



## NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN WORKING GROUP

March 10, 2022

Teleconference

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### MEETING NOTES

#### **Participating**

- A/GFTC – Jack Mance
- BMTS – Scott Reigle
- BMTS – Ashley Seyfried
- CDTC – Chaim Simon
- CDTC – Jen Ceponis
- DCTC – Emily Dozier
- ECTC – Courtney Taylor
- FHWA – Nicole McGrath
- HOCTC – Alexander Turner
- ITCTC – Jay Lambrix
- NYMTC – John Simpson
- NYSDOT – Karen Lorf
- NYSDOT – Colleen Smith Lemmon
- NYSDOT – Valerie Deane
- NYSDOT – Alexandra Beck
- NYSDOT – Sandra Lusher
- NYSDOT – Julie Baldwin
- NYSDOT – Jim Cuzzo
- NYSDOT – Cristina Graveling
- NYSDOT – Susan Pitely
- NYSDOT – Meg Webster
- NYSDOT – Korie McAllister
- NYSDOT – David Krulewitch
- OCTC – Jessica Ridgeway
- SMTC – Kevin Kosakowski
- UCTC – David Staas
- WJCTC – Geoff Urda
- Planning4Places – James Levy

#### **1. Introductions**

Emily Dozier opened the meeting.

#### **2. Approval of Meeting Notes**

The meeting notes from the December 2021 Zoom meeting were approved for posting to the website.

#### **3. NYSDOT Updates**

Karen reported that NYSDOT is working on many projects. Staff is finalizing the active transportation plan RFP and are close to getting it released. Colleen is working with staff to overhaul the Complete Streets Checklist and making good progress. With a major revision, it should be more likely that items currently falling through the cracks will be caught and there should be more coordination with regions and MPOs. This more detailed update effort will take longer but will be a solid update. A new hire, David Krulewitch, is starting to look at the way the counts program is conducted. NYSDOT has good technical abilities but doesn't have a good policy for the program. David may reach out to MPOs to discuss count programs.

Finally, Meg will be focusing more on outreach and education. With additional staff trying to do more outreach, NYSDOT is looking to better coordinate with communities and other agencies. For bike routes using State highways, they are looking at a more robust permitting process. Please let Karen know if you are aware of any plans for a bike route using a State road. Regarding signs, there is no update at this time.

#### 4. Partner Agency Updates

No partner agency staff were on the call.

#### 5. BMTS – Two Rivers Greenway Trail Maintenance Report – 2021 Snapshot

Ashley Seyfried provided a presentation on the BMTS project. This project looked at the trail system in the BMTS area and is an update to the 2019 effort. The expectation is to do a report every 2 years to prioritize maintenance. This effort included multiple municipalities and 2 counties. The system has eco-counters on it.

The assessment was conducted by breaking the trail system into 1/10-mile sections to assess conditions in detail. The ArcGIS Collector app was used to collect data. Pavement was scored by looking at the frequency and depth of cracking. Maintenance was assessed using a 1-3 scoring system which assessed the trail and surrounding conditions, including trash, overgrown vegetation, and encroachments onto the trail. Major hazards like large potholes were documented. Signage was also assessed to identify any damage.

This effort resulted in the development of overall and individual trail condition sheets. These sheets showed statistics on the information collected. Detailed comments for each trail section were also provided. This information was uploaded into an interactive GIS map where users can click on a trail segment icon to see the trail name, details, notes and photos of the trail, sign and other notes. All information was provided to municipalities and trail conditions were color coded to each segment to represent good, fair, or poor condition.

Colleen asked if the info is on the BMTS website. Ashley noted that there is a link on <http://www.bmtsonline.com/data/pavement-ratings>.

Christina Graveling asked what level of personnel time was required to undertake this effort and if personnel were dedicated to just this project. Scott noted that it took approximately 3-4 days of total staff time by the two of them. Staff walked city trails and used bikes to cover other trails. They were able to cover approximately 10-15 miles. The ESRI Collector app was key because information is loaded automatically into the system while in the field. The app can be downloaded from ESRI, but it does need to be setup in advance.

