



**NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs  
MODELING WORKING GROUP  
January 29, 2021**

**Conference Call  
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Participating**

- AVAIL, Eric Krans
- AVAIL, Catherine Lawson
- AVAIL, Alex Muro
- CS, Rich Denbow
- CDTC, Chris Bauer (Co-chair)
- SMTC, Jason Deshaies (Chair)
- DCTC, Emily Dozier
- FHWA, Sarah Sun
- ITCTC, Jay Lambrix
- NYMTC, Michael Chiume
- NYMTC, Munnesh Patel
- NYMTC, Jianghao Zhu
- NYSDOT, Jim Davis
- NYSDOT, Mark Grainer
- NYSDOT, Nathen Harp
- NYSDOT, Alan Warde
- OCTC, Lauren Burns
- OCTC, Zach Coleman
- UCTC, David Staas

**1. Introductions**

Alex Muro (AVAIL) opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

**2. Work Plan Review**

Jason discussed the Modeling WG Work Plan. A draft Work Plan was provided to the WG in early January and discussed at the January 8, 2021 meeting. Comments were requested prior to today's meeting. Jason summarized the comments provided. One change is to add the FHWA Travel Forecasting training event. Jason and Chris will start working with FHWA next month on the training.

Jason asked if we should add an item to continue to look at the travel impacts related to the pandemic. The WG supports adding this item. Alan Warde said that NYSDOT is also looking

at data on travel behavior changes in NY during the pandemic. Dr. Lawson added that BTS is posting national information for all modes.

Each Work Plan will include a compendium of datasets, tools/applications, and other resources that are available to MPOs in New York State. This will help to ensure that these resources are documented. Jason initiated a list of resources and provided it to the WG prior to the meeting. Jason and Rich will incorporate all comments and provide a final draft Work Plan to the NYSAMPO staff consultant. It will then be submitted to the NYSAMPO Directors with the other WG Work Plans for review and approval.

### **3. Census Data and MOEs**

Emily Dozier discussed the topic of how practitioners address statistical error (MOE) with Census data (ACS). She discussed a previous approach at DCTC with Walk Bike Dutchess. In this example, based on an ESRI white paper, CVs of 12% to 40% were flagged as 'use with caution' and CV greater than 40% were not used. An approach being used for the Moving Dutchess Forward EJ analysis includes a disclaimer for the demographic map, which is based on ACS 5-year estimates, that says estimates may have a high margin of error, especially for lower-population areas. Typically, DCTC looks at larger areas (municipal) and considers the upper and lower bounds of the estimate. If the lower bound is above the upper bound for the countywide average they assume the estimate is above the county average. They are still looking for a more nuanced approach.

The Census Bureau provides information on how to use MOEs for statistical testing, how to approximate the MOE for an estimate, and additional resources. See <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/training-presentations/acs-moe.html>.

### **4. Update on NPMRDS Software**

AVAIL discussed recent updates to the NPMRDS tool.

- Data from December 2020 is now available in the reporting tools.
  - It's worth noting that the NPMRDS data has travel time information, not counts, so the data is of limited use for the purposes of analyzing the effects of the pandemic on travel behavior. From the data we can infer that counts decreased, but the AVAIL team has not yet done an in-depth analysis.
- When comparing travel time in 2019 and 2020, reliability has increased. Peaks are not as congested, and PHED has decreased considerably.

### **5. Miscellaneous**

Jason asked if anyone has a good resource for number of employees per square foot of development buy sector. He has looked for resources and found that many are outdated and provide a wide range. Alex suggested Infogroup data.

### **6. Next Meeting**

The next MWG meeting will take place on February 26, 2021.