

What Lies Ahead?

An Overview of NJDOT's 2015 Transportation Capital Program



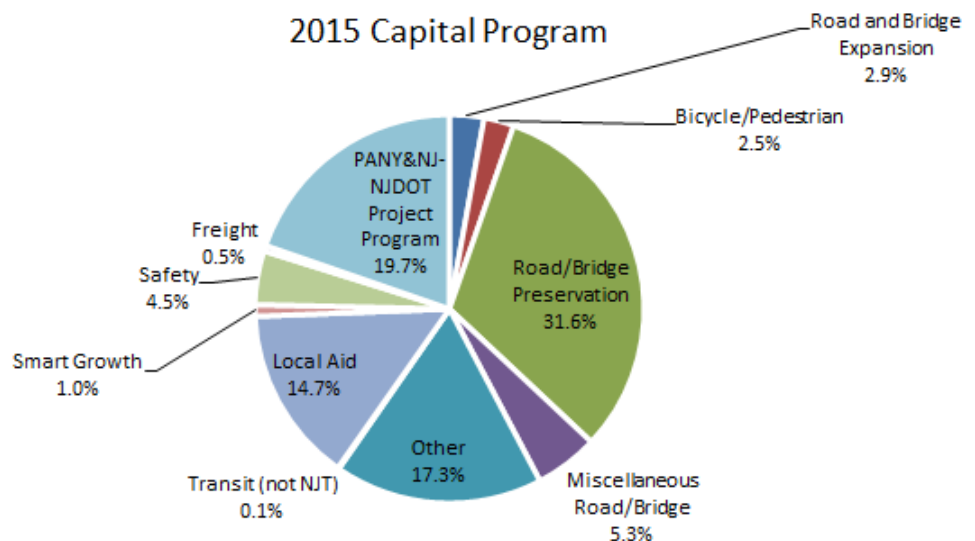
The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) yearly transportation capital program lays out the agency's planned investments for the state's roads, bridges, transit and all other transportation-related capital projects for one year. Examining the projects in these documents provides insight into the agency's transportation priorities.

NJDOT's 2015 transportation capital program totals \$3.7 billion, with \$1.2 billion going to New Jersey Transit (NJT) and \$2.5 dedicated to NJDOT.¹

FINDINGS

- **The percentage of dollars dedicated to road and bridge expansion projects has dropped significantly.** In 2014, road and bridge expansion projects comprised almost 10 percent of the NJDOT capital program's funds; in the 2015 capital program, **expansion projects make up only 3 percent of funds. This is the lowest percentage in recent years.**
- Funds dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects dropped slightly in 2015, from 2.8 percent of funds in the 2014 capital program to 2.5 percent of funds in the 2015 capital program.
- Some road and bridge projects include bicycle or pedestrian elements like sidewalks or bike lanes. Road and bridge projects with bicycle/pedestrian elements total about \$44.7 million, or 6 percent of funding going to all the road and bridge projects in the capital program.
- **Fix-it-first** projects that maintain or fix the state's roads and bridges **make up a larger share of the 2015 capital program** than they did in the previous two years. In 2015, these projects will comprise nearly 32 percent of the capital program's funds. In 2014, they totaled 25 percent of the funds and 30 percent of the funds in 2013.
- **At \$1.2 billion, almost 39 percent² of the funds in the capital program are dedicated to NJT.** This is consistent with NJT's share in the 2014 program.

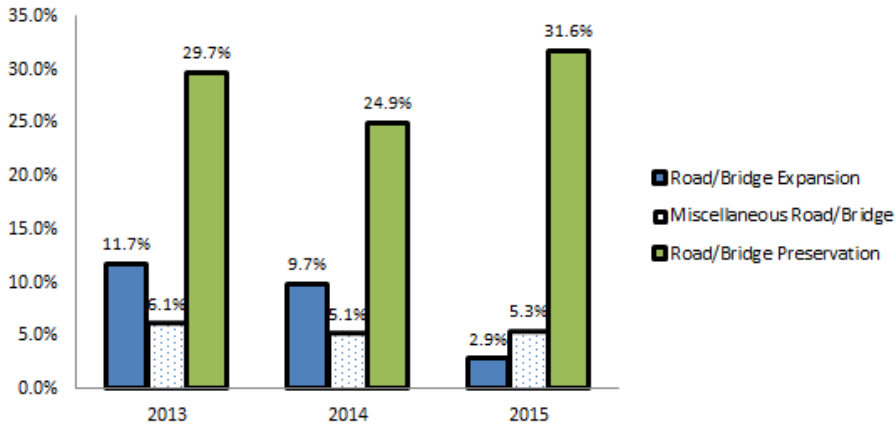
Share of Dollars in NJDOT's 2015 Capital Program



