

BINGHAMTON METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY
PLANNING COMMITTEE
February 23, 2017
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Bennett at 1:34pm.

Roll Call:

Members Present:

Robert Bennett, Village of Johnson City Public Services
Vernon Myers, Town of Vestal Engineering
Frank Evangelisti, Broome County Planning
Greg Kilmer, Broome County Public Transportation
Leslie Boulton, Broome County Public Works
Gary Hammond, Tioga County Public Works
Elaine Jardine, Tioga County Planning
Terry Kellogg, City of Binghamton Public Works
Ray Standish, City of Binghamton Engineer
Alex Urda, Town of Chenango
Brian Coddington, Town of Conklin Highway Department
Ron Lake, Town of Dickinson Engineer
Debra Standing, Town of Owego
Lou Caforio, Town of Union Public Works
Pam Eshbaugh, NYSDOT Region 9 Planning

Advisory Members Present:

Lisa McCafferty, Tioga County Public Health Department

Others Present:

Jennifer Yonkoski, BMTS Central Staff
John Sterbentz, BMTS Central Staff
Scott Reigle, BMTS Central Staff
Cassandra Gascon, BMTS Central Staff
Cyndi Paddick, BMTS Central Staff
Kati Chen, BMTS Intern
Ron Coleman, NYSDOT Region 9
Jack Williams, NYSDOT Region 9
Jillian Newby, NYSDOT Region 9
Rich Rooney, McFarland Johnson

- ✓ Approval of minutes from December 1st, 2016 meeting. Motion made by G. Kilmer, seconded by G. Hammond. Approved by consensus.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ACTION ITEMS:

2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program

J. Yonkoski highlighted some of the projects that Central Staff will be undertaking in addition to the ongoing tasks that they routinely do in the upcoming UPWP. Some key tasks include:

- Household Travel Survey - J. Sterbentz summarized the project: The last time this type of survey was done was approximately 9 years ago. A consultant will be hired to administer the survey. The results are used for updating the transportation model, including trip generation, mode split, trip destination and origin, and more.
- Intersection Study – Watson Boulevard and McKinley Avenue in the Village of Endicott.
- Road safety audit of Murray Hill Road and Washington Street
- Parking study for the Village of Owego, remains on this UPWP. We are awaiting contact with Owego's new mayor to see if it is still wanted.
- Town of Kirkwood corridor study (carry over from the current UPWP because it was not completed in the prior year due to staffing issues).

J. Yonkoski reviewed the draft budgets and also noted that there were no changes proposed for the BMTS Central Staff staffing plan. The Traffic Engineer position is posted and a full time person is being sought. Until that time, Cyndi Paddick will continue to work in the position part-time.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-01, Recommending Policy Committee approval of the Draft 2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program and associated grant budgets
Motion: L. Caforio, Second: F. Evangelisti. Approved by Consensus.
- ✓ Resolution 2017-02, Recommending Policy Committee approval of the Draft 2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program Staffing Plan
Motion: F. Evangelisti, Second: G. Hammond. Approved by Consensus.

Public Participation Plan Update

C. Gascon explained the changes made to the update of the participation plan. A section was added regarding BMTS's social media and internet-based public participation strategies. Other updates include more detailed guidance on processes for public review and public notices for meetings. The updates better reflect what BMTS is currently doing for public outreach.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-03, Recommending Policy Committee approval of the proposed update to the BMTS Public Participation Plan
Motion: F. Evangelisti, Second: G. Kilmer. Approved by Consensus.

Limited English Proficiency Plan Update

C. Gascon reported that census data was updated and used for a new analysis of the LEP population. Changes to the plan also included a better explanation of the process BMTS utilizes for accommodating limited English proficient people, as well as the addition of several language assistance measures the MPO is required to provide when appropriate.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-04, Recommending Policy Committee approval of the proposed update to the BMTS Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan
Motion: F. Evangelisti, Second: G. Kilmer. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

J. Yonkoski noted a mistake to the PIN number on the resolution. The correct PIN number should be 903824. P. Eshbaugh stated that the project is a preventative maintenance project along Rte. 434 from the City of Binghamton line to State Street. The project will resurface the road and fix the superelevation of the portion of the roadway near MacArthur school. The amendment is needed because the cost of construction and construction inspection has increased. The money comes 100% from HSIP funding. P. Eshbaugh provided some background information on HSIP funds for those who are unfamiliar.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-05, Recommending Policy Committee approval of an amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 903824 Rte. 434 preventive maintenance project to resurface 10.1 lane miles from the city of Binghamton line to State Street. Increase Construction cost. R09-0451
Motion: T. Kellogg, Second: R. Lake. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

P. Eshbaugh explained that an amendment was needed to add safety projects from the statewide Pedestrian Safety Action Plan to the TIP. The PSAP provides HSIP funds from the DOT main office for countermeasures at pedestrian crossings that increase pedestrian safety. This includes funding for things like signs, pavement markings, high visibility crosswalks, retro-reflective signal heads, tabling of intersections, and more. Solicitation for local PSAP projects could be as soon as June, so municipalities should start thinking about potential local projects.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-06, Recommending Policy Committee approval of an amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 90PS01 Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP). R09-0453
Motion: R. Standish, Second: E. Jardine. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

