

BMTS Article Digest
December 2019 – January 2020

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed in the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page of www.bmtsonline.com.

Scott

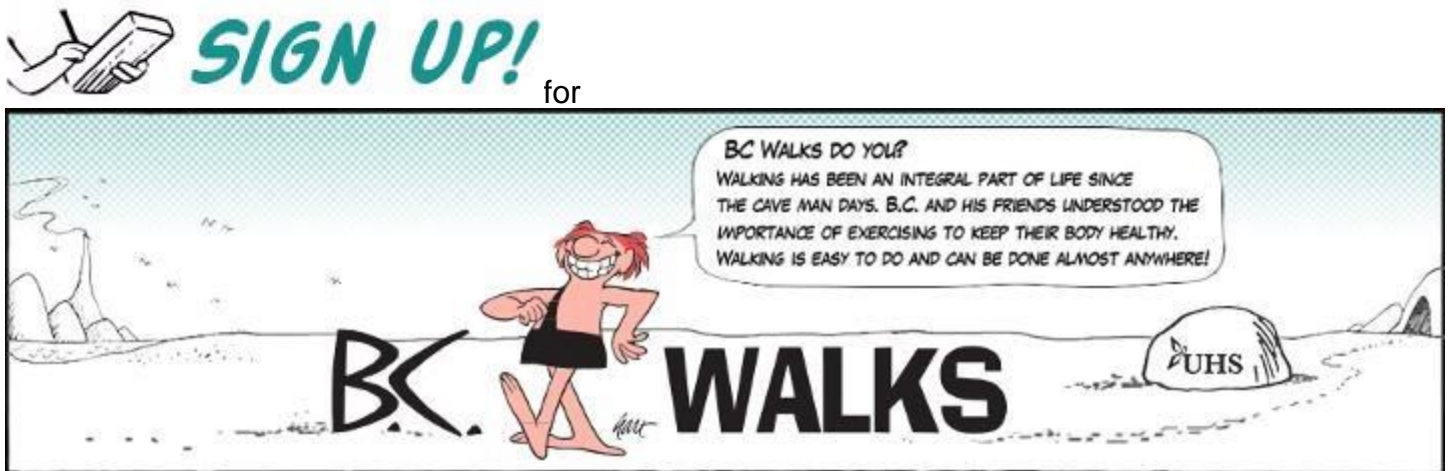


CenterLines

Take a look at the National Center for Bicycling & Walking's newsletter, **CenterLines**. You can also arrange to have it emailed directly to you.

See <http://www.bikewalk.org/newsletter.ph>

CenterLines is the bi-weekly electronic news bulletin of the National Center for Bicycling & Walking. **CenterLines** is our way of quickly delivering news and information you can use to create more walkable and bicycle-friendly communities.



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Friday, 13 December 2019

Sayre Driver Charged After Pedestrian Struck, Killed

Jeff Murray

Elmira Star-Gazette USA TODAY NETWORK

A Sayre man faces charges following a monthlong investigation into a car/pedestrian crash that killed another Sayre resident. The crash took place shortly before 6:30 p.m. Nov. 12 on South Wilbur Avenue in Sayre Borough, according to the Sayre Police Department. A pedestrian, Kenneth Bracken, 85, was struck while crossing the road and suffered fatal injuries, police said. He died the next day at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre.

Following the investigation, police charged the operator of the vehicle, Robert Ackley with careless driving resulting in unintentional death, exceeding the maximum speed limit by 10 mph, and failure to yield right of way to a pedestrian.

All of the charges are summary offenses, the lowest level of criminal charge in Pennsylvania, punishable in most cases by fines.

Bracken worked for IBM in Owego until his retirement and was also a founding member of the Sayre Historical Society, according to his obituary.

He also volunteered for several years at Robert Packer Hospital, his obituary said.

The New York Times

E-Bikes and E-Scooter Rentals Won't Be Allowed in N.Y. Anytime Soon

Gov. Andrew Cuomo vetoed a bill that would have legalized both types of transport, angering supporters of the measure.



Delivery workers rely on electric bicycles, but many of them are illegal in New York City. Credit...Carlo Allegri/Reuters

By Ed Shanahan

Dec. 26, 2019

Electric-scooter rentals will not be coming to New York and the electric bicycles favored by New York City delivery workers will remain illegal after

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo on Thursday vetoed a bill that would have [legalized both types of battery-powered transport](#).

The veto was a blow to several constituencies: scooter companies that operate in dozens of cities in the United States and abroad and see New York as a lucrative, untapped market; delivery workers who rely on an illegal form of transportation to earn a living; and those pressing for ways to ease congestion on New York City's traffic-choked streets.

In rejecting the legislation, Mr. Cuomo cited safety measures he said that he had sought in his proposed 2019 budget but that had been "inexplicably omitted" from the bill that cleared both houses of the State Legislature by overwhelming margins.