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The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.
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Share of Dollars Going to Road and Bridge Projects in NJDOT's 2013, 2014 and 2015 Capital Programs



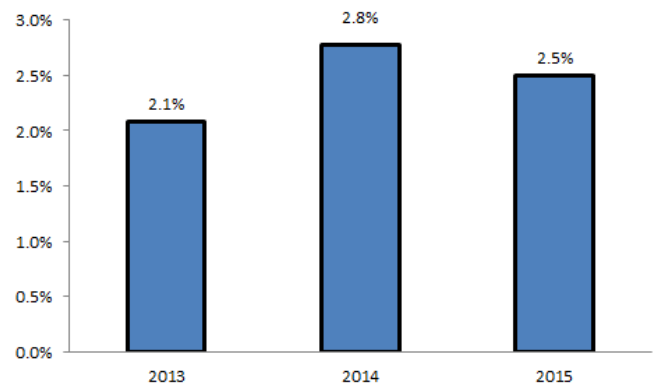
What is Fix-it-First?

A fix-it-first policy prioritizes maintenance and preservation of existing roads and bridges over building new infrastructure. This emphasis reduces the backlog of deficient roads and bridges, which cost travelers time and money while ensuring the road network remains safe. Additionally, a focus on existing roads and bridges means state DOTs are not adding new roads and bridges that require additional maintenance. As part of the 2000 Transportation Trust Fund reauthorization, the New Jersey legislature passed a fix-it-first mandate. The past three capital programs show varying adherence to a fix-it-first policy; while expansion projects comprise only 3 percent of the funds in 2015, in 2013, these projects consumed nearly 12 percent of the capital program's dollars.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Appoint an NJDOT Commissioner committed to and with experience in implementing complete streets, transit-oriented development and transit projects.
- Identify new revenue streams to replenish the state's Transportation Trust Fund. New revenue should be sustainable, long-term, dedicated, and not a source of one-shots or increased borrowing.
- Commit to keeping road and bridge expansion projects to four percent of capital program funds.
- Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements on roadways with high pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular collision rates.
- Ensure that road and bridge projects incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at the onset, as opposed to an add-on, to reduce project costs.
- Ensure that complete streets projects comprise at least five percent of capital program funds.
- Ensure that emerging trails in Southern New Jersey, such as The Circuit, receive funding for planning, design, and construction. Prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist improvements on roads that provide access to these trails to create safe connectivity to the trails and surrounding communities.
- Stop capital fund transfers from NJT's capital program to its operating budget. Since FY 2012, \$1.6 billion has been transferred from NJT's capital budget to its operating budget.

Share of Dollars Going Towards Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects in NJDOT's 2013, 2014 and 2015 Capital Programs



Sources and Footnotes

TSTC analysis of the NJDOT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2015, 2014, 2013*. TSTC analysis of the NJT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2015*.

Image: Robert Sciarrino, *The Star Ledger*.

1 NJDOT's \$2.5 billion portion of the capital program contains projects that are not administered by the agency but must be in the capital program because they are funded with federal funds. These "non-DOT" projects include the Port Authority's Goethals Bridge replacement and the Bayonne Bridge Navigational Clearance Project. TSTC's analysis of the NJDOT portion of the capital program takes out these projects in order to paint a more clear picture of NJDOT's planned spending. The FY 2015 NJDOT portion has \$616.5 million in non-DOT projects; the FY 2014 NJDOT portion has \$862.8 million and FY 2013 NJDOT portion has \$128.7 million.

2 TSTC's analysis of the NJDOT/NJT funding split does not include any non-DOT projects listed in the NJDOT portion of the capital program.

Methodology

For 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, 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 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.

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 Expansion		Expansion of the rail network.
Rail Maintenance and Expansion		Rail projects that have both maintenance and expansion of rail network.
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.
Bus Maintenance and Expansion		Bus projects that have both maintenance and expansion of service.
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.