

**NYSMPOs Director's Meeting**  
**February 2, 2007 10:30AM-3:00PM**  
**HOCTS Boehlert Center at Union Station**  
**321 Main Street Utica, NY 13501**  
**Meeting Summary**

**In person:**

Steve Gayle, BMTS  
Kealy Salomon, PDCTC  
Bill Tobin, UCTC  
John Czamanske, OCTC  
Hal Morse, GBNRTC  
Mary Rowlands, SMTC  
Jay Schissell, ECTC  
John Poorman, CDTC  
Ron Hayes, NYSDOT  
Dick Beers, FHWA

Sarah Siwek, SSA  
Tanya Zwahlen, SSA  
Peter Plumeau, Wilbur Smith  
Craig Secrest, TransTech Management

**By teleconference:**

Marty Neveu, NYSDOT  
Gerry Bogacz, NYMTC  
Jim Stack, GTC  
Aaron Frankenfeld, AGFTC

**1. Meeting Summary**

The January meeting summary was accepted.

**2. 2007 NYSMPOs Annual Meeting**

The Save the Date postcard was distributed. Tanya will mail send hard copies to MPOs not in attendance and email the file to the Directors. The postcard will also be posted to the NYSMPOs web site.

The group discussed who to invite outside of the 13 MPOs in New York. Tanya and Sarah will send save the date postcards to MPOs in NJ, CT and PA. In order to attract MPOs from outside of New York, the agenda should have a national tone.

The group reviewed the 2006 Annual Meeting evaluation (included as Appendix A) and agreed on a forward looking theme. Potential titles include "New Challenges, New Roles" and "MPO Experience 2007, 2017." The following concepts were suggested as relevant for conference sessions:

- There are several upcoming meetings related to the next federal transportation bill - the AMPO Policy Committee meeting, the AMPO/AASHTO Finance Summit and the National Revenue and Policy Commission field hearings, which will focus on metropolitan planning
- The future redefined role of the MPO
- New ways to apply finance to transportation
- Promoting transportation and land use integration
- Transportation policies related to climate change, sustainability and energy have a higher profile than during the last energy plan
- I-86 corridor management

- Operations and ITS
- Incident Management
- Safety
- Charrettes undertaken by Orange County in September 2006
- Community Design Phase I SCI project
- University Hill in Syracuse. A success story of shared development with mixed use parking management authority.
- The new planning rule

Potential speakers:

- Ken Orski on the state of transportation
- Steve Hemminger, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, currently serving on the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission
- Richard Geddes, associate professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University, currently serving on the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission
- Steve Winkelman, Manager of Transportation Program at the Center for Clean Air Policy to discuss Green-TEA and the global warming bill
- Jim McKenzie, Executive Director of Metroplan (Little Rock, AR) regarding AMPO's T4 discussions
- Mark Stout, Assistant Commissioner of Planning & Development for the NJDOT to discuss NJ's aggressive statewide program regarding land use and transportation.
- Jeff Kramer, MPO Institute, which provides training for policy board members
- Congressman John Hall (NY), who serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- Congressman Jerry Nadler (NY), who serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- Elliot Sander, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the MTA.
- Barry Seymour, Director of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
- The to-be-named Commissioner of NYSDOT

The conference space will allow three concurrent tracks, and the group discussed the possibilities of safety, land use/transportation and finance. Each session should (1) share successful products and (2) discuss where MPOs need to be in 5 years.

The group discussed scheduling the program to run past noon on Friday to allow more time for development of a statement coming out of the annual meeting. There is space reserved Wednesday for training or working group meetings.

Steve Gayle distributed PowerPoint slides from "Driving the MPO Planning Process: A seminar for MPO Board members." The group decided that policy board members

are unlikely to attend the annual meeting. A useful product for AMPO to develop would be a DVD showing the stature, responsibility and impact of MPO policy boards in places like San Francisco and New York. It would both provide an overview to policy board members and show them that they are part of something important nationally.

Sarah and Tanya will put together a draft agenda for review in March. Gerry Bogacz will distribute the Save the Date to the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the CT MPOs. NYSMPOs should provide Ron Hayes with the number of NYSDOT staff that should attend since they could fill the conference.

### **3. Shared Cost Initiatives**

#### **a. Community Design Phase I**

The final product for Community Design Phase I was distributed at the meeting. David Jukins provided excellent project oversight and the project reflects his hard work. A web page will be added to the NYSMPOs site with links to pdfs of the final product. Tanya will ask Dave to send hard copies to A/GFTC, NYMTC, GTC and ITCTC. The project working group will develop a distribution strategy for the 2,000 copies.

