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Help Plan the Region's Transportation Future **New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Regional Travel Survey**

Sept 2, 2010 - To better understand the tri-state area's transportation needs now and into the future, the region's transportation planning agencies are launching a Regional Travel Survey that will look at how – and why – people move around 28 targeted counties in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Beginning in September and continuing over the next year, travel data will be collected from more than 18, 000 randomly selected households in this area, each representing thousands of other households. More information can be found at www.RegionalTravelSurvey.org. To reach the maximum number of households, the survey will also be available in Spanish, Chinese and Russian.

The results will allow planners and transportation providers to develop plans to improve transit systems, reduce traffic congestion, address air quality issues, and ensure the safety of the region's transportation network. Participation in the survey, while not mandatory, will help provide key travel statistics for the region and help plan future transportation investments. The survey will update data collected in a similar household travel survey conducted in 1997/1998. The federally funded Regional Travel Survey is sponsored by the region's metropolitan planning organizations, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Agency (NJTPA), in conjunction with the planning agencies representing Connecticut, and Orange and Dutchess counties. They have contracted with NuStats, a nationally-known survey research firm specializing in travel behavior and transportation research, which will conduct the survey.

Joel Ettinger, executive director of NYMTC, emphasized the importance of participating in the survey, saying, "Results from the Regional Travel Survey will help guide future transportation projects in the region. To plan for the projects of tomorrow, we need to know how people move around, reasons they travel and who uses the transportation system today. With your input, we will be better able to develop plans for transportation improvements that affect mobility, access to jobs, air quality, and quality of life in the region."

Mary K. Murphy, executive director of NJTPA said, "How we plan the region's transportation in the future will be guided by the results of this survey. It is important that we capture the way people travel and why so that we can use scarce funding in the most effective way. Regardless of how you travel, we hope that you will join us in this important effort."

Several hundred thousand randomly selected households will receive letters asking for their participation in the survey. Following a brief telephone call or web survey to gather some basic household information, participants will be invited to take part in the diary portion of the study. A few days later, they will receive personalized travel diaries by mail for all household members. Each person age 16 and older keeps track of his or her travel for a 24-hour period. Parents/guardians should complete diaries for children under age 16.

Participation in the Regional Travel Survey is voluntary and all information that each household provides will be kept strictly confidential. The names and personal information will be separated from the responses for analysis purposes and all results will be reported in summary form only.