

On The Move

Associated with the Middlesex County Improvement Authority

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Peter A. Cantu Receives Planning Award

He has a distinguished career with twenty-nine years in public service and twenty-three years as Mayor of Plainsboro. On November 13th 2003, Mayor Peter A. Cantu, Executive Director of KMM, was awarded the C. McKim Norton Community Development Award by The Regional Planning Partnership (RPP). The Award was created in 1983 to honor a long-time RPP Board Member who was a strong advocate of regional planning.

Driving through the township today, one can witness the results of a successful Master Plan that is not only working but also enhancing the community.

In 2001, the governing body adopted a Village Center Master Plan that locates new mixed use development in the center of Plainsboro. This plan is pedestrian, business and transportation friendly. With the opening of the 1,000-acre Plainsboro Preserve in 2003, more than 50% of the township has been designated as open space.



From left to right: Dianne Brake, President of RPP; Peter A. Cantu; Carol Beske, RPP Chairman

It was lack of planning that caused Peter to first run for office in 1975. The governing body at that time, approved projects "without attention paid to planning for the infrastructure – schools, roads, and police services," to support the development. Peter knew such a lackadaisical approach could doom his community.

Soon after becoming Mayor, Peter introduced the first Master Plan for Plainsboro. His vision was to create a community that "addressed adequate transportation needs through infrastructure, balanced development and open space and fostered a sense of community for the residents". Not long after, the Township secured its preservation goals by adopting a six acre zoning class.

Plainsboro also boasts high ridership on the public transit that is available. A public/private shuttle travels from Princeton Junction Train Station to the Princeton Forrestal Conference Center making stops at major industries and park and ride lots located throughout the township. Plainsboro is also a part of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum and is currently working with NJ TRANSIT and NJDOT on a Bus Rapid Transit Proposal for Route 1.

Throughout his remarkable career, Peter Cantu has demonstrated a commitment to growth management, regional planning, environmental issues, affordable housing and suburban and urban revitalization.

Aside from his significant accomplishments in Plainsboro, Peter has also served as Executive Director of KMM for the past fifteen years. "Peter's strong work ethic and unique vision has made not only Plainsboro an ideal place to live but this vision has spilled over into his work at KMM making Middlesex County a place to proudly call home", said Timothy Dacey, Chairman of KMM Board of Directors.

Special thanks to the Regional Planning Partnership.

Winter Driving Requires Cautions

If the *Old Farmer's Almanac* is correct, our snow shovels will be getting quite a bit of use in 2004. We can expect "near-normal snowfall" in the coming months. "Snowy periods" are predicted for mid-late January followed by a nor'easter in early March and wet snow instead of April showers.

As in past Winter issues of *On the Move*, KMM wants to emphasize the importance of being prepared for winter driving by publishing these Winter Driving Tips.

Keep a Winter Kit in your car. Fill your kit with spark plugs, batteries, water, blanket, waterproof gloves, flares, flashlight and a shovel. Each item can come in handy if your car becomes disabled in a snowstorm.

Let your car warm up before driving. Whether your car is old or new, it's a good practice to warm up the car for five to fifteen minutes. This allows the engine to warm up and the ice that has formed on the windshield to dissolve.

Remove ALL of the snow from your vehicle. Leaving snow on the side of the windshields where the wipers don't reach can be dangerous because it creates a blind spot. Leaving the snow piled on the roof of your vehicle can also be dangerous to both you and those driving in your vicinity. Properly clean your vehicle before you leave.

Be attentive to black ice. Black ice is difficult to spot and maneuver even if you are paying close attention to the road and driving cautiously. If you do hit black ice, remember to remove your foot from the brake and turn your wheel to the opposite direction of the spin.

Take Mass Transit. If mass transit is available in your area, make sure you have a schedule on hand. On bad weather days, NJ TRANSIT increases their bus and trains schedules. It's a safe, warm way to get to where you need to go.

Sign up for KMM's ETN. KMM will either fax or email you alerts of road closures and accidents that may affect your commute. What better way to face a wintery commute than equipped with KMM's ETN alerts?

Enjoy the beauty of the Garden State in the Winter months by driving safely!

Congratulations!

KMM is proud to announce the promotions of two of its employees and the addition of one new employee.

Morteza Ansari has been promoted to Senior Transportation Coordinator. A Program Coordinator since 1999, Morteza brings expert knowledge to the numerous projects with which KMM is actively involved. Most recently, Morteza coordinated a survey among bus commuters in the Borough of Sayreville. He also represents KMM on the Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee and on the Route 18 Community Partnering Team.

Elyse Previte been promoted to Commuter Services Administrator. Since joining KMM team in 2000, Elyse has enhanced the Rideshare program through innovative programming and

marketing. Elyse was responsible for creating KMM's newest offering – the Emergency Ride Home program. The result of Elyse's hard work is a service that provides a safety net in the form of a ride home to rideshare registrants who encounter an emergency or unexpected overtime.

Arlene Perez has also joined KMM as a part-time intern. Arlene is currently studying Environmental Economics at Cook College, Rutgers University. She fills an important support role at KMM and has assisted in tabulating surveys, outreach to employers, and distribution of information.

We congratulate Morteza Ansari and Elyse Previte on their promotions and welcome Arlene Perez to the KMM team.