#### **b. Innovative Approaches to Planning Implementation**

Peter Plumeau (Wilbur Smith) and Craig Secrest (TransTech Management) provided a status update on the Innovative Approaches to Planning Implementation SCI project.

Task one identified needs and issues related to project tracking. The most important priorities for project tracking include (1) straightforward reporting on annual obligations and (2) the ability to know about and influence reprogramming of funds in advance (not after the fact). Communication issues are the most prevalent cause of problems. The consultant team researched project implementation tracking by other MPOs in the nation and found that most struggle to get timely and accurate information on local and state DOT projects.

The final task of the project is to define potential systems approaches to project tracking. The project consultant noted that this may not be the best approach and suggested three potential courses of action: (1) developing a reporting framework and project tracking requirements, recommending software to track data and developing a roadmap for implementation, (2) further exploring barriers to project tracking and ways to remove barriers, or (3) researching policy and enforcement solutions that would produce on-time/on-budget projects.

The group discussed the impediments to project tracking in New York. Tracking non-state projects deteriorated when NYSDOT no longer administered the projects. Communities without staff capability are not advancing difficult projects, but communities that know what they are doing move forward. Easy projects also move forward. MPOs need an equitable process of enforcement for localities and the state.

GBNRTC is starting to see success from bimonthly meetings with NYSDOT Region 5 staff and project sponsors. If municipalities lack capacity, NYSDOT provides technical support and project delivery has improved.

The consultant team will describe successful practices in New York State, such as GBNRTC and NYSDOT Region 5, and use New York's best practices as a baseline to measure progress. The consultant will present baseline information to NYSMPOs prior to the 3/6 joint MPO/RPPM meeting with NYSDOT in Schenectady. The 3/6 meeting will include this topic as an agenda item. The goal will be for NYSDOT to meet the baseline in all regions. There was not an interest in scheduling a demonstration of Web TELUS at this time. Hal Morse will redraft the final scope description and email it the Directors.

#### **c. Transit Supportive Development**

The contract will be complete next week. Kickoff will take place soon after.

#### **d. 2006 Training Evaluation**

Sarah Siwek presented a summary of evaluations related to the 2006 NYSMPOs training program. The memorandum is included as Appendix B.

On behalf of the GIS working group, Jeff Quackenbush (HOCTS) recommended that NYSMPOs acquire an ArcInfo license in order to access the full suite of GIS tools. The cost is \$7,500/seat and \$200 annually for maintenance. Sarah will send a memorandum to the Janine Simonson at the NYSDOT MPO unit and Pat Santillo at the Office on Information Services (OIS) regarding a bulk purchase of licenses from ESRI.

Funding for licenses could potentially come the \$85,000 transit human services SCI project and the \$50,000 post processor SCI project, both which were recommended for postponement by the Transit Working Group and the Travel Demand Model Users Group, respectively. Marty Neveu commented that NYSDOT also may pay for the licenses.

There is \$24,000 left in the 2006-2007 training budget. Sarah will send a memorandum to MPO Directors with proposed training courses for March and April. Suggestions included Advanced Geodatabases, transportation

conformity, and microsimulation training for both VISUM and TransCAD. The GIS Users group suggested that an Introduction to GIS and Geodatabase course be offered every year, due to turnover of technical staff.

#### **4. Staff Services Contract transition**

The group discussed the staff services contract and agreed to develop an RFP for a planning services agreement with a one-person, New York State-based consultant. John Poorman, Gerry Bogacz and Steve Gayle will develop the RFP and job description.

#### **5. NYSDOT Update**

Ron Hayes provided an update on the following NYSDOT activities:

- NYSDOT received 35 SPR applications, including 6 from MPOs. Projects will be awarded later in February.
- No further updates regarding Safe Routes to School. The MPO proposal is under consideration, along with two other alternatives, one developed by the RPPM/MPOs in regional meetings and one development by the NYSDOT Operating Division.
- The program update is on schedule for 3/1. The group discussed the 2/15 date provided by RPPMs as the freeze date for the program, which may impact the public review of the TIP for some areas. Several MPOs have not seen their program budgets. The group agreed to meet with NYSDOT after 3/1 to discuss how to make the process better.
- An MPO/RPPM meeting has been scheduled for 3/6. The program update will be on the agenda.
- The Governor released a budget this week and it could impact the program update. The NYSDOT budget increased by \$7.3 billion.

John Poorman discussed his positive experience as part of Governor Spitzer's transition team.

#### **6. Future of the MPO Discussion**

Steve Gayle asked the New York MPOs to individually or collectively provide input to AMPOs policy committee discussions related to T4. Issues to consider include whether or not to keep 50,000 as the floor for MPO minimum size, should the 200,000 distinction remain and how to reconsider MPOs for megacities.