"Failure to include these basic measures renders this legislation fatally flawed," the governor said in his veto message. He specifically referred to the lack of a requirement that riders of the battery-powered conveyances wear helmets as one of his main objections.

“Helmets are a common-sense requirement that should be imposed on operators of these vehicles to protect public safety,” Mr. Cuomo said, adding that he looked forward “to continuing this discussion in the 2020 legislative session.”

Supporters of the legislation expressed dismay over the governor’s move. Several said it would mean continuing hardship for [delivery workers who face the threat of being fined](#) up to \$500 and having their bikes — throttle-controlled as opposed to pedal-assist — impounded with every ride they make.

The New York Police Department said on Thursday that it had issued 1,114 summonses for the operation of e-bicycles and e-scooters so far in 2019. A breakdown of how many of each had been subject to summonses was unavailable, but advocates for delivery workers said the police were generally more inclined to target electric bicycles.

As to how many of the vehicles had been seized, a spokesman said the department did not “capture data to that level of specificity.”

“Our state has failed to help tens of thousands of New Yorkers who desperately need relief from the punitive measures taken against them every day for merely doing their jobs,” said State Senator Jessica Ramos, a Queens Democrat and the lead sponsor of her chamber’s version of the legislation. Ms. Ramos vowed to work toward the bill’s passage again in 2020.

Danny Harris, the executive director of Transportation Alternatives, an advocacy organization, said in a statement that “Governor Cuomo, a supposed champion for immigrants and the working poor, has failed to protect 40,000 low-wage, mostly immigrant workers in New York.”

With his veto, Mr. Harris added, the governor had “blocked a critical path forward for new transportation alternatives that address congestion, reduce emissions and improve access to opportunity for all New Yorkers.”

The governor’s move won praise in some quarters.

“Kudos to @NYGovCuomo for keeping this off the streets of New York,” William J. Bratton, a former New York City police commissioner, wrote on Twitter.

The legislation, which was passed in June, would have allowed cities and towns around the state to set local rules for electric scooters and bicycles. Scooter rental companies like Bird and Lime would not have been allowed to operate in Manhattan.

Still, the scooter companies, which have spent heavily to lobby city and state lawmakers in hopes of opening up New York streets to their products, had welcomed the bill. On Thursday, one of the companies, Lime, said it was ready to see Mr. Cuomo’s concerns addressed.

“While it’s disappointing that this important bill will not become law this year, we’re hopeful that the administration will work swiftly with legislative leaders to improve mobility for all New Yorkers early in the New Year,” Phil Jones, Lime’s senior government relations director, said in a statement.

Several cities in New Jersey have experimented with adding electric-scooter rentals to their streets under a state law passed in May, with at least two ending their programs after problems emerged.

Hoboken started a pilot program in May and stopped it last month amid [a heated debate about safety](#). The City Council is considering whether to renew the program.

In Elizabeth, a 16-year-old boy became [the first person killed while riding a shared electric scooter in New Jersey](#) when he collided with a tow truck in November.

The death, which Mr. Cuomo mentioned in his veto message, came just three weeks after the city started its scooter program. The program was subsequently halted.

Given the huge majorities the New York bill attracted, lawmakers could presumably override Mr. Cuomo’s veto. But because the Legislature is now in recess, doing so would require a special session. There was no sign on Thursday that such a session was in the works.



The legislation would have allowed cities around the state to set their own rules for e-scooters, but rental companies would not have been allowed in Manhattan.

Credit...Bryan Anselm for The New York Times

What Happens Next:

A vetoed bill is returned to the chamber that first passed it. Included with the veto is a statement from the Governor explaining his or her rejection of the bill. A veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority from both legislative houses. – nysenate.gov

Friday, 3 January 2020

Why Cuomo vetoed legalizing e-scooters

Joseph Spector

New York State Team USA TODAY NETWORK

ALBANY — Gov. Andrew Cuomo last week put the brakes on New York’s plans to legalize electronic bikes and electronic scooters.

The Democratic governor vetoed a bill passed by the state Legislature in June to allow the popular vehicles through a pay-by-ride system, saying the plan did not include enough safety precautions.

Cuomo proposed a stricter measure as part of his state budget proposal in January, but said lawmakers took out several of his provisions, including requiring the use of a helmet at all times.

“The Legislature’s proposal inexplicably omitted several of the safety measures included in the budget proposal,” he wrote in his veto measure. “Failure to include these basic measures renders this legislation fatally flawed.”

Bill was hotly anticipated

The bill drew strong interest across the state, but also uncertainty over what Cuomo would do as the industry has been eager to enter New York, particularly millions of new customers in the New York City market.