Save the Date

TransAction 2004

28th Annual NJ State Transportation Conference

NJ Department of Transportation
NJ TRANSIT

County Transportation Officials Association of NJ

NJ Council on Community & Special
Transportation

Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

New Jersey's 3 Metropolitan Planning
Organizations

April 19, 20 & 21, 2004

At Tropicana Resort & Casino
Atlantic City, NJ

This NJ State Transportation Conference features road, bridge, railroad and truck freight, intermodal freight and passenger, bus, commuter and light rail, paratransit, bicycle & pedestrian, car and vanpools (ridesharing), traffic calming, ITS and alternate fuels; planning, funding, operations and administration. Includes a major expo with over 100 booths, a networking reception, social activities and over 50 sessions. Last year's attendance was over 1,000 from 22 states and Canada.

Details, general registration, and vendor registration forms from

Frank T. Reilly
Morris County DOT
PO Box 900
Morristown, NJ 07963-0900
telephone (908) 903-1077
Email: FReilly@co.morris.nj.us.

Relief is on its Way for Middlesex County Commuters

Route 27/Wood Avenue

If you are among the commuters affected by traffic congestion at the intersection of Route 27 and Wood Avenue: you'll be happy to learn relief is on its way. In the Summer of 2003, the NJ Department of Transportation met with local residents, property owners, community leaders, businesses and other stakeholders to discuss improvements to this busy intersection north of Metropark.

Metropark was built to attract commuters to the Northeast Corridor Rail Line. It has been so successful that now, thirty years later, the area's roadways are straining to meet the demands of residents, businesses, and commuters traveling to and through Metropark.

The proposed changes are designed to improve mobility and safety. They include a grade separated interchange, widening of Route 27 and Wood Avenue, ramp access to maintain turning movements, shoulders, continuous sidewalks, lighting, furnishings, and landscaping, and relocation of Coppermine Brook.

Preliminary designs are scheduled for completion in Spring, 2004. If a construction contract is awarded as planned, in 2006, the project is expected to be completed in 2-3 years.

Route 287 Easton Avenue and River Road Improvements

A unique partnership has formed in an effort to decrease congestion on Route 287 at Easton Avenue and River Road. Local leaders from Middlesex and Somerset counties and the Townships of Franklin and Piscataway have joined forces with residents, businesses, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The result of this alliance is a package of short-, mid- and long-term improvements to help reduce congestion and enhance safety at these interchanges.

The initiative calls for short-term improvements like adding signage and improving traveler information systems as well as eliminating or reconfiguring U-Turns on Easton Avenue. Mid-term improvements include widening Easton Avenue at Davidson Avenue and re-aligning the ramp at Exit 9. Long-term improvements will widen Easton Avenue northbound at Davidson and improve connections at Exits 9 and 10.

Currently, the short-term projects are in the preliminary design stage. Longer term projects are undergoing feasibility studies.

Witches, Ghosts and Vampires Haunt Plainsboro

You wouldn't think that princesses, pirates, ghosts, goblins, witches and vampires have a lot in common. But, they do. They all love Halloween and when they go trick or treating, they need to be careful. That's why KMM has sponsored our annual Halloween Safety Poster Contest for four years. Each year, KMM works on the poster contest with a municipality that has participated in International Walk Our Children to School Day.

This year, students in grades K-4 at Plainsboro's Wicoff School were invited to submit posters depicting *How to be a safe pedestrian & bicyclist on Halloween*. Students competed to draw the most creative and informative poster and to receive the top prize for their grade. The judges presented a gift certificate from the Sports Authority to one winner from each of the four grades. The winners were announced and the prizes awarded during a special assembly that occurred after the school's Halloween parade.

KMM wishes to extend a special thanks to the teachers of Wicoff School and Officer Michael Kelly for their work in helping KMM bring the Halloween event to Plainsboro.



Winner of the 2003 Halloween Contest along with KMM Transportation Planner, Sean Meehan and Plainsboro Police Officer Michael Kelly.

Walking Safely - Walking Healthy

October 8, 2003 marked KMM's 5th year hosting the International Walk Our Children to School event in Middlesex County. Mayors, police officers, parents, teachers and children from Dunellen, Highland Park, Jamesburg, Metuchen, Middlesex, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, Piscataway, Plainsboro, South River, Milltown, Spotswood and Woodbridge participated in walks, assemblies, and other organized activities.

Many municipalities set up meeting spots along school routes where groups of children could walk to school together. Other communities hosted parades on school grounds. KMM's goal is to teach children about the importance of using crosswalks and looking both ways before crossing the street as well as the health benefits associated with walking. Townships like New Brunswick, Metuchen and Highland Park dedicated the week to events that taught children how to stay safe and healthy.

Walk Our Children to School Day was established in 1997 by The Partnership for a Walkable America. Today, over thirty-three countries participate in this event, making it one of the most successful programs of its kind.

In Middlesex County, the Walk grows more successful each year. Sean Meehan, KMM's Transportation Planner said it was "the biggest event yet" with thirteen municipalities hosting activities.

Through funding from the NJ Department of Transportation, KMM was able to provide each municipality with safety coloring books, book marks and reflective zipper pulls.

The annual event is held the first Tuesday in October. For more information, please contact Sean Meehan (732) 745-5903.





Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc.
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 New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Movers & Shakers

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

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



Does your company offer mass transit information to your employees?

Does your company have employees who carpool or vanpool?

Does your company have employees that telecommute?

If you can answer yes to any of these questions, you may be eligible to receive Best Workplaces for Commuters designation. A benefit of this designation includes

statewide media recognition. For more information, please call Cristina Fowler (732) 745-4318. Deadline for submission is February 1, 2004.

KMM Staff

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Morteza Ansari Senior Transportation Coordinator	Elyse Previte Commuter Services Administrator
Cristina C. Fowler Marketing Administration Manager	Gail Wolynech Program Assistant
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