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# NANTUCKET

## REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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2007 – 2030

ENDORSED ON MARCH 5, 2007

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NANTUCKET METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

ENDORSEMENT OF THE

2007 – 2030 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
AND  
AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINATION

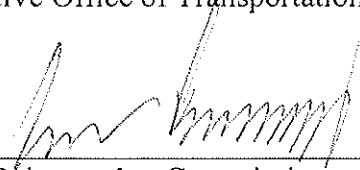
In accordance with 23 CFR Part 450 Section 322 (Metropolitan transportation planning process: Transportation Plan) of the October 28, 1993 Final Rules for Statewide and Metropolitan Planning, the Committee of Signatories representing the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Nantucket Region hereby endorses the 2006 – 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Also, in accordance with Section 176 (C)(4) of the Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 [42 U.S.C. 7251(a)], the MPO for the Nantucket Region has completed its review and hereby certifies that the implementation of the Nantucket MPO Regional Transportation Plan satisfies the conformity criteria specified in both 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93 (August 15, 1997) and 310 CMR 60.03 (December 30, 1994); furthermore this plan includes all regional significant projects contained in the previously endorsed Nantucket MPO 2007 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The projects in the TIP are of the same design and concept that were analyzed in the Regional Transportation Plan. Therefore no new air quality analysis is required for the TIP. Both the Nantucket 2006 – 2030 Regional Transportation Plan and the Nantucket MPO 2007 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program are consistent with the air quality goals of, and in conformity with the Massachusetts State Implementation Plan.

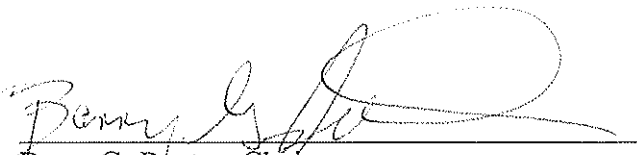
Signatory Certification:

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Bernard Cohen, Secretary of Transportation  
Executive Office of Transportation

3/22/07  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Luisa Paiewonsky, Commissioner  
Massachusetts Highway Department

3/26/07  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry G. Rector, Chairman  
Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission

3/8/07  
Date



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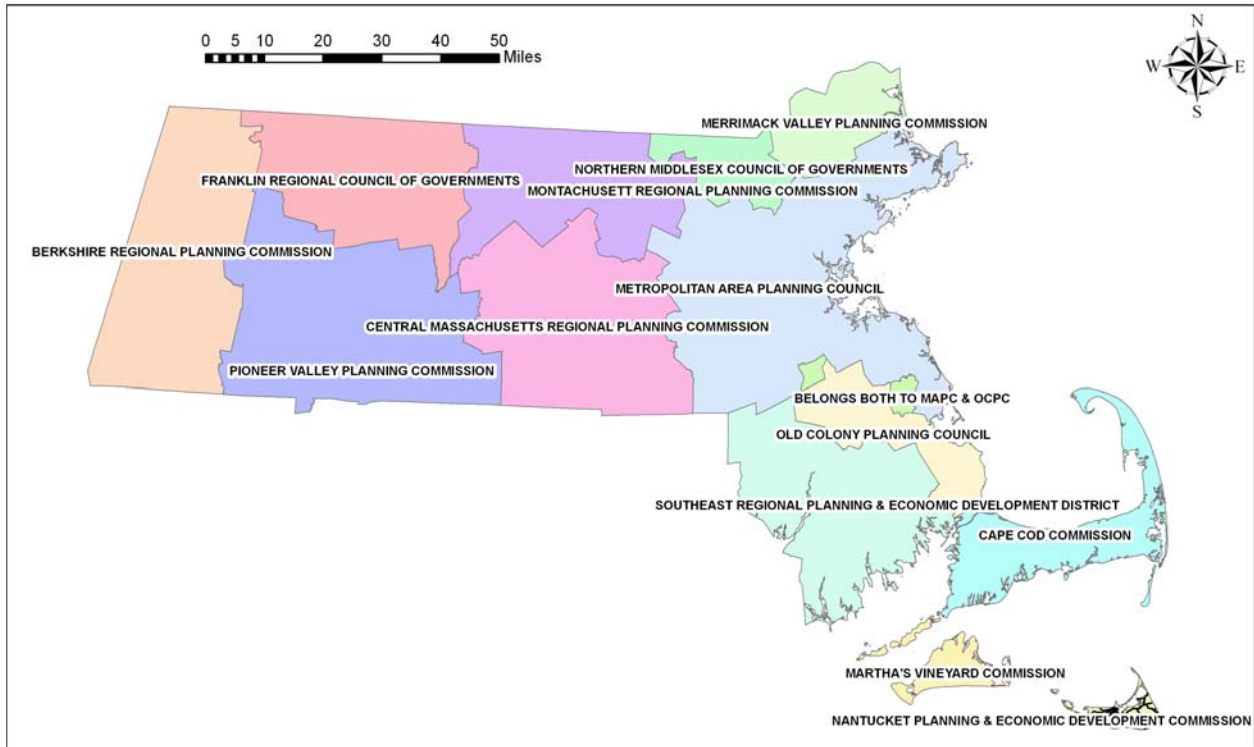
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**Map 1. Map of Regional Planning Agencies**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Nantucket Island is located 25 miles off the south shore of Cape Cod and approximately 38 miles southeast of Woods Hole, Massachusetts in Nantucket Sound. The main island of Nantucket is approximately 45.9 square miles, and is 14 miles long and varies in width from 3 to 6 miles. In addition to the main body of the Island, two barrier Islands, Tuckernuck and Muskeget, lie to the west of Nantucket Island. Nantucket is served by ferry and airplane from Hyannis, Massachusetts and direct air service from Boston, Providence, metropolitan New York City and Washington, DC.

