State of New Jersey
Executive Order #43
Governor James E. McGreevey

WHEREAS, a vital transportation system in New Jersey is essential for the health and well being of our communities, our working families, and our economy; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is already the most densely populated state in the country and its population is expected to grow by 1 million people by the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's highway and bridge system is overburdened and in need of repair; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's public transportation system is over capacity and suffering from ten years of deferred maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the aging transportation infrastructure in New Jersey poses a significant and ongoing safety security concern; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey drivers waste 261 million hours sitting in traffic, costing each New Jersey drive nearly $1,300 per year, negatively impacting our quality of life and losing valuable time that could be better spent with our families; and

WHEREAS, improving the transportation system to meet the needs of the 21st century is an important goal of this Administration, especially as it relates to reducing congestion, enhancing safety, and improving the quality of life for all working families in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the needs of New Jersey's transportation system outweigh the resources available; and

WHEREAS, in this time of limited resources it is important to identify and prioritize transportation needs and allocate available resources by incorporating the principles of "Fix it First" and "Smart Growth"; and

WHEREAS, a "Fix it First" strategy will focus our efforts on improving aging bridges and rehabilitating highways, rail and aviation systems first, instead of pursuing an expansion policy; and

WHEREAS, smart growth principles will focus and direct transportation investments into the redevelopment of our older urban and suburban areas, protect existing open space, conserve natural resources, increase transportation options and transit availability, reduce automobile traffic and dependency, stabilize property taxes, and provide affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century is a vital funding mechanism for the Department of Transportation to address the transportation system needs in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century in 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Trust Fund was created in July 1984 to provide a stable and predictable
funding source for state and local transportation capital improvements in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, of the 36,000 miles of roadway in New Jersey, 32,000 miles are controlled by county and municipal governments whose responsibility it is to maintain the quality of this local infrastructure; and,

WHEREAS, the Local Aid programs funded through the Transportation Trust Fund were created to provide counties and municipalities the tools and resources needed to maintain and operate these local roadways, which account for nearly 90% of New Jersey's roadways; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Trust Fund must be renewed by July of 2004; and

WHEREAS, the current and future transportation needs of New Jersey are greater than the resources provided by the Transportation Trust Fund and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JAMES E. MCGREEVEY, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. There is hereby established a Blue Ribbon Transportation Commission ("Commission") to examine and make recommendations on the pressing transportation issues facing New Jersey over the next ten years. The Commission shall also identify the means necessary to address these pressing transportation issues and recommendations for their consideration during the upcoming renewal of the Transportation Trust Fund. The Commission shall issue a final report containing its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation that it deems appropriate, within one year after the Commission organizes.

2. The Commission shall consist of seven (7) public members appointed by the Governor, and the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT), ex officio. The Commissioner of DOT shall serve as Chair of the Commission. The public members shall include representatives of the business, labor and environmental communities, as well as individuals with expertise in New Jersey transportation issues. The Commission shall organize as soon as may be practicable after the appointment of its members. The members shall appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the Commission.

3. The Commission shall meet at the call of the chairperson. The Commission shall be entitled to call its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State department, board, bureau, commission or agency, as it may require and as may be available for its purposes, and to employ stenographic and clerical assistance and incur traveling and other miscellaneous expenses as may be necessary in order to perform its duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for its purposes.

4. DOT shall work closely with the New Jersey congressional delegation and with other similarly situated states to establish funding priorities and develop a strategy to maximize the State's share of federal resources. This strategy shall consider proposals to provide DOT with the flexibility to ensure the expedited and efficient completion of transportation infrastructure improvements.

5. DOT, New Jersey Transit (NJT), the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA), the New Jersey Parkway Authority (NJPA) and the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) shall implement:

   a. An expedited project delivery pipeline initiative, that will shave 1 to 4 years off the time to deliver a typical project, reduce project cost and increase the total number of projects that can be advanced in a year. This initiative will replace the "one-size-fits-all" schedule historically us
by State agencies, whether projects are minor or major in nature. This improved project delivery process will accelerate the amount of work contracted by State agencies, create jobs and ensure that State agencies spend the maximum possible on transportation improvements; and

b. A highway safety initiative designed to reduce accidents on our highways through improved infrastructure, driver education, and traffic safety compliance enforcement; and

c. A statewide rail plan designed to increase the efficiency of freight movement and thereby reduce the number of trucks on our highways; and

d. An improved access permit process that will expedite regulatory review and incorporate the principles of Smart Growth, when allowing access to New Jersey highways. This new process will curtail sprawl by directing development in growth areas, such as urban and older suburban corridors, and prevent it in environmentally sensitive and overdeveloped areas; and

e. An information and signage program that will convey clear, concise, consistent, and "smart" information to the motoring public. This initiative will consist of a Pilot Program to identify resources necessary for Statewide implementation. DOT, NJT, NJTA, NJHA and SJTA will immediately begin to take steps to implement this Pilot Program and report to the Governor's Office on its progress in sixty days. The Pilot Program will fix confusing directional signs and implement technology to provide real-time traffic information. The Pilot Program will also reduce red tape by transferring traffic engineering decision-making from the State to local governments and by expediting transportation improvements on local roads; and

f. An expanded Park & Ride initiative, with a goal of achieving over 20,000 new parking spaces within the next five years at mass transit facilities and transportation centers, along with a public awareness campaign that will provide user-friendly information to the public.

6. DOT, NJT, NJTA, NJHA and SJTA, in conjunction with the Smart Growth Policy Council, shall develop plans that are consistent with New Jersey's smart growth policies and that promote and encourage the use of public transportation.

7. DOT, NJT, NJTA, NJHA and SJTA shall include in their capital investment strategy a process that will expedite projects determined to advance the principles of "Fix It First" and "Smart Growth." These projects shall receive priority treatment. Such projects shall include, but not be limited to, preserving and rehabilitating bridges and roadways, increasing capacity for all modes of public transportation, eliminating bottlenecks, preserving and rehabilitating airports, improving rail freight services, improving ferry services, enhancing safety, and making our communities more livable.

8. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Delaware River Bay Authority, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission and the Delaware River Port Authority shall consider incorporating, on a priority basis, policies consistent with "Smart Growth" and "Fix It First" principles with respect to New Jersey projects. In addition, these bi-state authorities shall consider the following measures:

a. implementing an expedited project delivery pipeline initiative to reduce project costs and increase the number of projects that can be advanced in a year;

b. coordinating their efforts, where appropriate, with the development of a Statewide rail plan;

c. implementing highway safety initiatives;
d. improving their access permits process to allow expedited regulatory review, while incorporating smart growth principles;

e. implementing information and signage programs to convey accurate and appropriate information to the motoring public; and

f. supporting and contributing to the expanded Park and Ride initiative.

9. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this 7th day of January in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Three, and of the Independence of the United States, the Two Hundred and Twenty-Seventh.

/s/ James E. McGreevey

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Paul A. Levinsohn

Chief Counsel to the Governor