In fact, e-scooter companies — including Lime, Bird, Bolt, Jump, Spin and Skip — were spending more than \$145,000 a month to lobbyists in Albany and Manhattan to get a bill into law, the USA TODAY Network New York found in April. Even some upstate cities were eager to get into the business. The City Council in Rochester in May passed a law to allow a scooter-share program in a deal with bike-share provider Zagster. Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, D-Queens, the bill’s sponsor, said she was disappointed in the governor’s decision. Supporters said allowing the vehicles would help people who can’t afford cars, aid delivery workers navigate crowded city streets and cut down on pollution. “For the past several months, I have worked with a broad coalition to pass legislation that would deliver economic justice for thousands of delivery workers across New York City, and bring safe, viable options to transit deserts across the state,” she said in a statement.

What happens next

Rozic indicated she would continue to push for the law’s approval. The six-month legislative session starts in January, and Cuomo indicated he too would be open to negotiation.

“Despite this missed opportunity, my goal always was and will continue to be a path forward— bike or otherwise for our delivery workers, environment and transit starved communities,” she said. The law would have applied only to

electric scooters that could travel no more than 20 mph and e-bikes that could go up to 25 mph. Only those age 16 and older would be able to ride them, and they would be illegal on sidewalks.

The law would allow local governments to regulate or prohibit them.

The bill was closely aligned to what the industry has pushed for in states across the country.

But by not requiring helmets and reflective clothing at night, Cuomo said the bill lacked enough safety measures.

He said his proposal had a lower speed limit, a prohibition against operating while impaired by drugs or alcohol, a helmet requirement, mandatory front and rear lights and a mandatory bell on each one. Cuomo cited a recent study published in the American Journal of Otolaryngology that found head injuries tripled in the past 10 years because of the motorized vehicles, and two thirds of them involving victims not wearing helmets.

"E-bikes and e-scooters carry the potential to be a useful tool in changing the way we travel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions," Cuomo wrote. "They do, however, carry significant safety concerns."

He added, "As such, I am constrained to veto this bill. I look forward to continuing this discussion in the 2020 legislative session."

Joseph Spector is the New York state editor for the USA TODAY Network. He can be reached at JSPECTOR@Gannett.com or followed on Twitter: @GannettAlbany .



Gotcha e-scooters, photographed at a promotional booth on Aug. 28 on the Michigan State University Campus in East Lansing. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Vestal Museum to move back to Rail Trail



[December 27, 2019](#) 3:43 pm

[LOCAL NEWS, NEWS, TOP STORIES](#)

VESTAL (WBNG) -- The Vestal Museum has secured all of its funding to make its big move in 2020.

The Vestal Museum will move back close to its original location on the Vestal Rail Trail next to the Vestal Coalhouse.

The museum had to undergo fundraising efforts in the form of grant writing. It secured a \$360,000 grant from New York State, a \$70,000 grant from the Hoyt Foundation and a \$50,000 dollar grant from the Decker Foundation.

The museum says moving back to the original location opens up some potential doorways.

"If we move back to the Rail Trail then we have potential to receive national historic status," said Museum Director Cheresse Rosales. "There's a number of requirements and one of them is that its in its original or similar to its original location and position."

The museum aims to make the move in the summer or fall.

An opportunity for active winter recreation!

Binghamton Installs Rec Park Ice Rink

Jeff Platsky, Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin

Published 11:45 a.m. ET Dec. 24, 2019 | Updated 2:20 p.m. ET Dec. 24, 2019

Ice skating is returning to a Binghamton city park.

Starting Friday evening, a rink — measuring 32-feet-by-60-feet — will be operating in the outfield of the Little League field at Recreation Park on the city's West Side.

It's a bring your own skates and hot chocolate deal. There won't be a skate vendor or concession on site.

The announcement came a day after daytime temperatures peaked over 50 degrees as winter start in the region. But the presence of ice won't be dependent on the weather.

A compressor unit that will maintain an ice surface up to 50 degrees is included in the \$49,000 set up unveiled Tuesday morning. Money from the general park budget is being used to cover the cost of the temporary rink. The city will also pay the cost of electricity to make and maintain the ice.

"We're hopeful kids will come and use it," said Binghamton Mayor Rich David.



A 32-foot-by-60-foot skating rink will open at Binghamton's Recreation Park On December 28, 2019. (Photo: Jeff Platsky/Press & Sun-Bulletin)

Hours of operation: 8 a.m. until dusk Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. Sunday.

Youngsters under 12 will require the supervision of a guardian, the mayor said. Activities will be monitored by personnel from the

city's Parks and Recreation Department.