#### **7. SAFETEA-LU Compliance and Interagency Consultation**

Robert Griffith presented a white paper regarding SAFETEA-LU compliance and interagency consultation requirements (Appendix C). Section 6001 requires MPOs to consult with Federal and State resource agencies during development of their long

range transportation plans. MPOs must identify environmental mitigation activities or areas. Consultation should take place to meet compliance requirements by July 1, 2007, as well as each time a long range transportation plan is updated. If an MPO does not comply with SAFETEA-LU requirements, FHWA and FTA cannot take action to approve the respective portion of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The result is that projects using Federal-aid cannot be approved by FHWA or FTA for the affected area.

In the short-term, the expectation by FHWA is that MPOs will identify environmental sensitive areas such as parks, wetlands and watersheds, using existing available data. Consultation should include some outreach to resource agencies, possibly joint contact on behalf of all 13 MPOs. NYSDOT will serve as short-term role to kickoff the process and longer-term as the projects evolves. The resource agencies will expect MPOs to be clear in identifying their needs/requirements and expectations.

#### 8. Other Business

- a. Bill Tobin thanked NYSMPOs for funding one of his policy board members to attend AMPO national conference.
- b. GBNRTC approved a Bridge Preventive Maintenance Strategy and a Human Services Transportation Plan recently and offered copies to MPOs.
- c. NYSMPOs staff will not advance the brochure until the new commissioner has been named.
- d. NYSMPOs held a meeting on the SIP development in New York on 1/12. NYSDEC and NYSDOT participated. There is a follow up meeting on 2/23. There are two issues to highlight:
  - There is an issue with consistency of VMT data for the motor vehicle emissions budgets developed by NYSDEC. NYSDEC is using HPMS volumes from 2002. MPOs have more recent data used for travel demand modeling.
  - MPOs want credit for off-road CMAQ projects, but in order to do that, there needs to be a provision in the SIP. We may need NYSDOT and the MPOs to weight in with NYSDEC on this issue. It would be much better to have this issue in the current SIP than wait for a revision, which could take two or three years.
- e. CMAQ guidance is out for review. Comments are due 2/23. Sarah is drafting comments for AASHTO. CMAQ funds were allowed to be used for transit agencies for three years, but the window is ending. AASHTO is requesting that FHWA reconsider the three year ban.
- f. The Air Quality working group is drafting a memorandum from NYSMPOs to the ICG about suggested change to improve the ICG process.

**2006 NYSMPOs Annual Meeting  
Conference Evaluation  
July 27, 2006**

**Total Evaluations Received: 14 (11.7% response rate)**

1. Did you think the content of the conference sessions was appropriate and informative? Please explain why or why not.
  - Concurrent tracks provided opportunity to attend relevant sessions at all times.
  - Some were a little too general for MPO staff (the day 2 material). If more policy/planning committee members had been there, they may have gotten more out of it. The value for me was meeting other MPO & AMPO staff in person
  - Content was informative for a range of people from those just becoming familiar with MPOs to those deeply involved with MPOs. Issues addressed were timely.
  - I'm glad the focus was on how do we sell transportation and land use integration rather than the technical aspects of doing transportation-LU integration
  - Yes, both in challenging us to expand our MPO horizons and finding out about practices of other NYS MPOs.
  - Yes, it identified and discussed issues that are critical to our understanding and addressing myriad of transportation questions facing us today and into the future.
  - The Colloquy sessions were especially good for covering emerging issues for planners.
  - It encouraged those in attendance to think outside the box and expand their thinking beyond that required by our bureaucracies
  - Yes. The sessions provided insightful information (Colloquy) regarding future activities and involvement for MPOs.
  - Yes. The sessions provided a good range of topics that dealt with MPO operating issues and emerging policy issues. The former were presented in a manner that was beneficial to both policy and technical committee members and the latter were more geared to MPO staff – which is what I believed we strived to do.
  - Yes. The Safety Forum was very helpful. It provided a lot of information in a short amount of time. Our organization came away with a lot of contact information and tasks to be accomplished in the next couple of years. Additionally, the theme of “making MPOs more relevant” was very timely. Relevancy and effectiveness go hand in hand.
  