Nantucket Island is unique because it is both a town and county. The Island is also one of Massachusetts' thirteen regional planning areas, for which the Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission (NP&EDC) is the Regional Planning Agency (RPA).

Nantucket has unique geographic, natural and historic characteristics. The Island consists of barrier beaches and fragile inland and coastal wetlands. Nantucket is also home to a diverse mix of wildlife and plant habitats.

In 1966, the entire Island of Nantucket was designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior. The Massachusetts legislature also designated the County of Nantucket as a Historic District in 1970 and authorized a Historic District Commission to

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oversee it. The Island has a large collection of eighteenth and early nineteenth century homes. An informal survey identified over 400 dwellings remaining, which were erected between 1750 and 1850.

Nantucket depends greatly upon the survival of its natural and historic resources to maintain its attraction as a tourist destination. Much of Nantucket's economy is income generated from tourists and other visitors, retirees, and second-home owners. Maintenance of the Island's natural and marine resources is also important to the future success of its resource-dependent industries such as shell fishing.

Transportation plays a critical role in Nantucket's future. It is important that the Island maintain its historic character while providing a safe and efficient means for visitors and residents to travel to and around the Island. Traffic gridlock threatens Nantucket's aesthetics and character that tourists seek.

## **1.2. NP&EDC**

The Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission (NP&EDC) serves as one of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' thirteen Regional Planning Agencies. Ten of these agencies are federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). Federal regulations require that an MPO be formed in urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more. While the Nantucket region (as well as the Martha's Vineyard and Franklin regions) do not meet these criteria, the Executive Office of Transportation and the Massachusetts Highway Department provide planning funds for transportation planning in these regions, essentially treating them as MPOs.

The Nantucket MPO consists of a Committee of Signatories (COS) who together make decisions about transportation planning goals, projects, priorities and funding. The Nantucket COS consists of the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) and the Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission. For the purpose of this document, the Committee of Signatories will be referred to as the Nantucket MPO.

In its role as an MPO member, the NP&EDC follows federal transportation planning regulations, including the participation of citizen advisory groups in transportation planning activities.

## **1.3. SAFETEA-LU**

On August 10, 2005, the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling \$244.1 billion, SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on

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this foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.

SAFETEA-LU addresses the many challenges facing our transportation system today – challenges such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment – as well as laying the groundwork for addressing future challenges. SAFETEA-LU promotes more efficient and effective Federal surface transportation programs by focusing on transportation issues of national significance, while giving State and local transportation decision-makers more flexibility for solving transportation problems in their communities.