P. Eshbaugh explained that this project has been progressing in Town of Barker. Since the project was not in Urban Area it was not added to the TIP, however, the alternative that was chosen is within the MPO Planning Area so the project now needs to be added to the TIP. L. Boulton asked if the alternative that was chosen is the location that the town preferred. P. Eshbaugh responded that it is indeed the preferred location. J. Yonkoski displayed a map of the project to show the location of the alternative that was selected.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-07, Recommending Policy Committee approval of amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 921330 Rte. 79 over Chenango River. R09-0454
Motion: G. Hammond, Second: L. Boulton. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

P. Eshbaugh explained that these two projects were awarded as part of the Bridge NY program. Since they are located within the MPO Planning Area, they need to be added to the TIP.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-08, Recommending Policy Committee approval of amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 975444 and PIN 975446 Country Club Road over Patterson Creek & Juneberry Road over Big Choconut Creek

Motion: R. Standish, Second: L. Boulton. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

P. Eshbaugh explained that Region 9 is combining 2 separate existing projects into one, using PIN 904265.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-11, Recommending Policy Committee approval of amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 904265 Preventative Maintenance resurfacing project along Rte. 26 within multiple municipalities.

Motion: G. Hammond, Second G. Kilmer. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

J. Newby gave a brief presentation on the status of the 434 Greenway projects PINs 903808 and 903826. The presentation included the benefits of greenways and the design alternatives being investigated.

After the presentation, J. Williams spoke on the two projects that the next two TIP amendment requests pertain to. He let the Committee know that much consideration went into choosing this project as a transformative project for the area, at the request of the Governor. He stated that although some committee members may have other projects that they would rather see funded, this money is specifically for this project. If this project is not approved, the money could not be invested elsewhere within the urban area.

Discussion followed and several questions are posed:

V. Myers asked if the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge over Rte. 434 will be widened to accommodate the proposed multi-use trail. J. Newby answered that it will not be widened, and that the path will be 9.5 feet wide at its narrowest point. V. Myers expressed concern that 9.5 feet is not wide enough for two-way pedestrian and bicycle traffic- it is unsafe. He added that the Vestal Rail Trail, which is much wider than the proposed trail, has seen many pedestrian and bicyclist collisions. J. Newby responds that it will only be 9.5 feet wide at its narrowest point, with most of the trail being between 10' and 12'.

R. Bennett inquired about where they are planning to put parking on each end of the trail so that people may drive to use it. P. Eshbaugh said that before parking areas are determined, the alternatives for design must first be narrowed down. DOT will meet with local municipalities to discuss parking locations.

G. Hammond asked who would be responsible for maintaining the greenway once it is built. Several committee members responded that it is the local municipality's job.

C. Paddick asked why an alternative along the north side of Rte. 434 was not included. J. Newby replied that this alternative was investigated and environmental issues were a deterrent for locating the trail on the north side.

C. Paddick referenced BMTS's greenway study and how the study includes a trail network from Chenango to the Tioga County line. She reiterated to the committee that the entire path network should be kept in mind and that this was a critical linkage in the trail system. Once constructed, it will be in place for many years so it is very important to investigate all alternatives and choose the best one, even if it isn't the least expensive or quickest option.

F. Evangelisti reiterated that it is important for this project to be done right. It is a critical part of the trail that should be considered a transportation project.

J. Sterbentz, added that based on previous analysis of this project, it was determined that it would not significantly decrease vehicle miles traveled in the area.

A. Urda stated that the north side of Rte. 434 should not be ruled out as a potential location for the multi-use trail since it would provide the most scenic view of the river. Several committee members agreed.

R. Bennett called for a motion.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-09, Recommending Policy Committee approval of amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. PIN 903826 Rte. 434 Greenway; Pennsylvania Ave to Murray Hill Road, R09-0455.
Motion: T. Kellogg, Second: R. Lake. Approved by Consensus.

2017-2021 TIP Amendment

P. Eshbaugh detailed that much like the previously discussed project, this is another transformative project. The project will bring 363 down to grade, slow down traffic, and provide City of Binghamton residents with access to the river. Many questions and discussions followed:

L. Boulton asked if there will be plenty of outreach opportunities for the public. P. Eshbaugh said that there will be a ton. J. Sterbentz spoke, asking if the outreach will be regional as well as local, since changes to this road will have a regional impact. P. Eshbaugh responded that she can distribute a list of where/who they will be aiming outreach. E. Jardine commented that this will be a very difficult project for commuters to deal with.

