases or leases.
Bus Maintenance	Necessary maintenance for buses.
Bus Expansion	Expansion of bus service. (Note: no bus expansion projects were identified.)
Bus Enhancements	Improvements that are not required maintenance, but additions that improve bus riders' experiences.
Rail Enhancements	Improvements that are not required maintenance, but additions that improve rail riders' experiences.
Rail and Bus Enhancements	Improvements that are not required maintenance, but additions that improve rail and bus riders' experiences.

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