SAFETEA-LU continues a strong fundamental core formula program emphasis coupled with targeted investment, featuring:

- Safety
- Equity
- Innovative finance
- Congestion Relief
- Mobility & Productivity
- Efficiency
- Environmental Stewardship
- Environmental Streamlining

#### **1.4. TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE COMMONWEALTH**

In 2005, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation developed a new agenda for transportation to support community goals, provide safe and efficient mobility for individuals and goods, and enhance both the economy and the natural environment by encouraging growth in areas of established development. This planning document is known as *A Framework for Thinking, A Plan for Action*, and outlines eight themes that provide a vision for the future, and articulates the mission of the Massachusetts transportation agencies. These principles are:

- Objective, coordinated, transparent, and inclusive decision-making;
- System preservation;
- Transportation and sustainable development;
- Operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness;
- Mobility;
- Safety;
- Security;
- Special constituencies (i.e., elderly or disabled)

#### **1.5. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

In addition to considering the Commonwealth's Transportation Plan, described in section 1.4, the NP&EDC staff developed the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the

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Nantucket MPO in compliance with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This plan provides a demographic framework, the NP&EDC's goals and objectives for transportation facilities, as well as a financially constrained action plan of recommended programs and projects through the year 2030.

This plan must also consider planning factors for projects and programs as provided in SAFETEA-LU. These SAFETEA-LU planning factors and this plan's consideration of these factors are as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
  - *Section 3.1 provides an overview of goals for Nantucket that ensure the health of the island's industry. And although there currently is no economic development plan, the Town and County concept used for land use development is incorporated into goal 3.3.2 of this plan.*
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
  - *Section 10 of this plan provides a discussion of safety improvement efforts for various transportation facilities.*
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
  - *Section 11 of this plan provides a discussion of security improvement efforts for various transportation facilities.*
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
  - *Increasing accessibility and mobility for people is a continuing theme of this plan's goals, and is directly addressed in the goals and objectives in section 3.3 and 3.4. Freight accessibility and mobility is primarily addressed in sections 4.6, 8.1.3, and 9.1.4. Specific goals concerning freight movement can be found in section 4.7.2.*
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
  - *Environmental, historical, and tribal resources are discussed in section 2.3, and specific goals and objectives to protect and enhance these resources are found in section 3.5.*
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
  - *Intermodal enhancement is found in many sections of this plan, including sections 3.4, 4.4, 5.1.5, 8.1.4, and 9.4.*
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
  - *Discussions of system management and operational efficiencies are found primarily in the NRTA, Airport, and Steamship Authority, specifically in the areas of intelligent transportation systems, or ITS (section 5.1.8), and in the safety (section 10), and security (section 11) sections of this plan.*
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

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- *Although preservation of the island's infrastructure is discussed in section 2.3.1, specific goals to accomplish this are found primarily in section 3.5.*

## **1.6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**

The NP&EDC conducted a public participation process, as required in SAFETEA-LU, involving coordination with the agencies and committees representing State and Federal governments, the ferry services, the airport services, land use management, public transportation, aging and disabled populations, tribal governments, environmental / natural resources, and historic resources. In addition to this coordination, the NP&EDC itself, charged in it's legislation with recommending plans for the economic, social and physical development of Nantucket related to transportation, land use, population growth, as well as being composed of representatives of the Housing Authority, Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, County government, and Planning Board (land management), contributed to the development of this plan.

The NP&EDC initiated the public participation process by holding two separate public informational meetings on August 24, 2006 (in the morning and evening) to review the updated community demographics and statistics related to the usage of transportation facilities. These meetings were open to the general public, and were noticed for a two-week period in the *Inquirer and Mirror* newspaper.

Other meetings / coordination efforts included:

August 17, 2006: NRTA Consumer Advisory Committee  
August 22, 2006: Nantucket Conservation Commission  
September 6, 2006: Nantucket Council on Aging  
November 8, 2006: Commission on Disability  
November 8, 2006: Nantucket Board of Selectmen  
December 30, 2006: Nantucket Memorial Airport  
December 28, 2006: Steamship Authority  
January 2, 2007: Nantucket Historic District Commission  
January 4, 2007: Nantucket Planning Board  
January 31, 2007: Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head

On January 8, 2007, the NP&EDC voted to initiate, and advertise in the *Inquirer and Mirror* newspaper, a formal public review period of the draft RTP from January 11, 2006 to March 5, 2007. A public hearing to solicit comments and questions during this review period was held on February 5, 2007. Comment letters resulting from this outreach effort are attached to this plan in Appendix 1. Following a public hearing, **the NP&EDC voted unanimously to endorse this RTP on March 5, 2007.**