

NYSAMPO Association
Transit Working Group Teleconference
Thursday, August 20, 2015 – 10:30 AM
Call-in #: 1-866-546-3377 toll-free, passcode 6135021939#

1. Introductions

Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council - A/GFTC – Kate Mance
Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study - BMTS – Jennifer Yonkoski
Capital District Transportation Committee – CDTC – Anne Benware
Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council - ECTC – Tina Hager
Genesee Transportation Council - GTC – Bob Torzynski
Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study - HOCTS – Not present
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council – ITCTC - Dwight Mengel
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council – NYMTC – Not present
Orange County Transportation Council - OCTC– Not present
Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council - PDCTC – Mark Debald
Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council - SMTC – Mario Colone
Ulster County Transportation Council - UCTC – Brian Slack
Watertown Jefferson – Not present
NYSDOT – Tom Vaughan, Lisa Cataldo

2. Report on June MPO Conference – Transit

- General attendee comments
- AICP - CM Credits: #e.31219 NYSAMPO 2015 Conference, APA New York Upstate Chapter, Syracuse, NY, June 22 - 24, 2015, 16.0 Credits Available
 - All presentations are now available on the NYSAMPO website now.
 - There were two sessions at the conference related to Transit:
 - Ladders of Opportunity, which covered (1) how Ladders of Opportunity can be applied to the coordinating process at the MPOs with Bob Torzynski, (2) how to use data - including interviews and direct user input - for transit development and obtaining funding with Richard Quodomine, and (3) a wide overview from Victor Waldron at FTA in terms of how FTA views the Ladders of Opportunity approach to planning.
 - Transit and Mobility Management, which covered (1) a state-level view of transit and mobility management from Bob Zerrillo, (2) rethinking models of mobility community systems with Dwight Mengel, and (3) an overview of the mobility management at the county level from JoAnne Spoto Decker from Onondaga County
- Comment: The Crowne Plaza and facilities were great. I enjoyed the sessions, especially the Ladders of Opportunity. It provided a good overview and demonstrated how it is a multi-faceted approach to integrating programs, with community mobility being one.
- Comment: I am new to the MPO world, and I thought the sessions led by other member MPOs were valuable. The pedestrian crash data session was very good. The Crowne Plaza had bicycles available, which was great to go out and use the bicycle lanes themselves.

3. 5310 Program – Debriefing on the 2015 Round for the 5310 Program

- What is the status of the program and recommendations at the MPO's and NYSDOT-Main Office? (How are MPO's handling including these projects in the TIP?)
- What was the experience using SharePoint, or alternatives?
- Lessons learned, and considerations for the next (TBD) 5310 Program Solicitation.
 - Comment: GTC experience technical issues but were able to get the applications in and specified for the TIP. We noticed that a lot of the proposals included parts both inside and outside of the urbanized area. We looked at the proposals to determine a percentage of the people who would be served (e.g., people with disabilities, the elderly) within and outside of urbanized area and came up with process that could fund almost all of the requests.
 - Comment: A/GFTC had difficulty with the technology. We went into Sharepoint and printed each section to a PDF separately to send to the rating and ranking committee. In addition, we found it difficult to know which section we were looking at based on the format of the applications on the screen/in Sharepoint. This should be considered for future improvements. We did not have many complaints from applicants, but we did not receive many calls.
 - Comment: CDTC followed a similar process to A/GFTC. We made PDFs by printing the Sharepoint screens and putting the sections together for the rating and ranking committee. We used the spreadsheet DOT had for committees for our rating and ranking. Our TIP person is working with Tom at DOT regarding how the selected projects should show in the TIP/STIP. Our applicants did not experience many issues except for the electronic signatures, but DOT worked with the applicants to resolve the issue.
 - Comment: BMTS had three entities applying that experienced last minute issues. NYSDOT let us know that if there were authorization errors and ensure the applications were in on time.
 - Comment: ITCTC had only one applicant, but the applicant was very happy that the process transitioned to electronic format. We helped the applicant with various questions, and the applicant were pleased that we started early because they needed all of the time.
 - Comment: We did not work with Sharepoint site because we only had four applicants that submitted and did not meet the funding level available in area. We look forward to sharing funds in the next application period.
 - Comment: The review process worked well, and the sections were seamless. This was a move in the right direction. The major problem was the electronic signatures.
 - Comment: The transition was a complicated process, but it is rare that things like this succeed on the first try, so it was a good learning moving forward. We had 17 applications and most of our problems related to attachments on the Sharepoint system. It would have been great if we had a little more time.
 - Comment: The State is applying for \$36 million out of the \$47 million available. It was hard to meet the deadline because NYSDOT spent a lot of time responding to FTA's questions/inquired. We had to retype a lot of the information even though the process was electronic, so we need to figure out how to improve the return information format. Action for this round is complete. NYSDOT will look at what funding is available and next steps.