2. How satisfied were you with the speakers and presenters? Please explain.
  - Speakers were generally excellent, with the possible exception of the AASHTO representative
  - Nice diversity of professionals, practitioners and others. The ARTWalk speaker, Doug Rice, added a fresh and entertaining perspective. It was interesting to hear about the process from his point of view.
  - Very satisfied. I appreciated the novel approach (for conferences) focused on the communication, rather than the technical. They provided a great chance to find out about what's going on and were very accessible.
  - Very good speakers that represented different perspectives.
  - Very good mix of presenters. I attended the ITS and congestion management sessions on Friday and both were very good.
  - I was satisfied with the speakers. However, some of the topics were redundant

- The speakers and presenters were excellent – I have not been to any other conferences that have included the NYSDOT Commissioner, AMPO executive director, Florida’s MPO association executive director, and Mort Downey along with a host of relevant speakers from NYSMPOs.
3. Did you feel the length of the conference was too long, too short or just right?
- *All respondents noted that the length was just right.*
  - A two-day event with sessions starting at lunch on the first and ending at the same time on the second seemed to work well. We may want to consider starting earlier on the first given that the state is large and it appeared many participants came in the night before.
4. What did you like most about the 2006 NYSMPOs Annual Meeting? Please explain.
- Transportation planning specific, liberating to not have to find a place somewhere within an engineering conference
  - The opportunity to meet the other MPO staff members and the AMPO staff was fantastic. The sessions on the Colloquy material were also well done.
  - I enjoyed the land use/transportation integration workshop. It shed some light on how much work we still need to do to break down the barriers and truly think about how to improve the planning and implementation processes. Discussions and interactions with people from various backgrounds were interesting.
  - Workshop prior to conference. Hands-on exercise very useful.
  - Providing me with the chance to talk to my colleagues from around the State.
  - New areas of emphasis – PPP
  - Discussion of the Colloquy
  - Great format, with the available training session the day before, and the kickoff sessions on the Colloquy that everyone attended, followed by your choice of sessions on Friday, made it especially worthwhile.
  - Breakout sessions and the ability to select the ones of interest to me.
  - The knowledge and breath of experience of the speakers.
  - I enjoyed meeting people representing NYSDOT and NYSMPO organizations
  - The sessions provided useful information regarding MPO activities. The Safety Roundtable was very informative and provided the much needed MPO involvement with GTSC, NYSDOT and NYSDMV.
  - Primarily the content and the speakers. Although, we may want to consider bringing in more out-of-state speakers for one to two major plenary sessions if this becomes wholly geared to MPO staff (with the understanding that this can get expensive).
  - The Safety Forum – it was pragmatic.
5. What did you like least? Please explain.
- AASHTO presentation and Commissioner’s content; not many folks are drinking the PPP Kool-Aid. However Commissioner Madison was a very good speaker
  - The policy session on emerging uses was a disappointment. I expected something different than what I got.
  - The location of sessions and room layout was a bit confusing. I understand the venue is under construction and there is very little to be done about that. However, it did feel like too many conferences were going on at the same time and space was tight.
  - Some of the plenary sessions were a bit dry and I did not relate to the topic
  - The weather

- The conference lacked the presence of downstate regional concerns. The upstate region of New York is vastly different than the downstate region. Speakers from the upstate region had differentiating issues and concerns than we have here on Long Island.
- A few of the sessions could have benefited with more time allotted in order to provide for Q and A.
- It was difficult to get Board and Planning Committee members to participate and I don't feel this was completely because of the timing or a lack of notice. However, I feel it would have been very beneficial to have had a networking-type event for the local electeds to be able to get together and discuss issues that they are facing in their respective regions.
- Nothing -I liked it. It was the best MPO conference I have attended in my career.

6. How would you rate this meeting compared to other conferences of this type that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.

- *Average rating was 8.25. No score lower than 7.*

7. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPO Annual Meeting.

a. Suggested locations:

- Saratoga Springs (3), Troy, Anywhere but Syracuse, Syracuse, Lake Placid (2), Ithaca, Albany, New York City (3)

b. Suggested session topics:

- Small MPO modeling applications
- Statewide initiatives under the state transportation master plan and the new governor, more statewide policy level material
- Planning Communication 201
- A mix of new and challenging topics with status updates on more familiar topics.
- Environmental processing
- Follow up on SAFETEA-LU implementation and what it means for transportation planners.
- Demand Response Operations, Taxis & Limousines as alternative modes of mass transit.
- Financing our systems; how to integrate planning and NEPA, how to bring principals to the table in a meaningful way.
- Further discussion on Land Use and transportation integration (with courses on an urban perspective)
- Developing effective Long-Range Plans

c. Session formats (e.g. plenary session, panel discussion, roundtable discussion):

- *The 2006 format was complimented by several respondents*
- I like the idea of more roundtable discussions rather than traditional presentation sessions. This would distinguish our annual meeting from traditional conferences.
- The variety of formats at this year's conference worked well: workshop, plenary sessions, walking tour, etc.
- More hands-on activities for participants.
- Roundtable discussion setting is preferable
- Roundtable discussions are not typically well-suited to large numbers. Given that we want this to be for a large and diverse group of participants, I think the panel discussions

and plenary sessions (when a recognized speaker is available) should be the primary formats.