Emily asked Ashley if she could provide more detail on the Collector app. Ashley stated that she configured the effort in ARCGIS Pro and uploaded to the map in ArcGIS Online. Users can customize the attributes and options to select. If using an ArcGIS subscription, it should work at all levels. The app was free to download on a phone and sign-in was done with the NYSAMPO account - it is uploaded through the app and shows up automatically in the office GIS. **Jim** will coordinate with the GIS WG Chairs about a possible training on the Collector app.

## 6. Work Plan

Work plan items have been assigned to sub-committees.

### - **Ped/Bike Counters Sub-Committee**

Scott noted that there isn't much new since the subcommittee last met. From that meeting we did discuss ongoing costs to BMTS for counters. A spreadsheet detailing costs is available on the ped/bike counts forum.

Kevin at SMTC is working with NYSDOT Region 3 staff to come up with times and locations for counts on the Syracuse section of the Empire State Trail and was looking to hear from others about setting up bike/ped count programs. Karen noted that NYSDOT is doing counts in various locations so locations should be coordinated. They did some last year and will be doing more this year. Julie Baldwin (Region 3) asked SMTC to assist and has been in touch with the NYSDOT Highway Data Services Group. The plan currently is to standardize counts but they probably won't start a formal count program until next year. The Region can undertake a special count this year. Kevin noted that he has coordinated with Dylan at PTNY. Some PTNY counts were conducted before the new section opened, but there is interest in seeing what the data is on the new section. They are looking at the complicated section – the divided roadway with a trail in the median and sidewalks on either side on a boulevard. Karen noted that there are plans for the boulevard section already. NYSDOT's next Bike/Ped coordinators meeting on April 7 will discuss counts; Julie will participate, and **Karen** can report back at our next meeting.

Emily asked if the counts are being conducted using cameras. If so, they should be able to capture a broad area, like a boulevard. Karen noted that Michael Grant is the contact at NYSDOT for this effort and NYSDOT is supplementing counts with cameras. Karen noted that Region 10 has done the most counts in the state and there is a lack of counts in other regions. It would be great if you can repeat locations and show growth over time. Julie noted that she is not sure who owns certain parts of the trail or how to set counters on trail sections owned by others. Karen stated that Michael Grant's group sets out most of the counters and has knowledge on this topic.

### - **Complete Streets Toolkit**

**Jim** L. provided a quick overview of the toolkit and will email snapshot images of the page. If any MPOs have examples of local best practices (implemented projects, before/after photos, etc.) that can be a link or posted to the page, please let him know. **Geoff** will schedule a follow-up meeting for the subcommittee.

Nicole noted that it would be helpful to review FHWA's new report to Congress about Complete Streets "Moving to a Complete Streets Design Model: A Report to Congress on Opportunities and Challenges":

[https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-](https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-03/Complete%20Streets%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf)

[03/Complete%20Streets%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf](https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-03/Complete%20Streets%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf). **Nicole** will send this to the group; it could be discussed at our next meeting.

Scott noted that Dan Suraci at Urban Cycling Solutions has funding to do 90-minute virtual Complete Streets workshops. BMTS is planning to hold one on June 22<sup>nd</sup> for Johnson City. Karen asked if the workshops are effective, and Scott stated that BMTS has done a few (one with Dan in person about 3 years ago). Last year the virtual one was more general and was open to everyone in the region. It was informational but it really helps to look at specific alternatives. Karen asked if these workshops are getting engagement from people who aren't knowledgeable about Complete Streets. Scott stated that the remote workshop likely informed the most people about Complete Streets as this effort was tied into planning & zoning training done by the County. Karen asked if there has been any engagement of highway officials in the workshops? Scott noted that they have attended. Even with the workshops and training, there is still pushback, but the general feeling is that it is important to keep getting the information out. It was noted that a good place to engage highway officials is through the Cornell Local Roads Program workshops (<https://cals.cornell.edu/nysltap-local-roads>). Scott suggested adding these educational resources to the toolkit.

- **Cost Estimating Fact Sheet**

**Karen** is working with NYSDOT staff to get the formulas used in their tool and will follow up. Empire State Trail estimates and NYSDOT estimates are the focus. **Jim** will follow up to get the EST estimates. More to come on this topic as it is further assessed.