- Comment: When can we expect the next round of 5310 applications?
 - Response: Spring of 2016. We will have workshops in late February and March to make sure we have more time than this year.
4. Coordinated Plans – what is the status of the MPO’s in terms of Coordinated Plan Updates?
- Comment: GTC is updating our plan. It will be adopted by the Board in September. This is an update to the 2011 plan, which was comprehensive and did not require a significant amount of tweaking. We focused on the recommendations and prioritization. At the first public meeting, we received general input and refined our recommendations. We will have another next week with the draft recommendations in terms of policies and other adjustments to address MAS and concepts like Ladders of Opportunity.
 - Comment: What did you include regarding MAS?
 - Response: We are considering a possible approach of emphasizing how the counties will play a better role in the process in terms of making sure that recommended services are not always via taxi. We will figure this out as we go, but plan to ensure cost effective alternatives. We have a Steering Committee, including Elizabeth Murphy out of Rochester, which will help with mobility management recommendations. We plan to break into different long-term coordinated strategies that take a broad view to address these issues at a high level and then work our way down. For example, Monroe County has an antipoverty program now with high mobility component.
 - Comment: CDTC is updating our 2011 plan. The draft plan describes recent changes in Federal funding programs and healthcare. We are currently engaged in a high level discussion of current issues and coming up with recommendations for the transportation coordinating committee. Per FTA, we are coordinating this plan update effort with the long range plan update.
 - Comment: MAP-21 requires evidence of the coordination process to the degree that that becomes part of the agency’s public outreach appendix. Agencies need to show evidence of meetings that included targeted populations.
 - Comment: It is important to ensure that environmental justice populations attend public meetings. GTC includes advertisements in the paper and use of interpreters to ensure communication. It also helps to send invitations to all 5310 applicants because it is important that they coordinate and attend public meetings. They can help get the meeting notification out to the local advocacy groups. The most important thing for us is to schedule meetings as early as possible and get the word out to avoid rushing at the last minute.
 - Comment: ITCTC has a survey through Survey Monkey that is going out to target agencies. We also have focused outreach meetings with seniors, people with disabilities, minority communities, and people with low income. We are trying to take that to a different level than in the past for our annual update of coordinated plan. This will involve a major rewrite that will be completed in about March of 2016. In the fall of 2015 we will have an application process in which agencies and operators will apply for mobility management or operating assistance. This helps to keep a lot of people engaged in the coordinated planning process. There is a lot of interest in the Ladders of Opportunity in jobs/economic mobility but no funding available outside of 5307. We are hoping that those funds will come around again.

- GTC conducted a nine-question online survey that was helpful. We also distributed a hardcopy form. Surveys are a great, low-cost tool.
5. Planning Emphasis Areas – Regional Models of Cooperation, Ladders of Opportunity – what, if anything, are MPO’s doing to address the latest USDOT PEA’s.
- Comment: Every year the FTA and FHWA come up with emphasis areas for the fiscal year going forward, encouraging MPOs to look at these areas. This year it was Regional Models of Cooperation. Bob will send a link to the MPOs with the information. Regional Models of Cooperation is an emphasis area for GTC. Going forward we will start including it in the work products.
 - Comment: ITCTC are doing it but defining our region as including any other counties that would like to work with us (i.e., not necessarily contiguous of where each county is located) in terms of sharing mostly mobility management resources. We applied to the State hoping NYSDOT will invest in our efforts through the 5311 Program. This emphasis area will deploy in October and provides a platform to bring overlapping goals together.
6. Medical Answering Service (MAS) referral issues – are there any updates with respect to concerns that MAS has been referring riders away from Public Transit and toward Taxis/other services.
- Comment: There was a meeting held in Cooperstown by Senators Seward and O’Mara where the meeting participants acknowledged that there are issues with service delivery throughout upstate New York affecting the quality of service. 15-16 counties reported issues, making it increasingly clear that working through the legislature may be the best way to address the problems. The Department of Health (DOH) and MAS contractors are satisfied with current processes, but every day is a struggle for those who are dependent on the service. These people are often shortchanged and, in some cases, vulnerable to personal security issues. Transparency is limited, and there is no apparent process internally for making improvements. Complaints are typically addressed with a band aid. Almost all trips are put on taxis, as service is up 300% since MAS. It is a continuing saga, and we have paratransit agency that is negatively impacted.
 - Comment: We encourage/advise people who experience difficulty getting trips to make audio recording when scheduling their trips. There is no long term process established to help with the problem, though meetings with DOH and MAS occurred through the transition period.
 - Comment: There was a well-written report published in 2010 by the Medicaid Institute on medical transportation in New York State. The report lays out decision criteria and things to monitor. It would be great for the legislature to contract the Institute for a follow up report. The lack of transparency is concerning, and locally we should start to get data to fill in the numbers.
7. Public Transportation Safety Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)
1. Link: <http://goo.gl/m5wCRL>
 2. Webinar: September 17th, 1-2:30 p.m. Register here: <https://goo.gl/1jc1v0>
 3. Comment deadline: October 13, 2015

- Comment: Members are encouraged to look at the public transportation safety and planning process and provide comments to the Safety Working Group. There is a webinar on Sept 17 for more information. Please direct comments to Steve Gayle (at Steven.Gayle@rsginc.com) by September 21.
8. Mobility Management Reports? Existing or prospective programs of potential interest.
 - No Comments
 9. New Business?
 - No Comments

Next Meeting Date: To be determined based on potential agenda items.

Please send any questions/comments to Bob Torzynski: rtorzynski@gtcmmpo.org