- Panel Discussion

d. Other ways to improve the 2007 Annual Meeting:

- Continue outreach efforts to engage MPOs outside of NYS to add to the conversation
- I think roundtable formats on various topics (like we did for safety) would highlight some of the differences between the MPOs, would identify areas for potential improvements or new partnerships and may help the NYSDOT/MPO relationships across the state. Again, I would also ask who is the audience and gear the program toward that. If it's largely consultants, NYSDOT and MPO staff, presentations on rural transit systems, for example, are not terribly informative. We learn about these things at other NYS conferences and we should distinguish our annual meeting from a traditional conference. Perhaps our annual meeting should consider focusing on more statewide policy issues.
- More hands-on exercises.
- More opportunity to network with other MPOs in an informal setting.
- Have specific USDOT sessions that address emerging issues from the federal perspective. Could be done from the state side as well.
- Added downstate representation
- A bit more advance notice and starting earlier on the first day to get more in.

8. Additional comments

- Thanks to everyone who worked hard on putting together an excellent conference
- I like bringing other disciplines into planning. This conference made me think that we need to do more as planning professionals in terms of communication – e.g. making technical materials accessible and interesting to general public, persuasion of elected officials, utilizing various forms of media, etc. Perhaps we could learn from consultants in the following areas: Communications, Public Relations, Advertising.
- I liked the diversity of professionals who participated in the conference. From Wednesday's workshop, it was clear that though we work in the same field, we come at it from different perspectives.
- Great idea sending the evaluation form over e-mail.
- I think its worth doing this kind of conference regularly. The walking tour of Saratoga Springs with commentary on planning activities was excellent.
- Facility was great, decent food and a very nice happy hour reception on Thursday night.
- I found this conference very informative and helpful in my work. It was definitely worthwhile attend

## **SARAH J. SIWEK & Associates**

*Transportation & Environmental Consulting*



**TO:** New York State MPOs  
Ron Hayes, NYSDOT

**FROM:** Tanya Zwahlen  
Sarah Siwek

**SUBJECT:** 2006 Training Evaluations

**DATE:** February 2, 2007

Thirteen course evaluations were completed. The course-specific evaluation responses for five courses follow. The evaluation highlights are:

- 2006 training courses met overall expectations. Course ratings ranged from 6-8.
- Participants would like training tailored toward the MPO/transportation planning when possible. Incorporating MPO data in course material is desirable.
- Participants suggested the following courses for 2007: Advanced Geodatabases, Scenario Planning Workshop (2007 NHI Course), vendor-specific Travel Demand Modeling training, TransCad Basics Review and a course related to working with the public at meetings.
- Central New York is preferred as a location by course participants. New York City is also desirable, although travel and overnight logistics can be expensive.

### **Building Geodatabases I October 2-4, 2006 New York, NY (ESRI)**

9. Did the content of this course meet your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
- Yes, the range of content and level of detail was as expected.
  - As an initial exposure to building geodatabases I found the information presented quite useful. The MPO will have to upgrade its ArcView license to include ArcEditor to utilize what was demonstrated.
10. How satisfied were you with the instructor(s)? Please explain.
- Very, she seemed very knowledgeable and encouraged questions and open discussions that facilitated an excellent learning environment.
  - The instructor was good and demonstrated the material well.

11. How satisfied were you with the content? Please explain.
  - Much of the content was only relevant to users with a higher level license than is currently provided under the NYSDOT license. Given that, the content was good, but much of which can't currently be utilized.
  - Good content
  
12. How satisfied were you with the facilities? Please explain.
  - Very, the training room was comfortable and the workstations were brand new.
  - Satisfactory facilities
  
13. How satisfied were you with the location? Please explain.
  - New York is always an exciting location for training, although the logistical issues associated with the trip can be a challenge at times, particularly for upstate folks.
  - I ♥ New York!
  
14. How would you rate this training compared to other courses that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.
  - 8 – Again, great content but with limited applicability at this point due to only having an ArcView license as opposed to a higher level license.
  - I rate it an 8, Instruction, Facilities and Location.
  
15. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPOs training courses.
  - a. Suggested topics:
    - Vendor-specific Travel Demand Modeling training could be beneficial, particularly if it focused on more advanced topics and also aspects of modeling for air quality. This continues to be a difficult training topic given the different software packages used across the state.
    - TransCad Basics Review
  - b. Suggested locations:
    - Syracuse
  
16. Additional comments:
  - Great job organizing these training opportunities, we appreciate your efforts!

**Building Geodatabases I**  
**October 23-25, 2006**  
**Johnstown, NY**

1. Did the content of this course meet your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
  - Yes the content was what I expected and more but our MPO does not have the ESRI license (ArcEditor/ArcInfo) to put the training to use.

