



## NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs FREIGHT WORKING GROUP

July 19, 2023  
Virtual Meeting  
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

### MEETING NOTES

#### Participating

- BMTS – Leigh McCullen
- CDTC – Chris Bauer (Chair)
- DCTC – Emily Dozier, Tara Grogan
- FHWA – Gautam Mani, John Formosa
- GBNRTC – Rich Guarino
- GTC – Jody Binnix
- HOCTC – Julie Richmond, Rick Reichert
- NYMTC – Yevgeniy Galinski, Leslie Fordjour
- NYSDOT – David Rosenberg, Jim Davis
- OCTC – Lauren Bennett
- SMTC – Mike Alexander (Co-Chair), Mario Colone
- UCTC – David Staas
- NYSAMPO Staff Support – Rich Denbow (Cambridge Systematics)

#### 1. Roll Call

Bauer opened the meeting and conducted the roll call.

#### 2. Freight Planning Initiative in the Mid-Hudson Valley Region

The three MPOs in the Mid-Hudson Valley TMA (DCTC, OCTC, and UCTC) are undertaking an initiative to better understand freight trends and goods movement across the TMA. This work supports the strategies and recommendations developed in the 2019 New York State Freight Plan. Dozier discussed the initiative and said freight in the region is dispersed and does not usually come up as a big issue during ongoing transportation planning. Bennett added that Orange County sees a lot of freight and warehouse activity, but due to staff capacity at the MPO, they have not been able to undertake a lot of freight planning.

Dozier gave an overview of the website set up for this effort (<https://mid-hudson-valley-transportation-management-area-ocnygis.hub.arcgis.com/pages/freight>). The website links to a white paper outlining trends and issues related to freight in the region. While it presents a snapshot of freight, it does not draw many conclusions due to data limitations. The study group worked with Transearch data, which gives a good snapshot of freight movement in and out of the region. Richard Batchelder from NYSDOT was a good resource for the MPOs for understanding the data. Galinsky offered to help MPOs with questions they may have about freight data.

The three MPOs also conducted a stakeholder survey to better understand the freight operators in the region and gain insights into the challenges they encounter. They reached out to over 50 stakeholders and followed up by phone and email, but received responses from only eleven stakeholders, representing over-the-road freight carriers, shipping/receiving and warehousing companies, manufacturers, and Stewart Airport. Their feedback will be used to guide ongoing freight planning efforts.

One question the three MPOs took away from this effort is what is the role of a small MPO in freight planning? Freight planning is time consuming and outreach is difficult. Binnix said the experience at GTC is similar. Freight is not often a big concern at the MPO, and freight is often thought of as just passing through the region. Bauer added that he is impressed by what DCTC-OCTC-UCTC staff have been able to do with the resources they have.

### **3. NY State Freight Plan Update**

Rosenberg provided an update on the NYS Freight Plan. The Plan is scheduled to be adopted by April 2024. NYSDOT purchased Transearch data. The base year will be 2021. A stakeholder kickoff meeting will be held in August/September, and MPOs will be invited to participate. The Plan will also include a truck parking component.

### **4. Equity in the Context of Freight Planning**

Clay Barnes led a discussion of equity considerations in the context of freight planning. This topic is important because the benefits of freight (jobs, economy, vital supplies, etc.) tend to be broadly distributed across geography and stakeholders, while the burdens of freight (safety concerns, emissions, etc.) tend to be localized and disproportionately borne by communities near freight facilities.

Barnes summarized research into how state DOTs have begun to include equity considerations as part of long-range planning since the passage of IIJA in 2021 and a series of Executive Orders issued around the same time. The research investigated if and how state DOTs responded, and methods they used to consider equity in freight planning. IIJA-compliant draft or final freight plans from 33 states were reviewed. Findings include:

- A total of 68% included equity as a goal or as a component of another goal area.
- Of these, 39% included either a qualitative or quantitative formal analysis of equity.
- States generally did not define freight equity performance measures or quantitatively gauge the impact freight has on over-burdened communities.
- Some states did quantitatively assess the degree to which the freight network is concentrated in equity focus areas.
  - States primarily used data from USDOT, the EPA, or the U.S. Census to determine this.
  - Some states have begun to develop tools and data beyond what is available from federal sources and that is tailored to state-specific challenges

The research is also looking at state Freight Advisory Committees (FAC) and equity. Bringing in community organizations to serve on a FAC proactively informs the state freight

plan from the start and can provide qualitative insight on the benefits and burdens of the projects and their prioritization. The most direct engagement of disadvantaged communities came from DOTs that serve tribal communities.

Grogan asked what performance measures are being used.

A: In one example, projects were scored higher if applicants discussed how equity will be addressed in a project. The state tracks scores and funding amounts for those projects.

Dozier asked if the any practices from this research can apply to freight plans on a smaller scale?

A: Yes. Local e-commerce data can be really helpful, as well as data sharing with community groups. Community engagement is one of the strengths of the MPO process.

## **5. Roundtable Discussion**

May Amazon Tour: The group reflected on the tour of the Liverpool, NY Amazon facility on May 11<sup>th</sup> after the NYSAMPO conference. Bauer noted the vast majority of delivery vehicles are owned by a third party rather than by Amazon. The operation relies heavily on the transportation system to be available for delivery use. Others noted the sheer volume of goods processed by the facility and the level of automation.

## **6. Updates**

Guarino: Noted that NYSDOT Passenger and Freight Rail Assistance Program (PFRAP) funding is available. The funds can be used for rail and port capital investments. The application deadline is October 6th, 2023. He will circulate information to the group.

Binnix: Reported that GTC released a RFP for a regional freight study. A firm was selected and the study will soon get underway.

Fordjour: NYMTC is starting regional waste movement study. He will be able to update the group at future meetings.

Alexander: SMTTC is in the early stages of developing a regional freight profile.

Bauer: CDTC is finalizing a regional truck parking study.

Mani: Mentioned a FHWA peer exchange on Freight Resiliency for Climate-Related Disruptions, which will take place in Chicago, IL on September 13-14, 2023. Contact him for more information.

## **7. New Business**

None.

## **8. Adjourn**

Bauer adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2023.