

# What Lies Ahead?

## An Overview of NJDOT's 2016 Transportation Capital Program

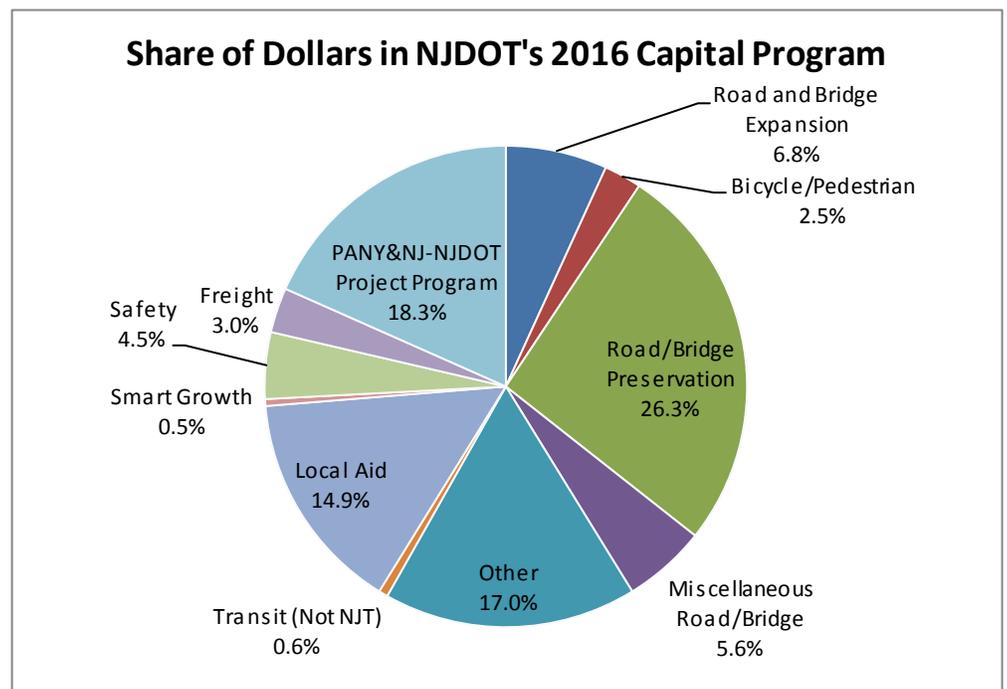


The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) yearly transportation capital program lays out the agency's planned investments for the state's roads, bridges, transit and all other transportation-related capital projects for one year. Examining the projects in the program provides insight into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

NJDOT's 2016 transportation capital program stands at nearly \$5 billion, with \$2.1 billion going to New Jersey Transit (NJT) and \$2.9 billion dedicated to NJDOT.<sup>1</sup>

### FINDINGS

- ◇ **The funds dedicated to road and bridge expansion projects have increased 140 percent.** In 2015, road and bridge expansion projects comprised only \$54 million of NJDOT capital program's funds; in this year's capital program, **expansion projects total more than \$130 million.**
- ◇ **Funds dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects held steady** at 2.5 percent of funds in the 2016 capital program. This amounts to over \$48 million in bicycle/pedestrian spending.
- ◇ **Road and bridge projects with bicycle/pedestrian elements increased by 150 percent** to \$112 million. About 15 percent of funding going to all the road and bridge projects in the capital program include bicycle and pedestrian elements.
- ◇ **Fix-it-first** projects that maintain or fix the state's roads and bridges **declined by 16 percent.** In 2016, these projects will comprise only 26 percent of the capital program's funds. In 2015, they totaled 32 percent of the funds.
- ◇ **At \$2.1 billion, almost half of the funds in the capital program are dedicated to NJT.** Unfortunately, a great deal of this money (over \$870 million) is reserved for Sandy recovery, so it will not be available in future years.



For more information, contact Janna Chernetz at (609) 271-0778 or [janna@tstc.org](mailto:janna@tstc.org)

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.  
[www.tstc.org](http://www.tstc.org)

