

On the Move

Associated with the Middlesex County Improvement Authority

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Additional Funding Awarded to KMM

In late November 2005, KMM received notification from the United States Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration that funding would be provided for KMM's application for a Route 18 Shuttle. Additionally, KMM also received approval to redirect funds to provide a carpool incentive program also for Route 18 commuters affected by the major road construction project currently underway.

Route 18 Shuttle

The United States Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration has approved KMM's application for a Route 18 shuttle, clearing the way for KMM to begin route and schedule development. The application had been submitted as part of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's TMA Hand-Off program.

Though work is progressing, construction on Route 18 between Route 1 and the Albany Street Bridge will impact the area for several years. KMM hopes to alleviate some of the congestion with a New Brunswick-bound shuttle.

Cautioning that it will be at least six months before the shuttle is on the road, Executive Director Bill Neary said the TMA wants to invest the time necessary to put an optimal route in place.

He said, "First, we need to talk to employers in New Brunswick and gather information about their workforce and work hours. Second, we'd like to talk with commuters, the potential riders, to understand their needs. Then, we'll design a route and schedule and go out to bid for the service. We need to let the process unfold logically."

Allowing for signing and processing of paperwork, KMM anticipates the shuttle project to begin in January, 2006.

Fuel Your Pool.

You Carpool. We Pay.

KMM has received permission from NJDOT to start a new cost-saving incentive program called **Fuel Your Pool!** — a carpool program that rewards Route 18 construction zone commuters willing to start and maintain carpools a \$100 Gas Card. The program is also open to existing carpools that travel along the designated corridor.

The construction zone is defined as the Route 18 Corridor between the NJ Turnpike interchange in East Brunswick to the Albany Street Bridge exit. Those who are interested in participating in this program are required to register with KMM, along with the names of their fellow carpoolers. To receive the \$100 Gas Card, the carpoolers are required to carpool at least 30 times over the course of 3 months. Participants are also required to record their commute at the end of each week. Both registration and weekly recording can be done all at the touch of a button online at the KMM website.

For commuters who are interested in the program but do not have a carpool partner, KMM can assist in finding a carpool match. A complete explanation of program requirements can be found online at www.kmm.org.

Director of Operations, Roberta Karpinecz explained, "This program is geared to help alleviate the congestion in and around the Route 18 construction zone and is ideal for commuters who work in the downtown area of New Brunswick. However, if your commute route travels in the designated area, your carpool may qualify for the program."

Financial incentives for carpools have been tested in other states and in other parts of New Jersey. Studies have found that people who begin carpooling because of an incentive will continue to carpool after the incentive program has concluded. If you would like to learn more about this program, please contact Cristina C. Fowler at (732) 745-4318.

Construction in Full Swing on Route 18

If you drive along Route 18 between the NJ Turnpike interchange in East Brunswick and the Albany Street exit, you are well aware of the construction project that has been taking place for the past several months. Work crews have been clearing trees and placing the foundations for the retaining walls along much of this stretch of road. Within the next few weeks, this project will move into Phase Two and commuters will begin to see significant changes over the course of the winter months, including closures of two major roads.

Jug Handle at Commercial Avenue & New Street Ramp will be CLOSED

Beginning on or around January 23rd, the Commercial Avenue jug handle will be closed. The light at Route 18 and Commercial Avenue will become a left hand turn signal for those driving North on Route 18. This left hand turn will be a double lane turn allowing traffic that is running north to continue through along the remaining right hand lanes.

In addition, the New Street exit ramp will be closed for approximately 10-12 months so that the bridge can be replaced. This too, will begin on or around January 23rd. Construction will be conducted during day and night hours, but motorists will see lane closures in this area mostly during the night hours.



Aerial photo of the Route 18 Construction Zone Detour Plan

Motorists that take the exit ramp will be asked to re-route and use the new Commercial Avenue light or the existing Albany Street ramp.