C. Paddick cited the high traffic volumes that have been observed on 363 and State Street. It does not seem like there would be enough capacity for all of the traffic if 363 were to intersect with State St. There would not be enough capacity for all of this traffic if 363 were brought down to meet other busy roads. J. Sterbentz added that this project will negatively

impact air quality because if traffic is slowed (or stopped due to traffic jams caused by high traffic volumes), more vehicle emissions will occur.

L. Boulton thought that this project would lower the level of service, which sparked a discussion on why this project should even be done if it will cost a lot of money and provide lower service in the end. P. Eshbaugh responded that it will increase the level of service for pedestrians accessing the river. Someone questioned why the road and bridges can't just be replaced as they are. V. Myers responded that a major rehab of what's there would probably cost nearly the same as redoing the whole thing. Others agreed. In addition to this, J. Williams added that this money is set aside specifically for a transformative project such as this and we won't necessarily get this money under any other circumstances. Thus, rehabbing or replacing the infrastructure as it is currently designed is not logical. G. Kilmer said that while it makes sense to want to beautify a gateway into the city, we don't want to 'throw the baby out with the bath water'. In other words, it seems counterintuitive to make a beautiful gateway into the city that no one will want to/be able to use easily. G. Hammond wondered if someone else would use the money if we didn't use it on this project, which J. Williams indicated was a possibility.

In response to concerns and comments expressed thus far, P. Eshbaugh said the project certainly deserves a lot of study and consideration to address these concerns, and that the DOT doesn't take that lightly.

C. Paddick asked if a feasibility study could be done first before going further with this project to determine if it is a worthwhile venture. R. Lake questioned the need for a feasibility study would be when it seems obvious that it isn't feasible. C. Paddick continued by asking if a feasibility study was done and the project doesn't seem feasible, would it be possible to then make the case for using this money towards a different project. There are two gateway projects that are on hold which need money. P. Eshbaugh was not sure these projects are 'transformative' enough to be completed with this money. The committee agreed that we shouldn't approve the project just because we have the money; it must be worthwhile.

L. Caforio suggested changing the amendment to only include scoping and design. P. Eshbaugh concurred to changing the amendment to approve funding for just scoping and preliminary design, not including incidentals. Then it can be revisited by the committee. Motion to approve this change to the amendment was made by L. Caforio, and seconded by R. Lake. Approved by consensus.

- ✓ Resolution 2017-10, Recommending Policy Committee approval of amendment to the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. ADDITION OF NEW PROJECT, PIN 90380A Rte. 363 & 434 Binghamton Gateway Project
Motion: L Caforio, Second: R. Standish. Approved by consensus.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/UPDATES:

✓ **NY511/Broome-Tioga Rideshare Website**

C. Gascon shared information about BMTS's new Broome-Tioga Rideshare website. It is a major overhaul of the old website that allowed people to connect with riders and drivers who are interested in ridesharing or carpooling. The new website includes many new features in addition to the rideshare aspect, including transit planners, live traffic feeds, and descriptions of regional transportation options.

✓ **ADA Transition Plan- City of Binghamton Pilot Project**

C. Gascon explained the pilot project that BMTS is doing with the City of Binghamton to create an ADA Transition Plan. ADA Transition Plans catalog current curb ramp and sidewalk ratings as they relate to ADA Compliance and detail how a city will improve that infrastructure to become ADA compliant. BMTS has hired three interns to collect data and assemble the report. Ideally, the pilot can be applied to other municipalities.

✓ **City of Binghamton Main St. HSIP Project**

R. Standish detailed that they chose Barton and Loguidice Engineering as the consultant for this project. The City is waiting on a bond contract before work can get started. The consultant is gearing up for surveying so they can begin immediately after funding arrives.

✓ **State St./Hawley St. TAP Project**

R. Standish announced that there is a public meeting scheduled for the State and Hawley Street project on February 28th in the council's chambers. A video made by the project's engineering consultants that shows a mock-up of the proposed project was played.

✓ **I-81 Pedestrian Bridge**

P. Eshbaugh distributed a handout. Based on a study that was done to look at different alternatives, NYSDOT has chosen to construct pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on US Route 11 between Bevier Street and Old Front Street. To replace or rehabilitate the existing pedestrian bridge was a less cost effective option than to add the accommodations to the bridge on Front Street. This option will still provide connectivity for non-motorized traffic and tie in with other planned paths on the Two Rivers Greenway system.

✓ **Transportation Alternatives Award**

P. Eshbaugh reported that award announcements have not been made yet.

✓ **Local Project Updates**

P. Eshbaugh explained that projects are just beginning to be programmed and started. R. Coleman added that unless there are specific questions on projects, the committee should refer to the handout for TAP information.

BUSINESS OFFERED FROM THE FLOOR

R. Bennett suggested that, in an effort to save money on printing costs, hard copies of certain documents will no longer be provided at meetings. They will still be available online for viewing and printing. Some things will still be printed for meetings. The Committee agreed.

The next meeting will be on June 1st, 2017 at 1:30pm.

Motion to adjourn made by R. Standish, seconded by G. Hammond.
Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.