- Yes, the course met my expectations.
  - Yes –good overview of the Geodatabase structure.
2. How satisfied were you with the instructor(s)? Please explain.
    - Very satisfied. The instructor was very knowledgeable and well organized. The instructor was also very helpful in willing to answer questions outside the course curriculum.
    - Very satisfied; instructor knew material and was willing to help.
    - Very – he knew the topic well and tried to give us more detailed transportation examples.
  3. How satisfied were you with the content? Please explain.
    - In a general sense the content was good, (see my other comments in following questions.)
    - Satisfied, though the course material and exercises were scripted and not necessarily tailored to MPO work. If possible, it would be great to use local MPO data for some of the GIS exercises – understanding that such a request is difficult to satisfy for this type of technical training.
    - Content was good for a general course in course exercises for the most part were good. A transportation specific course may have been more helpful but it is not offered.
  4. How satisfied were you with the facilities? Please explain.
    - The training facilities were very good.
    - Very satisfied.
    - Excellent facilities
  5. How satisfied were you with the location? Please explain.
    - Fair. Johnstown is an out of way location with little to do after training hours.
    - Very satisfied; cost effective location.
    - Ok, lodging choices were limited but ok.
  6. How would you rate this training compared to other courses that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.
    - 6 The trainer and training facility were very good. The training location wasn't the most desirable area and having training would be more valuable on data we have or work on developing.
    - I rate it an 8; slightly above average.
    - 8 good for a general course.
  7. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPOs training courses.
    - a. Suggested topics:
      - Scenario Planning Workshop (2007 NHI Course)
      - Advance Geodatabases

- b. Suggested locations:
    - Binghamton, Ithaca, Syracuse and Utica
    - Upstate New York
    - Central part of the state seems to work best.
  - c. Other ways to improve the 2007 training program:
    - Use data from the NYS MPOs. It will require more involvement in those of use working with GIS at the MPOs but will be far more valuable for our work efforts.
8. Additional comments:
- I think the trainer was very knowledgeable and I would take more GIS training from him in the future. I think the MPOs would benefit much more if we could use our own data or develop data that could specifically benefit MPOs involved in the training.

**Working with ArcGIS Network Analyst  
November 6-7, 2006  
Syracuse, NY**

1. Did the content of this course meet your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
  - The training was very informative and was relevant to tasks we'd like to do within our MPO and our MPO has the ESRI license needed to do the work.
  - Yes, the course met my expectations.
  - Not really - I thought we would get more into the integration of Geodatabases with Network analyst, but the course was more on the basic uses of the network analyst.
2. How satisfied were you with the instructor(s)? Please explain.
  - Very satisfied. The instructor was very knowledgeable and well organized. The instructor was also very helpful in willing to answer questions outside the course curriculum.
  - Very satisfied; instructor knew material and was willing to help.
  - Very – he knew the topic well and tried to give us more detailed transportation examples.
3. How satisfied were you with the content? Please explain.
  - Content was good and gave you a decent general idea on how to apply the concept to the data used by our MPO. Although, we used data sets developed by ESRI of the Portland Oregon area which greatly reduces the possibility for errors and hurdles that could/would exist with the datasets of the various NYS MPOs.

- Satisfied; again, the course material/exercises were very scripted, even though the software easily lends itself to MPO related work.
  - Content was for a general course which was a little too general for me. I would have preferred more data creation and maintenance. Course exercises for the most part were good.
4. How satisfied were you with the facilities? Please explain.
- Good, have taken a few GIS trainings there and overall the facilities have been satisfactory.
  - Satisfied; security precautions for using the equipment were cumbersome.
  - Good facilities
5. How satisfied were you with the location? Please explain.
- Yes, Syracuse is most central to the majority of NYS MPOs and has plenty of dining and entertainment facilities for those staying in Syracuse for multi-day training.
  - Very satisfied; cost effective location.
  - Good location
6. How would you rate this training compared to other courses that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.
- 7 Trainer, training facility and training area were all very good but the data used could be improved upon.
  - I rate it a 7; slightly above average.
  - 7 good for a general course.
7. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPOs training courses.
- a. Suggested topics:
    - Scenario Planning Workshop (2007 NHI Course)
    - Advance Geodatabases
  - b. Suggested locations:
    - Upstate New York
    - Binghamton, Ithaca, Syracuse and Utica
    - Central part of the state seems to work best.
  - c. Other ways to improve the 2007 training program:
    - Use data from the NYS MPOs. It will require more involvement in those of use working with GIS at the MPOs but will be far more valuable for our work efforts.
8. Additional comments:
- I think the MPOs would benefit much more if we could use our own data or develop data that could specifically benefit MPOs involved in the training.

