



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs SAFETY WORKING GROUP

March 24, 2021

Webinar

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

MEETING NOTES

Participating

- AGFTC - Jack Mance
- BMTS - Cyndi Paddock
- GTC - Alex Kone
- HOCTS – Alexander Turner
- OCTC – Lauren Burns
- OCTC – Ashlee Long
- SMTC - Mike Alexander
- UCTC – Brian Slack
- UCTC - David Staas
- NYSDOT – Jackie Berlant
- FHWA – Emmett McDevitt
- NHTSA – Allison Beas
- NYSDMV – Chuck DeWeese
- NYSDOH – Jennifer Hogan
- Planning4Places – Kathy Ember
- Cambridge Systematics – Danena Gaines

1. Introductions

Alex Kone opened the meeting and participants introduced themselves.

2. Meeting Notes

The February 24, 2021 meeting notes were accepted as written.

3. MUTCD Rulemaking Comments

Alex Kone reviewed the draft memorandum on MUTCD Rulemaking Comments. He thanked the Co-Chairs of Bike/Ped and Safety Working and Groups for working on this effort. He noted that some of the items seem similar because they were provisional and also permitted by the New York State Supplement to the national Manual such as green lanes. These additions would be made permanent as a part of the MUTCD. Other changes are related to setting speed limits, crosswalk treatments, and traffic signal warrants. The memo provides information to Planning Committees, boards, and the public on MUTCD changes. Chuck DeWeese commented that the highway safety community is commenting to request that states have more flexibility on the use of variable message signs for messaging for safety. Kathy Ember noted the memo is drafted to highlight key topics and additional provisions can be highlighted based upon the Safety Working Group input. Emmett McDevitt also commented on the proliferation of aesthetic signs – we have to look at the risk and reward for example the “I Love New York” signs. Chuck DeWeese stated that there is an appropriate middle ground but the use of VMS for highlighting a traffic safety message is

important. Kathy Ember noted that this memo may be updated following the conclusion of the FHWA MUTCD webinars and the final memo will be sent to the Safety and Bicycle/Pedestrian Working Groups and the Directors for review and distribution.

4. Upcoming Topics & Training

Alex Kone noted that Sandy Misiewicz is coordinating with David Orr to develop a flow chart on HSIP – as guidance for local sponsors to navigate the HSIP process, following practices in New Jersey and Michigan as discussed at the Peer Exchange in 2018. Alex noted that there are other fund sources for funding safety projects other than HSIP. Please send suggestions to the Co-Chairs or Kathy Ember on best practices that could be highlighted on how to navigate the HSIP process. Kathy Ember reported that there was a conversation with some ESRI trainers about providing a follow-up GIS training for the GIS and Safety Working Groups. They will be doing a more detailed training on using ArcGIS Pro and the tools that are available for crash data mapping. ESRI will be following up with some possible dates. This training will be scheduled as a separate training (1.5 hours). In May, we will have a training on USLIMITS2. Please let us know if you have any other presentation topics you would be interested in for upcoming Safety Working Group meetings. Alex Kone noted if anyone would like to use a specific corridor in their community to use as a test case the USLIMITS2 training to let him know so that he can get the data to the trainers.

5. Partner Updates

- a. NYS DOT: Jackie Berlant reported that the CLEAR system is progressing nicely but they are testing it internally. Please send Andrew Sattinger any questions about CLEAR if you have any. We are working on the Roadway Departure Plan and are beginning work on the Safety Performance Targets.
- b. ITSMR: No report.
- c. GTSC: Chuck DeWeese discussed the legalization of recreational marijuana legislation related to traffic safety. GTSC is also looking at equity and enforcement and putting an equity lens on everything they do. There are discussions of creating PSAP II for the next 5-years even with limited resources. There was a national report on pedestrian safety that indicated that NY had 17% reduction in the first six months of 2020 compared to 2019 on pedestrian safety deaths and believes this is due to work on PSAP. In 2020, it was a bad year for fatalities both nationally and New York was up by 100 even with large reduction with VMT. Serious injuries by rate were also up – there were more risky drivers on the road. However, in 2021, we are down on fatalities from 2020. Chuck shared some slides on COVID-19's effect on traffic tickets in New York State (for New York State Police, New York City, New York State Sheriffs and Local Police Departments). There was a down-turn in stop types between the first months of the pandemic. There was a 36% decline in traffic tickets from 2019 to 2020. The month of April experienced the greatest slowdown (86% lower than the previous year). There was a large decrease in Distracted Driving Tickets (48%). As a positive note, is that traffic enforcement works but due to the pandemic we saw an increase in fatalities and serious injuries. Alex Kone asked if the drop-off in enforcement was related to the increase in fatalities and serious injuries. Chuck DeWeese does think there were a lot of reasons for the increases including there were less restrictions for speeding and so there were greater fatalities and serious injuries. Risky drivers were speeding and not wearing seatbelts. Emmett McDevitt asked about pedestrian fatalities were done even though pedestrian volumes were up. Chuck DeWeese noted there is no VMT for pedestrians or

bicyclists but he does agree that anecdotally there were an increase in pedestrians and bicyclists. The fact that we were down 17% is significant.

- d. Cornell Local Roads Program: Alex Kone noted that the virtual and in-person workshops for CLRP can be found here: <https://www.clrp.cornell.edu/workshops/engineer.html>
- e. NHSTA: Allison Beas stated that NHTSA is looking at including equity at looking at different data points (more demographic information) related to this topic. NHTSA is also looking at forming some working groups in addition. Alex Kone asked if this would be similar to EJ analysis areas at the MPO area. Alex noted that we could incorporate some of that analysis to our safety work. Allison stated she would be happy to participate in any meetings on this topic.
- f. FHWA: No report.
- g. NYSATSB: No report.

6. Training/Conferences and Other Topics

Chuck DeWeese reported that the 2021 GTSC Highway Safety Conference will not be at in Lake Placid this year but may be held virtually.

Action Items

- Please send any thoughts about ideas for the HSIP flow chart to Sandy Misiewicz, Alex Kone, or Kathy Ember.
- The MUTCD memorandum will be sent out to the Safety Working Group, Bicycle/Pedestrian Working Group, and the Directors when it is finalized.
- Please contact Alex Kone if you have any data that can be used for the USLIMITS2 training.