



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN WORKING GROUP

March 28, 2019

**In-Person Meeting @ CDTC
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

MEETING NOTES

Participating

- A/GFTC – Jack Mance
- BMTS – Scott Reigle
- CDTC – Jennifer Ceponis
- CDTC – Jordan Solano-Reed
- CDTC – Sandy Misiewicz
- DCTC – Emily Dozier
- ECTC – Scott Shaw
- ECTC – Courtney Taylor
- FHWA – Emmett McDevitt
- FHWA – Gautam Mani
- HOCTS – Alexander Turner
- NYSDOT Main Office – Tom Benware
- NYSDOT Main Office – Colleen Smith-Lemmon
- NYSDOT Main Office – Jim Ercolano
- NYSDOT Main Office – Meg Webster
- NYSDOT Main Office – Korie McAllister
- NYSDOT Region 1 – Valerie Deane
- NYSDOT Region 2 – Joseph Kaczor
- NYSDOT Region 7 - Alexandra Beck
- NYSDOT Region 7 – Lynn Godek
- NYSDOT Region 9 – Susan Pitley
- NYSDOT Region 10 – Lanny Wexler (via phone)
- OCTC – Ashlee Long
- SMTC – Danielle Krol
- SMTC – Mike Alexander
- UCTC – David Staas
- WJCTC – Geoff Urda
- PTNY – Dylan Carey
- Planning4Places – James Levy

1. Introductions

Emily Dozier opened the meeting.

2. Approval of Meeting Notes – December 2018

The meeting notes from December were approved for posting to the NYSAMPO website.

3. NYSDOT Updates

Tom Benware noted that the Empire State Trail (EST) effort is continuing to move forward. NYSDOT Region 3 projects, including the City of Syracuse and Town of Dewitt will be let in April or May. This project is a major connection which will create a trail down Erie Boulevard and include a road diet. The project cost is approximately \$10M. In NYSDOT Region 5 (Buffalo area), there are six projects to fill gaps in the shoreline trail with integration with Niagara Boulevard travel lanes. The Data Services Bureau is looking at conducting bike/ped counts along on-road segments of the EST to understand current use and changes over time. It is important to understand the influence of off-road trail use on the on-road segments, where NYSDOT is the responsible entity.

Regarding a state bike plan update, NYSDOT has a design services contract in development. It was noted that while the 1997 plan is old, it is still relevant and one element of an update would be to review how its recommendations align with conditions today. Jim Ercolano stated that the 1997 plan is still in effect as it was never rescinded or updated (see https://www.dot.ny.gov/display/programs/bicycle/maps/app_repository/bike_and_ped_plan.pdf).

Lynn Godek stated that some updates were discussed but never progressed. Emily Dozier offered MPO assistance in any update effort and Tom Benware stated that MPO involvement would be wanted.

Regarding the state bike map, NYSDOT is currently looking at the accuracy of state bike routes with assistance from ICF (the consultant). They are reviewing the GIS data and comparing it to Open Streets Map to identify issues. There are some anomalies that have been sent to NYSDOT Regional Coordinators to assist in resolving and coordination with Regional Engineers is occurring as-needed. It is hoped that the map that is released will be quite accurate. NYSDOT is working on identifying methods to keep track of local bike routes. It is understood that MPOs have good data and tracking capabilities. The map needs to show useful data for end-users, planners, and capital program planners. It needs to identify where on- and off-road systems meet. Discussions regarding what exactly will be shown are still underway. Emily Dozier noted that she would like to see the EST (including off-road segments) and connections to it on the map. Tom thought there could be a draft this summer.

Emmett McDevitt asked about [bikes on Amtrak](#). This is a critical link in EST accessibility. NYBC has worked on this issue and Dylan Carey noted that PTNY discussed the issue with State elected officials on Trail Advocacy Day at the Capitol. It is still an issue that does not seem to be moving forward quickly. Jordan Solano-Reed noted that the rolling stock needs to be re-engineered to provide space for bicycles, and there is a RFP out now for new rolling stock (see <https://media.amtrak.com/2019/01/amtrak-seeks-new-passenger-equipment-for-northeast-regional-and-state-corridor-service/>). **He suggested commenting on the need for bike storage.** Bikes are permitted on Metro-North trains, but with restrictions during peak periods.