- I think the trainer was very knowledgeable and I would take more GIS training from him in the future. I think the MPOs would benefit much more if we could use our own data or develop data that could benefit MPOs involved

### **Presenting Data and Information**

**August 25, 2006**

**New York, NY**

1. Did the content of this course meet your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
  - I didn't know what to expect; I found it very interesting and useful.
  - While very informative, there was little explanation of how to use some of the examples given by the instructor.
  - Met. The course went back to the basics of how to communicate information effectively but simply. Effectively demonstrated how the use of Powerpoint for presentations can corrupt content and reasoning. Just a solid, back to basics course.
2. How satisfied were you with the instructor(s)? Please explain.
  - I was very satisfied. I liked the examples, experience shared.
  - The instructor was very knowledgeable and well-spoken. He was very academic and used many obscure examples.
  - Edward Tufte is an expert in his field. His approach of using four textbooks rather than powerpoint to get his message across was an effective technique. He is very articulate. He kept the subject matter interesting.
3. How satisfied were you with the content? Please explain.
  - I was satisfied with the content and found it provided a different way of thinking about data and relaying information to others.
  - I was disappointed in the overall content.
  - Rather general, covering a lot of disciplines. But I got the message – one can present complex data simply and through pictures more successfully than through the use of computer slideware.
4. How satisfied were you with the facilities? Please explain.
  - They were OK – kind of tight seating arrangements.
  - The facility was appropriate for the number of people that attended.
  - Comfortable with tables to spread out. Very large audience which made it impossible to interact with the instructor. He did however, offer “office hours” during scheduled breaks. Refreshments were ok, nothing special – could have been better for New York.
5. How satisfied were you with the location? Please explain.
  - Great
  - I enjoyed having the training in NYC.

- Convenient – just a hop, skip, and jump from Penn Station. Plenty of lunch opportunities but limited knowledge of the area made them difficult to “find”.
6. How would you rate this training compared to other courses that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.
    - 8 – I still think back to the information from the course when planning/developing public outreach materials/presentations.
    - 6
    - 8 – Good information, but a very long day.
  7. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPOs training courses.
    - a. Suggested topics:
      - Working with the public at meetings
      - I’d like to see this course presented again, but tailored toward transportation and offered exclusively to the State’s transportation community – DOT, MPOs, Regional Planning Commissions, etc. I’d like to see something on speed management, integrated design & CSS, and corridor design (management).
    - b. Suggested locations:
      - Dispersed throughout NY to make it easier for all MPO staff to attend
      - Someplace affordable & touristy – Niagara Falls (with access to Toronto). Doesn’t really matter I guess.
    - c. Other ways to improve the 2007 training program:
      - It would be helpful if notifications for available training were sent out more in advance. It is often difficult to adjust schedules with limited notice.
      - I think we’re doing ok for beginners – let me think about it. CEU credits would be nice where possible.
  8. Additional comments:
    - It is difficult to recall the details about training taken in August for a January evaluation.
    - This course, or something similar, should be required for anyone who is responsible for data manipulation and analysis, in my opinion.

**Transportation Safety Planning  
December 6-7, 2006  
Utica, NY**

1. Did the content of this course meet your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
  - Somewhat - It was a more general description of safety and made great assumptions of having existing data to base the planning upon.

2. How satisfied were you with the instructor(s)? Please explain.
  - They were very knowledgeable in the subject matter but were sometimes strayed off topic.
3. How satisfied were you with the content? Please explain.
  - Content was of for a general course maybe a bit too much for some sections. Course could be shortened.
4. How satisfied were you with the facilities? Please explain.
  - Good facilities.
5. How satisfied were you with the location? Please explain.
  - Good location.
6. How would you rate this training compared to other courses that you have attended? Rate 1-10, with 1 = worst and 10 = best. Please explain.
  - 7 good for a general course.
7. Please provide suggestions for the 2007 NYSMPOs training courses.
  - a. Suggested topics:
    - Advance Geodatabases
  - b. Suggested locations:
    - Central part of the state seems to work best.



3. Request for resource plans.
4. Some level of outreach to agencies.
  - (a) may be joint contact by all MPOs.
5. Failure of resource agencies to participate is not a failure of MPOs to comply with SAFETEA-LU.
6. Develop a continuous process
  - (a) must be “ongoing.”
    1. should not be reinvented each time a plan is adopted/changed.
  - (b) cover post compliances.

