



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

October 21, 2021

Webinar Meeting

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

MEETING NOTES

Participating

- CDTC, Jennifer Ceponis (Chair)
- AGFTC, Jack Mance
- CS, Rich Denbow
- DCTC, Mark Debald
- DCTC, Tara Grogan
- ECTC, Kevin Meindl
- FHWA, Becky Lupes
- FHWA, Gautam Mani
- FHWA, Nicole McGrath
- GTC, Joe Bovenzi
- ICF, Cassie Bhat
- NYSDEC, Jason Pandich
- NYSDOT, Elisabeth Lennon
- NYSDOT, Colleen Smith-Lemmon
- NYMTC, Manish Shah
- OCTC, Zach Coleman
- UCTC, Brian Slack

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jen Ceponis welcomed the participants and kicked off the meeting.

2. Resources from FHWA Sustainable Transportation and Resilience Team – Becky Lupes, FHWA, Brenda Dix and Cassandra Bhat, ICF

Becky Lupes provided an overview of resources for integrating climate resilience into the transportation planning process. FHWA defines resilience as the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions. FHWA is partnering with numerous states and MPOs across the country to conduct vulnerability assessments, adaptation projects, and prepare for extreme

weather events. FHWA developed a Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Framework that provides a structured process for conducting assessments and features examples from around the country. It documents several ways resilience can be considered in transportation planning.

Cassie Bhat presented FHWA's Climate Change Sensitivity Matrix. The Matrix is a spreadsheet-based reference tool that examines the relationship between six asset types and eleven climate stressors. Sensitivity is defined as how an asset or system fares when exposed to a climate variable. The Matrix can be used as a screening tool to identify the stressors that are relevant to your assets, to identify thresholds for when assets become sensitive, and to understand the vulnerability of specific assets. She described an example application of the Matrix at MPO in Austin, Texas.

For assistance with the Matrix or other resiliency resources, MPOs can reach out to the FHWA Division office. More information about the tool and other resiliency resources are available at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/>

3. Resiliency Planning Best Practices

The Working Group discussed resiliency-related work underway.

Jen said CDTC is developing a task focused on resiliency efforts for localities.

Mark Debald said DCTC recently issued a RFI to gather feedback on considerations for conducting a vulnerability assessment in the region and how it can be used in planning. The RFI will help inform the development of an RFP that DCTC plans to issue in the future. One issue DCTC is struggling with is understanding the data sources available for predicting the future climate and events.

Joe Bovenzi said GTC did a study a few years ago. He can share the RFP they issued.

4. Partner Agency Updates

NYS DOT: Elizabeth Lennon reported that NYS DOT is updating its Smart Growth Checklist and should be able to present it at the next meeting. It will include resiliency information and screening methods.

NYS DEC: Jason Pandich reported that Climate Action Council activity is in full swing. Work is underway on a Scoping Plan for the CLPA. A lot of assessment input is coming from Climate Justice Working Group. Details are available at <https://climate.ny.gov/>.

DEC is also working on updating emission standards that would adopt California ZEV standards for trucks. Info is available on DEC's website.

NYSERDA: Information was provided to Jen via email. The Charge Ready NY Program has exhausted all of the available funding and is no longer accepting new applications. NYSERDA is reviewing any submitted applications for approval. NYSERDA also reported that EV sales have been strong this year.

FHWA: The FHWA Resource Center announced their annual Call for Service (CfS) which opened on Monday, September 20. Submissions were due to the NY Division Office by Friday, October 15th. If there are any questions, MPOs can reach out to the Division Office.

5. MPO Updates and Other Items

Jen passed on the following information items recently sent by USDOT:

Climate adaptation and resilience plans from across the Federal Government are available [here](#).

USDOT released its Climate Action Plan, available [here](#). The first priority action is to “Incorporate Resilience into DOT Grant and Loan Programs.” This would impact MPO member agencies seeking USDOT funding through discretionary grant programs. The second priority action is to “Enhance Resilience Throughout the Project Planning and Development Process.” USDOT will revise its current regulations and guidance, including transportation planning with the lone mention of MPOs in this action. There is also a “Climate Change Impacts and Equity” section that includes 10 efforts USDOT will undertake to “ensure that all people can benefit equally from climate solutions and to diminish the disproportionate burden of climate impacts that some communities endure.”

The Government Accountability Office issues a report title “[Climate Resilience – Options to Enhance the Resilience of Federally Funded Roads and Reduce Fiscal Exposure](#).” The report includes ten options to further enhance the climate resilience of federally funded roads.

6. Next Meeting/Adjourn

The next meeting will be scheduled for early 2022.