Lanny Wexler discussed bike route signage concerns. Some bike routes on Long Island were developed 10+ years ago and he has been working to identify and map the sign locations. Each year he rides some of the trails to identify if signs are present and in good condition.

He asked if other regions are doing the same and no-one in attendance said that they were assessing sign conditions or presence. Lynn Godek noted that Region 7 does not have a GIS layer with bike sign locations and is not aware of any sign-related maintenance. Lanny stated that he has found issues with missing signs and stated that it is important that sign locations be identified and sign condition assessed regularly, with sign replacements provided when needed. Emmett McDevitt stated that bike route signs should be part of an overall signage maintenance program or plan. Lanny stated that signage maintenance needs to be institutionalized to maintain the integrity of the bike routes. Lynn Godek stated that **DOT bicycle and pedestrian coordinators should identify who is responsible for sign maintenance and confirm if signage for bicycle facilities is included.** She stated that there may be extra signs purchased and available for use in Region 7 but knowing where the signs are located is important to being able to undertake a maintenance plan or program.

Tom Benware asked where sign information is typically stored. Lanny stated that he maintains a database. Colleen Smith-Lemmon stated that it is important for development of the EST to make sure an inventory is maintained by each region. The responsibility for maintaining such a database may be different in each NYSDOT region, but there should be someone in each region maintaining this information. With the on-going efforts of the EST, the timing is right to ensure this effort is covered in each Region. It was suggested that having a statewide management system might be worth considering. Tom Benware stated that to move this effort forward, it would be good to assess ownership and maintenance responsibilities. **NYSDOT staff will follow up.**

Emily Dozier asked for more detail regarding EST counts. Tom noted that others typically do on-trail counts but not on-road counts. Bike/ped counts can be done under existing Data Services contract(s) but he is not sure yet how these may be undertaken. Jim Ercolano stated that latent demand is an important issue to understand and the Department is assessing what can be done in-house. Tom Benware stated that the Department is aware that good data is lacking and this is a vital issue to be able to study and understand volumes for crash analysis and capital planning needs. Colleen Smith-Lemmon stated that the Department is developing a pilot program; Emily Dozier stated that DCTC is planning to do some pre-EST trail counts in Dutchess County. Jen Ceponis stated that CDTC has a 10-year count program and that they do counts for every LRTP update. PTNY does annual counts on the Erie Canalway Trail – 12 locations at a time. The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project (NBPDP) factors are used. Jim Ercolano stated that consistent methodology in counting is important if undertaking a statewide count program. Tom Benware agreed that the methodology for undertaking counts is important. The NBPDP method is not consistent with Federal data submission requirements – the feds use the TMAS guidelines. The discussion then covered potential data sources and the potential use of cell phone data (such as Strava) for counts. CDTC undertook a demo of the Ride Report app but it wasn't perfect. For count apps, people have to have the app on their phone and have it turned on to work. This only typically covers a small percentage of riders. Dylan Carey noted that PTNY can put their eco-counters anywhere on a trail but have not used them on-road to-date. The counters do not differentiate between modes so PTNY uses a 2-hour count to estimate the mode split. Emily noted that some MPOs could help collect data to get better coverage across the state. **Tom will clarify NYSDOT's methodology** for the EST counts once it is set.

4. Partner Updates

a. NYBC Report

No Update. Emily and Jen noted that NYBC is reorganizing; they will reach out to the Board Chair.

b. PTNY Report

Dylan Carey updated the group on PTNY's projects. A new Trails Across NY advocacy campaign kicked-off recently, and the [trail intersection checklist](#) is now online. PTNY is also working to develop a community traffic calming and on-street bicycle facility/intersection design guide (through a GTSC grant). **James Meerdink is still working on this project for PTNY and will be getting in touch with the Working Group to request data and information.** Emmett noted that the guide needs to be consistent with the MUTCD and should be reviewed by Barbara Abrahamer at NYSDOT. It was noted that there is already a lot of literature regarding intersection design and it was asked who the intended audience is for this document. Dylan stated that the effort is targeted to local municipalities and officials. They are looking for local examples to share with others to show what can be done and has been done across New York State. Lynn stated that the Cornell Local Roads Program has a good program to transfer federal policies to local needs that should be consulted.