For a more detailed explanation of the possible detours, log on to www.kmm.org and click *Construction* or call our office at (732) 745-4465.

Safe Routes to School Demonstration Project

Even the pouring rain could not darken the mood as dedicated volunteers gathered at the JFK Elementary School in Jamesburg to participate in the Safe Routes to School Demonstration Program workshop. On October 25th, parents, teachers, school board members, and municipal and county officials came together to learn about and discuss Safe Routes to School programs that encourage and enable children to walk and bike to school safely.

Jamesburg is one of three New Jersey municipalities chosen to participate in the Safe Routes to School Demonstration Program. The workshop is the latest result of a long effort in which the New Jersey Department of Transportation and their consultants, The RBA Group, have worked with the NJ Safe Routes to School Technical Advisory Committee to officially bring Safe Routes to School programs to New Jersey. The workshop sought not only to bring interested volunteers together to learn about and discuss Safe Routes to School programs, but also to establish a network of people in Jamesburg

that can advance Safe Routes to School initiatives that will be responsive to the unique needs of both the JFK School and the community.

At the workshop, participants discussed their goals and visions for the Safe Routes to School program, their observations about what currently works well and does not work well with how children arrive and depart from school, and specific local issues in Jamesburg. The workshop notes will be synthesized to form a Safe Routes to School Action Plan. The action plan will recommend priority projects and activities that the school, municipality, and community can use to create the conditions necessary for students to walk and bike safely. Representatives from The RBA Group are currently working to create the action plan for Jamesburg. KMM has been advised that the action plan should be completed by January. After the success of the demonstration program workshop, KMM looks forward to viewing the action plan and continuing our work to promote Safe Routes to School throughout Middlesex County.

Online Magic – KMM's NEW Interactive Website

If you are a commuter and have access to the Internet and have not yet visited the NEW www.kmm.org, stop what you are doing and rush to your computer. In October 2005, KMM's website became a one-stop information center that provides a host of online services such as commuter classifieds, bike rental availability, mass transit schedules, park & ride lot information, construction updates, and much, much more. The site offers New Jersey drivers an online home where they can explore transportation alternatives. KMM's free commuter services aim to decrease traffic congestion, improve air quality, and reduce stress for drivers.



I-287 Easton Avenue/River Road Interchange Improvement Plan

The I-287 Easton Avenue and River Road interchanges are among the most heavily congested in central Jersey. Everyday, commuters experience long lines accessing the on and off ramps. Slowdowns on the thru lanes and exit roads are common occurrences. While NJ TRANSIT and Somerset County bus routes provide some relief, additional transit service would be welcome.

The good news is that Somerset and Middlesex Counties have been actively evaluating the corridor and exploring measures to ease the traffic headaches. A bi-county steering committee consisting of county and local elected officials, residents, business leaders, and consultants formed to ad-

Short Term Improvement Strategies

- Transit Service Improvements
- Travel Demand Management (TDM)
- Smart Growth/ Transit Friendly Design
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Way-Finding Signage

dress mobility issues. KMM, RideWise of Raritan Valley (Somerset County's TMA), and the New Jersey Transportation Department were at the table too. After collecting and analyzing data, the group reached a consensus on a package of short-term, mid-term, and long-term alternatives. The consultants presented a final report in September 2003. Next, the consultants presented a mobility plan consisting of six short term transportation improvement strategies.

Currently, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority is considering an application from the Middlesex and Somerset County Planning Departments that would fund the design phase of some of these improvements.

To underscore that congestion is a regional issue, KMM and RideWise plan to bring municipal and county officials together for a frank talk about the transit improvements. Early recommendations include expansion of 3 existing routes and the addition of 3 new routes. The TMAs hope to address funding obstacles and opportunities and to develop an action plan that will result in implementation of some of the recommendations. The meeting is scheduled for February, 2006.