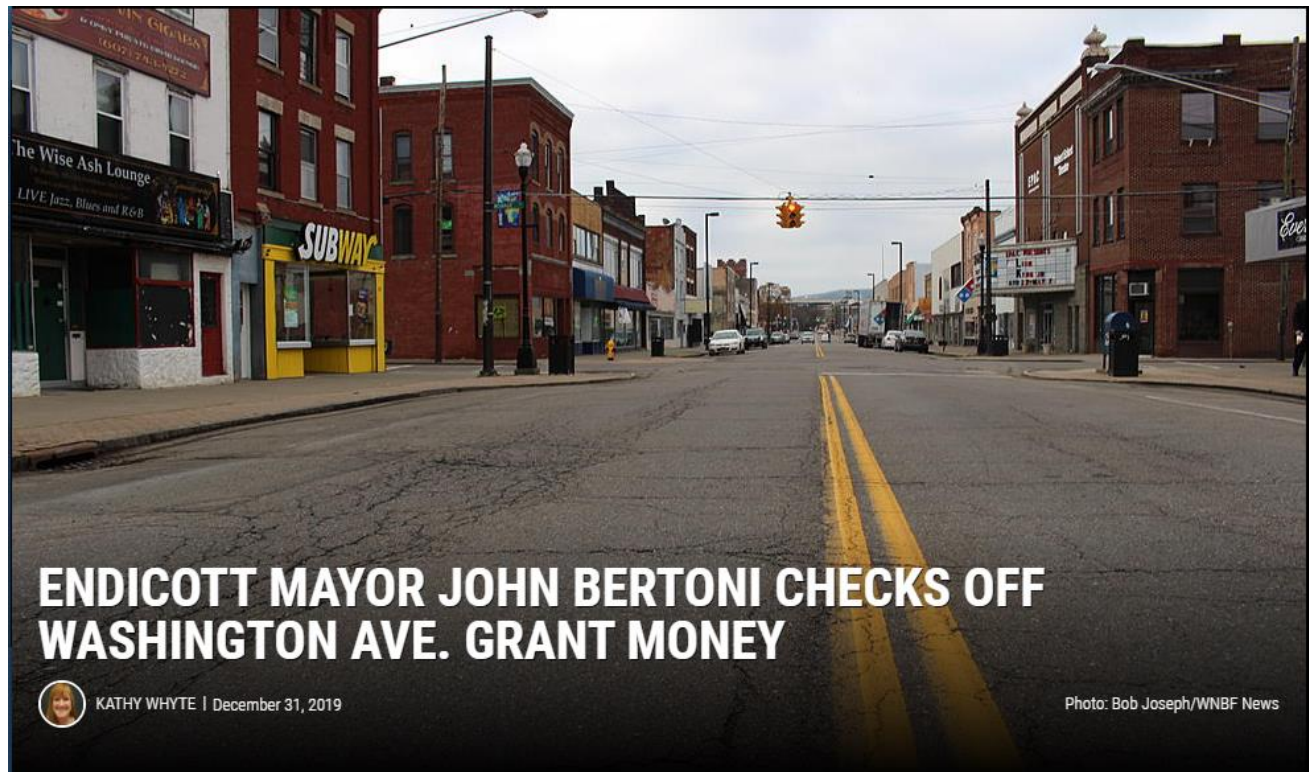
Skating is expected to be available through at least the end of February.

If successful, David said other temporary rinks may be rolled out in other city parks with Cheri Lindsay Memorial Park on the city's North Side next on the list.

David said ice skating has been a frequently requested winter park activity.

The rink is expandable if demand warrants.

Thirty years ago, the city would flood the tennis court at West End Park giving residents a large skating surface as long as the cold weather held out. As late as 1991, Binghamton would flood areas at Rec Park, State Street Park, Fairview Park, Webster Street Park, and Fourth Ward Park for skating on a natural surface.



ENDICOTT MAYOR JOHN BERTONI CHECKS OFF WASHINGTON AVE. GRANT MONEY



KATHY WHYTE | December 31, 2019

Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News

[KATHY WHYTE](#)

December 31, 2019

Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News

The man who has occupied the Mayor's office in Endicott for the past dozen years steps aside with one last big check-off on his to-do list as he ends his term.

Democrat Mayor John Bertoni announced December 30 the Village has finally been awarded a New York State Main Street Grant it has sought through several funding rounds. The \$350,000 will be used to renovate the 10s block of Washington Avenue.

The Village has come close in several previous applications but still ended up short of getting the New York State Main Street Grant money.

The grants are available to not-for-profits and local governments to be used to help revitalize historic downtown districts and mixed-use neighborhoods.

After 12 years as Mayor, John Bertoni is officially retiring from public office and had not sought re-election to a fourth term. He said, however, he plans to remain involved in his hometown and is staying in Endicott.

Bertoni's political career has also included terms on the board of trustees, Town Union Supervisor and school board member.

Republican Linda Jackson was elected Mayor in November, becoming Endicott's first GOP mayor in more than a decade.