Jim Ercolano stated that an update to the AASHTO Bike Design Guide is due to be released in 2020 (it was originally due in 2018).

5. Shared Mobility Research

Jennifer Ceponis provided an overview of the shared mobility document that she has been working on for several months. This started as a CDTC effort but has become an NYSAMPO effort that both the Climate Change and Bicycle & Pedestrian Working Groups are involved in. Jen asked if there were any thoughts on how NYSAMPO can best look at equity and new mobility, and assess all the information that has come out recently on this topic. It was stated that a Fact Sheet might be a good option. Jim Ercolano stated that we will be seeing more scooter share over time. The Fact Sheet could be digital only for posting on the NYSAMPO website. Colleen Smith-Lemmon stated that it would be good for the fact sheet to provide considerations of policy and opportunities. The technology is changing fast so providing a date that the document was produced will be important. Jack Mance agreed that it would be good to have all the information in one place and updated as-needed as the technology changes. Danielle Krol stated that SMTC is looking at developing a similar section for the upcoming LRTP. She can share it once available. Colleen noted that this should focus on mobility as a service, not just shared mobility. Emily Dozier asked that the document provide information and links with each topic as its own header.

Danielle Krol noted that Gotcha Bike (pedal assist bike share) is coming to Syracuse. Ashlee Long noted that 511NY is working with Lime in the Mid-Hudson region. Jennifer Ceponis stated that it would be good to inventory/map where these services are located and who is running each one, as well as providing best practice case studies.

6. Work Plan

a. Fact Sheets

The Complete Streets Fact Sheet and Fixed Route Transit Fact Sheet are done and copies are available for each MPO staffer to take back to the office. For those MPOs not at the meeting today, copies will be mailed to each office.

b. Priority Work Plan Items

The group discussed the following priority items and members agreed to help on each effort.

- i. **Ped/Bike Counts:** This involves promoting best practice methodologies and potentially developing a coordinated/consistent statewide count program. This will require funding and where this comes from needs to be discussed further. **Tom B, PTNY, and the MPOs** will work on this.
- ii. **Safety Education Toolkit:** This involves the toolkit, PSAs, and social media efforts, and is a joint project with the Safety Working Group (see item below). The group discussed the need for a document on Bicycle and Pedestrian safety geared toward highway engineers, and the need to push engineers to design for more than the minimum when it comes for bike and pedestrian infrastructure, especially for bridges and sidewalks. Lynn noted that the recent [webinar](#) on [FHWA's new Bikeway Selection Guide](#) was useful. The group also discussed a document on HAWK signals, RRFBs and other beacons or signals, illustrating when is it appropriate to use each type. Boulder, CO has a 2016 guide that could be referenced for this effort. There is also a need for education about bike boxes. Canton has one at a bridge that was recently installed. **Jen and Sandy** will work on this item.
- iii. **Complete Streets:** Scott Reigle noted that NYBC is offering trainings. BMTS is hosting a NYBC training in June and plans to use it as a "train the trainer" program. **Scott will report back;** other MPOs may choose to take advantage of this training.

The idea of a model Complete Streets ordinance was discussed. This was originally a GTC project, but the status is unclear.

This item should also include creating a toolkit of Complete Streets language from long-range plans and other MPO documents.

- iv. **ADA Transition Plans:** this includes continuing to develop and share best practice methodologies for ADA-related data collection and transition plans (see below re training). This is a joint project with the Safety and GIS Working Groups. **Jack and Emily** will work on this.

- v. **Shared-Mobility research** (discussed above): This will continue to be a joint project with the Safety and Climate Change Working Groups. **Jen and Danielle** will work on this.

c. PSA's

Mike Alexander noted that GTSC is planning to rebroadcast the bike safety PSAs this summer. There are high definition versions for broadcasting and low definition versions for sharing online and via social media (see the [NYSAMPO website](#) and [YouTube channel](#)). PSA broadcasting went well in 2018 but there are a few hurdles to overcome. Contact Mike if you are interested in using the broadcast versions on television.