The Pulse of Middlesex County Business

Delays stretching for miles on Route 1 between Edison and New Brunswick, congestion at Exit 8A off the NJ Turnpike and back-ups on Route 287 merging off at Easton Avenue on any given morning are not uncommon occurrences in Middlesex County. According to the recent Employer Services survey conducted in the last issue of *On the Move*, traffic congestion is affecting more than just the commuter. Sixty-three percent (63%) of those who responded to the survey indicated traffic congestion affects daily business operations.

Is this affecting your business too? Let KMM assist in getting you and your employees to work...and on time. For sixteen years, KMM has assisted employers in implementing programs that increase productivity and make employee commutes easier and less stressful.

In-house transportation fairs

KMM conducts in-house transportation fairs at businesses across Middlesex County. Some are even conducted on a quarterly basis. At these fairs, KMM assists employees in finding carpool and vanpool partners as well as delivering the most current transit schedules available. Based on the location of the site, KMM customizes the information provided at the fair to best serve its employees.

Emergency Traffic Network

Over 10,000 commuters receive the ETN alerts – helping them to commute to and from work each day. The ETN is sent either via email or fax on a weekly basis indicating the construction schedule for major roads in the county. In the event of an emergency, such as an accident and road closure, an alert is sent out to recipients allowing them to adjust their trips accordingly if this alert affects their normal commute route.

Staggered Work Hour Program

It is surprising to see how arriving to work as little as one hour past normal start time not only avoids traffic but gets a commuter to work faster and stress-free. KMM has assisted businesses in assessing whether their office is a good candidate to implement a staggered work hour program. For those where this program is feasible, employees avoid the morning and evening rush hours by arriving and leaving one hour passed the morning and evening commutes.

These are just some of the programs KMM offers. If you are interested in learning more about these programs, call us today or visit us online. One call or click can save you time and money. (732-745-4318 or www.kmm.org)

Employer Service Survey Follow Up

In the fall 2005 issue of *On the Move*, KMM featured an Employer Services survey. Upon responding to the survey, participants were entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate to the Brunswick Square Mall.

“I love sharing the KMM information with my staff and other facilities in the company. It has helped many employees avoid traffic tie-ups since we are so close to the Turnpike and Route 130.”

Maria Wisbeski Fater, Human Resources Director at Monroe Village
Recipient of the \$50 gift certificate to Brunswick Square Mall

Movers & Shakers

The efforts of Keep Middlesex Moving are supported by the following institutions:

Borough of Highland Park	Greater Media Company	NJ Alliance for Action	Township of Monroe
Borough of Jamesburg	Johnson & Johnson	NJTRANSIT	Township of North Brunswick
Borough of Metuchen	K. Hovnanian Companies	PSE&G	Township of Piscataway
Borough of Milltown	Middlesex County Improvement Authority	Rutgers University	Township of Plainsboro
Borough of South River	Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce	Sayreville Public Library	Township of South Brunswick
Borough of Spotswood	New Brunswick Parking Authority	South Plainfield & Piscataway Chamber of Commerce	Township of Woodbridge
Brunswick Square Mall	New Jersey Department of Transportation	The Regional Planning Partnership	Verizon
Bristol-Myers Squibb	New Jersey Turnpike Authority	Township of Cranbury	Woodbridge Chamber of Commerce
Buckler Associates		Township of East Brunswick	United Way of Central Jersey
City of New Brunswick		Township of Edison	Wyeth Pharmaceuticals
CME Associates			

Morteza Ansari Receives Promotion

Morteza Ansari was recently promoted to Program Manager. A member of the KMM team for over 5 years, Morteza oversees program implementation as well as development and funding. On behalf of the entire Board and staff, we congratulate Morteza on his well deserved promotion.

KMM Staff

Bill Neary Executive Director	Morteza Ansari Program Manager	Lynne Cuevas Secretary/Bookkeeper
Roberta Karpinecz Director of Operations	Arlene Perez Rideshare Coordinator	
Cristina C. Fowler Marketing Administration Manager	Sean Meehan Transportation Planner	

