



Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy

Corridor Working Group Briefing Note #1



What We Heard at Event #1

The first session of this major initiative to develop and implement a regional growth strategy for the Route 1 corridor between Trenton and New Brunswick was convened on October 26, 2004. More than 55 representatives of the fifteen municipalities, three counties, two metropolitan planning agencies, state agencies, and major environmental, development, commercial, and transportation organizations in the region attended.

This effort seeks to reach agreement about changes in land use that will take advantage of the economic strengths and opportunities in the region. Among other growth goals, the study is expected to establish transportation priorities for the corridor. The work is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, with support from the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth, Economic Development Authority, Commerce & Economic Growth Commission, and Department of Environmental Protection, and NJ TRANSIT.

Spirited discussion followed an introduction to the study and potential growth outcomes. This is a summary of what we heard:

- The future of the US 1 corridor has statewide significance. There is a pressing need to link land use with the transportation system.
 - We need to emphasize that smart growth does not mean no growth.
 - We need to increase the availability of alternative transportation modes, mixed-use development, and roadway connections.
 - We need affordable housing at all income levels. Businesses need access to a skilled, yet affordable labor force. We need to improve public transit connections between housing and employment.
 - We need land use patterns that are more transit and pedestrian friendly.
 - Education is needed so local officials can promote the need for and benefits of integrated land use and transportation planning.
 - We need appropriate incentives to sell our concepts to the public. We must provide a corresponding benefit for the changes that some resist.
 - An analysis of the region's economic structure, including employment types, labor force characteristics, inputs and outputs, etc., would help us see ourselves in a more global context.
 - It is possible that we may get some limited, project-based revenue-sharing among towns, but we need property tax reform to get at real fiscal balance and equity. However, we cannot use the lack of statewide tax reform as an excuse for not doing anything.
-
- **We need to take action now.**