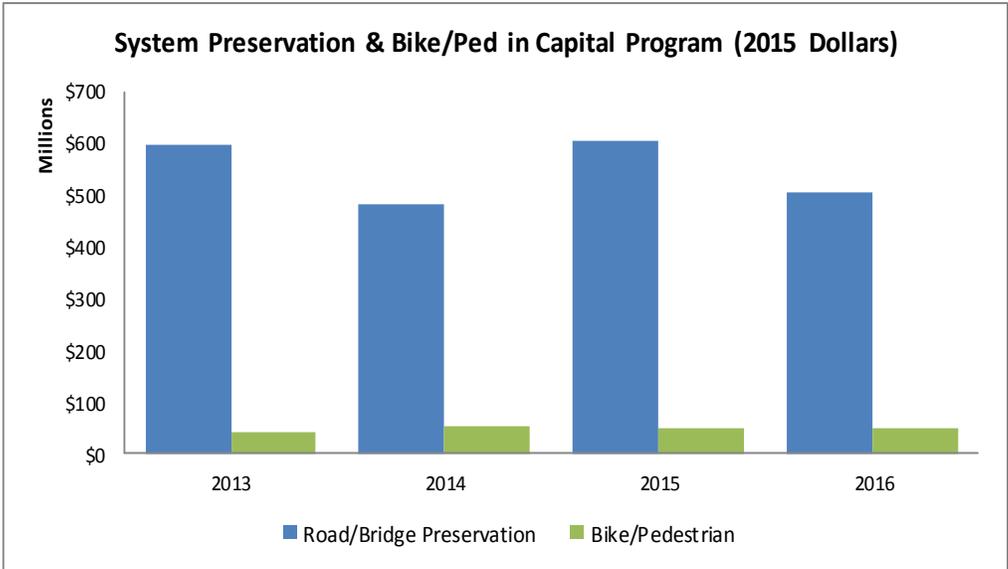
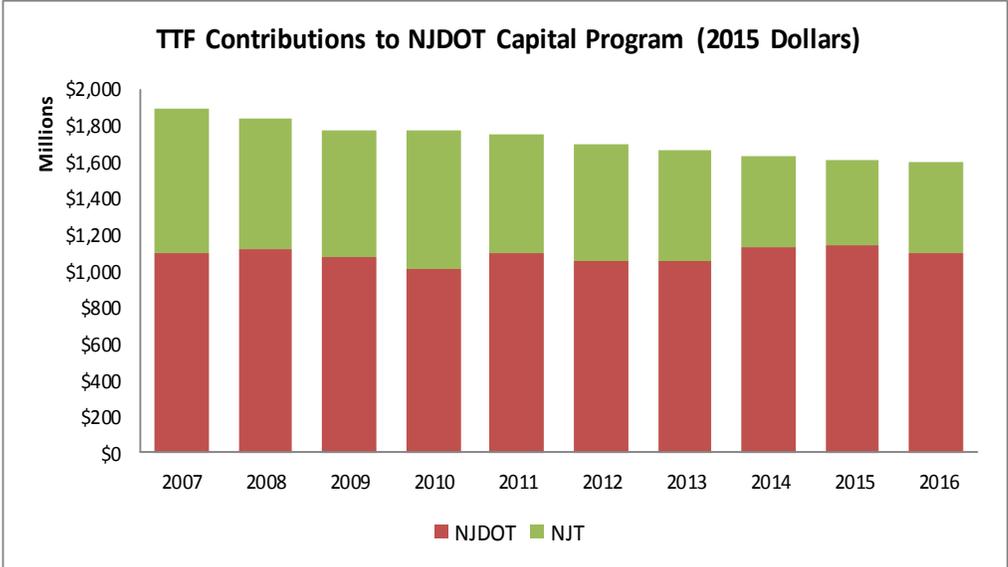


# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◇ Support an increase in the overall size of the NJDOT capital program with new revenue sources. Since 2007, contributions from the Transportation Trust Fund to the capital program have declined by 15 percent. New revenue should be sustainable, long-term, dedicated, and not a source of one-shots or increased borrowing.
- ◇ Keep road and bridge expansion projects to no more than four percent of capital program funds.
- ◇ Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian projects on roadways with high pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular collision rates.
- ◇ Ensure that road and bridge projects incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at the onset.
- ◇ Ensure that emerging trails, such as The Circuit in Southern New Jersey, 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, \$2 billion has been transferred from NJT's capital budget to its operating budget. Enact dedicated revenues to adequately support NJ Transit's operating budget.

### 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. 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 7 percent of the funds in 2016, in 2013, these projects consumed nearly 12 percent of the capital program's dollars.



## Sources and Footnotes

TSTC analysis of the NJDOT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2016, 2015, 2014, and 2013*.

TSTC's analysis of the NJT portion of the *Transportation Capital Program Fiscal Year 2016*.

<sup>1</sup>NJDOT's \$2.9 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 clearer picture of NJDOT's planned spending. The FY 2016 NJDOT portion has \$951.5 million in non-DOT projects. The FY 2015 portion had \$616.5 million in non-DOT projects. The non-DOT portion of the FY 2014 and FY 2013 capital programs were \$862.8 million and \$128.7 million respectively.

<sup>2</sup>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.
	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 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.	
NJT	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.