Ashlee Long said that OCTC paid for two PSAs last year but they had to work with two cable companies and that was difficult. They didn't get much feedback and they will not be running them again this year.

Sandy Misiewicz noted that there is interest in possibly dovetailing these into an education effort. There is interest in collaborating during bike month (May) on messaging. Developing a universal hashtag and message used by all MPOs to boost social media presence is desirable. We need to develop a process or program for this effort. There is also a pedestrian safety enforcement effort June 14-27th.

Emmett noted that the State's funding from HSIP to develop PSAs as part of the PSAP campaign will run out in 2020. They will need to identify methods to undertake more PSAs in the future.

d. Pedestrian Safety Audits

Regarding pedestrian safety audits, a federal offer of assistance was sent out statewide. There was funding for up to 4 locations, and 13 applications were received. Almost all responses came back from municipalities on the eastern side of NYS. No focus communities submitted a request. Most requests identified state highways, but the State wants to focus on local roads. There was concern that conducting audits on state highways would duplicate existing processes. There appears to be a definite demand for RSAs. Emmett will suggest that a training be offered for those who requested assistance. FHWA will follow up with the applicants.

e. ADA Inventory Training

Jack Mance stated that the ADA training will take place in Glens Falls on April 18th at 1:00PM. There are currently 9 people registered and there is room for additional registrations. The training will begin with a presentation on the planning side of transition plans from Warren County Planning staff. The presentation will be followed by a field exercise where attendees will work with Warren County GIS staff to use the app on tablets and conduct a real-world exercise in Glens Falls. There will also be a detailed GIS technical discussion.

f. Bike/Pedestrian Level of Service

Jennifer Ceponis asked about the B/P LOS methodologies used by other MPOs. CDTC has used the Landis method but it is old and outdated; they find that roads score poorly when not anticipated to be poor. CDTC is testing other methods (Level of Traffic Stress, HCM, etc) and often allow consultants to use their judgement. Is there a preferred methodology? No MPOs noted a preferred methodology. Emily Dozier stated that she was interested in the work that CDTC is undertaking. **Jen will forward information about the methods they are testing.**

7. Local Project Updates

WJCTC – Geoff Urda noted that they recently hired a consultant to extend the Black River Trail to Fort Drum. The train currently ends 2 miles south of Post.

DCTC – Emily Dozier stated that Dutchess County has a GTSC grant for pedestrian safety education in the City of Poughkeepsie. They are working in an elementary school, at senior centers, and with transit. DCTC has developed a Complete Streets 101 Fact Sheet and a bilingual safety tips brochure. The MPO is also doing video and bicycle-specific tube counts on trails to get pre-EST data.

SMTC – Danielle Krol stated that SMTC is looking to update their bike map. There have been EST meetings held by Region 3 and the Erie Boulevard segment, as discussed earlier in the meeting, is moving forward. The CNYRPDB and SMTC are assessing connections to the EST to provide connections to Villages and Downtown Syracuse.

BMTS – Scott Reigle noted that the NYBC Complete Streets Training is occurring on June 6th. The training will be focused on Endicott where there is economic development going on to redevelop a commercial strip. Training will be on Main St. where infrastructure upgrades will be occurring. There will be additional trainings in the future.

A traffic count RFP with bike and pedestrian counts was let but the bids came in too high. Instead, BMTS has purchased 11 EcoCounters for trail use only. 9 of the counters separate bike and pedestrian counts. The goal is to be able to get 24/7/365 counts. BMTS will own and maintain the units and manage the data. Each municipality will install the units. EcoCounter provides online trainings for free but will do an on-site training for \$3,500. A dashboard will provide BMTS staff with real-time data. BMTS is hoping to get before and after data for new trail segments—the counters will be installed as the trails are constructed.