Jim C. asked how trail and other bike/ped infrastructure maintenance can be funded. Funding provided for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is primarily designated for construction. How can MPOs help fund maintenance as costs keep going up and maintenance budgets are not created? The group could discuss this more on our next call. This may also be an issue to discuss with Cornell Local Roads.

- **E-Bikes Fact Sheet**

Jim provided a quick overview and noted that the Fact Sheet is now on the website. Karen noted that the NYSDOT legal department is still working through issues related to e-bikes, particularly on trails/shared-use paths.

Emily asked if an e-scooters fact sheet should be drafted since they are becoming more prevalent and a safety concern. Jay stated that it may be worthwhile to look at e-mobility as e-scooters is too narrow. Emily noted that the State law only covers e-bikes and e-scooters. Colleen added that if the fact sheet's purpose is to explain the law, an e-scooter focus makes sense. Jay provided the following link related to e-mobility: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2WRG880sm0>. Jim L. noted that there is a shared mobility page on the NYSAMPO website: <https://www.nysmpos.org/sharedmobility>, which could be updated. **Emily** will ask the Safety Working Group for their input and interest.

## 7. MPO Projects & Discussion Items

Liability: Emily discussed an issue related to local liability from safety studies. A sidewalk study was done in a village and the village was threatened with a lawsuit because a location flagged for improvements had not yet been improved. The question was raised about liability from planning assessments and studies. It was generally determined that if a municipality is making a good faith effort toward implementation and documenting how it is implementing the recommendations, there should not be any legal issues.

NYS Cycling Census: Karen noted that it was disappointing that the survey didn't focus on issues like traveling as a family and security concerns. **Jim L.** will reach out to Dan Suraci to see if a presentation on the survey results is an option for the June meeting.

Walk-Bike New York: Emily asked who is planning to attend. Karen noted that Meg & David will be attending as well as many of the bike/ped coordinators. A large Region 4 delegation will be attending. Nicole, Geoff, Scott, Jay, Chaim, Emily, Tara, and Jessica will be attending. There is interest in holding an in-person meeting and dinner. Emily, Scott and Jim will help coordinate with Alex Kone from GTC.

Scott noted that a week after Walk-Bike New York the ITE NE District Annual meeting will be held in Ithaca. Scott sent **Jim** an email which will be sent to the group.

Future Presentation Topic ideas:

- FHWA Complete Streets policy (or others relevant to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Working group) (Nicole)
- Trail maintenance issues/funding options (PTNY, Jim C @ R5, others?)
- Cycling Census results (Dan S)
- 10% cycling mode shift, what would we have to do? What strategies would be required? What does rural cycling infrastructure look like? How viable is cycling in a rural context if given the proper infrastructure? What is the best rural infrastructure? (**Jay** to research and coordinate with Jim L.)
- Karen noted that changes in zoning and planning can benefit bicycling and bicycle infrastructure. Site plan review criteria to install and replace sidewalks and infrastructure as part of projects is a key element. Case studies of where it has been done successfully both for zoning & planning and infrastructure installation could be useful.

## 8. Action Items

The following items are noted for follow-up:

1. Let Karen know if you are aware of any plans for a bike route using a State road.
2. Karen will follow up to get the NYSDOT cost estimating formulas. Jim will get the EST estimates.
3. Karen will report back about ped/bike counts from the Coordinators' meeting.

4. Nicole McGrath to provide an overview of the Complete Streets report at the June meeting: <https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-03/Complete%20Streets%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>
5. Jim will email snapshots of the Complete Streets toolkit. If there are any examples of local best practices that can be a link or posted to the Toolkit page, please email Jim L.
6. Emily will ask the Safety Working Group about a e-mobility fact sheet or other tool.
7. Jim will coordinate with the GIS WG Chairs about a possible training on the Collector app.
8. Jim will reach out to Dan Suraci to see if a presentation on survey results is an option for the June meeting.
9. Jim will email the group about the ITE NE District Annual meeting.
10. Jay will research and coordinate with Jim L. on 10% mode shift and rural cycling ideas.