Emily stated that the use of these counters would make a good presentation in the future. **Scott Reigle will share the scope and RFP.** The total cost for the counters was \$69,000. This includes 2 ped-only pyro sensors, 5 urban post multi (ped/bike), and 4 eco-multi (ped/bike) as well as 2 days of assistance each year. BMTS plans to keep the counters for 10 years at each location.

Dylan from PTNY noted that they spent \$3,500 on two pyro-boxes. These count total users only. PTNY uses manual counts to estimate the ped/bike split. They boxes are used on trails and can be moved around to count different locations.

A/GFTC – Jack Mance noted that a bike share facility outreach project is taking place in Glens Falls. A/GFTC will be looking for input on the process.

FHWA – Gautam stated that a rescission is coming in September 2019. Unobligated funds may be rescinded. He encouraged the MPOs to obligate funds now, including any TAP/CMAQ funds.

Emmett McDevitt noted that there are a number of PSAP projects on-going and these may be part of the reason that pedestrian fatalities are going down in New York State while they are going up nationally.

UCTC – David Staas noted that TAP projects are moving forward. A trail crossing analysis using the PTNY guidance is being undertaken as a field work exercise. A CSX and rail safety group in Kingston is looking at trespass education efforts. They are looking to use counters to identify trespassing issues. An intern is undertaking ADA work using the A/GFTC methodology and trail work is on-going.

OCTC – Ashlee Long stated that an internal Complete Streets Working Group that includes the Health Department is working to get the County DPW engaged in Complete Streets efforts. The Health Department is incorporating bicycle and pedestrian elements into their Wellness Week activities in May, including an adult bike rodeo. OCTC has a template CS policy; **Ashlee will share it with the Working Group.**

CDTC – Jennifer Ceponis noted that the City of Saratoga Springs and CDTC are undertaking development of an LED Smart Streetlight Guidebook. Sandy Misiewicz stated that Year Three of the Safety Performance Targets is underway. New bicycle and pedestrian performance measures and targets will be coming out.

NYS DOT Region 1 – Valerie Dean stated that the Empire State Trail is a main activity within the Region. There is a project to undertake improvements to Cohoes Boulevard which will include the installation of a multi-use path. There are modifications to the ramps to I-787 to connect the Village of Menands and the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail (which is part of the EST).

HOCTS – Alexander Turner noted that the EST effort will complete significant gaps in the trail network in Herkimer and Oneida Counties. There is a project along Route 5 through the City of Utica that includes a road diet with bike lanes and sidewalk enhancements. HOCTS is also updating their bicycle and pedestrian guidelines.

NYS DOT Main Office – Colleen Smith-Lemmon asked that attendees try to get before and after pictures of improvements to the Empire State Trail.

8. Upcoming Events

- The next Working Group teleconference call will be held on June 13, 2019.

- The next in-person meeting is on September 12th. Geoff Urda offered to host the meeting in the Watertown Area. Danielle also offered to host in Syracuse.

9. Action Items

The following items are noted for follow-up:

- **All:** let Jack know of anyone else to add to the GIS Training attendance list
- **All:** consider commenting on [Amtrak's RFP](#) to note the need for bike storage.
- **Jen** will Develop a Fact Sheet on Shared Mobility for publishing to the website. It is not intended to be printed like recent Fact Sheets have been. Consider:
 - Mobility as a service
 - Identify/Map all such services across NYS, note if they are docked/dockless and the vendor
 - Include useful links and case studies
- **Jen and Sandy** will work on a social media campaign for Bike Month.
- **Jen** will forward information about the Bike/Ped LOS methods that CDTC is testing.
- **Scott** will report back on BMTS' "train the trainer" Complete Streets training by NYBC.
- **Scott** will share BMTS' RFP for the Eco-Counter ped/bike counters.
- **Ashlee** will provide a copy of the local Complete Streets Policy that OCTC helped develop.
- **James Meerdink/PTNY** will ask the Working Group for case studies for a community traffic calming and on-street bicycle facility/intersection design guide.
- **Tom Benware** will clarify NYSDOT's methodology for the EST counts
- **DOT bicycle and pedestrian coordinators** will identify who is responsible for sign maintenance and confirm if signage for bicycle facilities is included.