## II. NYSDOT Expectations

### A. Coordinated approach

1. NYSDOT serves as coordinator with state and federal agencies
  - (a) short term role to kick-off process
  - (b) longer-term role as process evolves
2. Process developed **with MPOs** that will lead to meaningful consultation
3. **NYSDOT’s rural consultation process**

## III. MPOs Expectations

### A. Participation on relevant portions of plan and process.

1. Resource agencies should provide input on respective elements of plan
  - (a) MPO will provide relevant sections of LRTP.
  - (b) Not expect debate/or “non-specialist” items such as USFS commenting on travel model methodologies. Would expect comments/consultation on policies as related to transportation impacts or resources.
2. Resource agencies are part of process but MPOs are decision-makers.
3. Resource agencies respond with data policies and plans for their particular specialty.

### B. Meaningful Consultation

1. Can/will agency participate to identify mitigation measures and activities?
2. Clear response what agency solutions are.
3. Resource agencies to identify what resources they have.
  - (a) Data
    1. paper – maps
    2. electronic/GIS: a data base
  - (b) Policies } web based
  - (c) Resource Plans } paper based
4. Who should MPOs contact?
5. When in the process are agencies contacted?

### C. Clear indications from USDOT of adequacy of efforts to consult.

### D. Process is not soapbox to cure all environmental issues.

1. Looking at transportation impacts only.
2. Not the forum to determine land use.

### E. Formal MPO mechanism for demonstrating SAFETEA-LU compliance on the Long- Range Regional Transportation Plan

F. FHWA/FTA concurrence with MPO Long Range Transportation Plan compliance with SAFETEA-LU.

**III. What are the resource agency expectations?**

**A. How will the agency participate?**

1. Interaction with MPOs
  - (a) none – agency will not participate with MPO.
  - (b) want to deal with each MPO separately.
  - (c) contact MPOs on a group basis.
  - (d) how often are the agencies willing to consult?
2. Regular meeting with agency.
3. Regular meeting with MPOs; identify issues, resource policies.
4. FHWA more to act on behalf.
  - (a) resource agencies can meet MPOs.
    1. face to face
  - (b) materials MPOs need placed on public website.
    1. teleconferences
    2. web forums

**B. Agencies will expect meaningful participation.**

1. Agencies expect MPOs to be clear in identifying their needs/requirements and expectations.
  - (a) agency will focus on areas of “regulatory” concerns.
2. Thoughtful consideration of agency positions/points/concerns.
  - (a) follow-up if inconsistencies occur.
3. Consideration of staff and resource limitations.
  - (a) use technology to transfer materials and communications.
    1. webinars
    2. teleconferences
  - (b) Do not expect a lot of travel to “remote” locations.
    1. try to “piggyback” meetings.
  - (c) Agency will consider participation/consultation with regards to core mission of agency.
  - (d) Agency does not expect to be consultant in whole planning process.

**IV. NYSDOT’s Role**

- A. Coordinate with MPOs to develop consultation process
  1. Short range develop plan
  2. long term institute plan
- B. Review metro planning program for consultation and compliance in conjunction with NYSDOT oversight
- C. Respond to request for resource materials

**D. MPO member role to approve UPWP, TIP & Plan**

**E. Collect and distribute or otherwise make available resource agency plans**

1. Hardcopy
2. Website addresses to plans

**V. FHWA and FTA Roles**

**A. Work with MPOs to determine compliance**

1. Standards to evaluate compliance
2. Standards to evaluate “good faith efforts”
  - (a) work plans (UPWP)
  - (b) accomplishment dates/targets

**B. Facilitate interagency contacts**

1. Meet with NYSDOT.
  - (a) diocese to consider
  - (b) NYSDOT responsibility with agency contacts
2. Meet with MPO Directors and staff
3. Contact Federal agencies
  - (a) layout SAFETEA-LU requirements.
  - (b) request joint meetings to introduce issues.
4. Develop process for consultation.
  - (a) short term – prior to 7/1/07
  - (b) long term – ongoing post 7/1/07

Proposal for Consideration of a Process for  
Environmental Consideration and Mitigation and Required Inter-agency Consultation

I.Short Term Actions (by July 1, 2007):

- a. Kick-off with NYSDOT, FHWA, FTA – 2/2/2007
- b. Commence developing Interagency Consultation Process
  - i. Thought: one coordinated process for all MPOs, not 13 different processes for each MPO
  - ii. Coordinate with NYSDOT
  - iii. Requires coordination with both state and federal agencies
- c. MPO develops plan for meeting SAFETEA-LU Compliance
  - i. Coordinate with NYSDOT, FHWA, FTA
  - ii. Show actions to be accomplished with milestones
- d. Identify policies consistent with resource agency plans
  - i. Identify environmental resources within the planning area.
  - ii. Use available GIS layers, e.g., wetlands, Parks, forests, other public lands, historic properties
- e. Tribal Consultation
  - i. Initiate outreach to Tribal Councils

II.Long Term Actions:

- a. Complete Interagency Consultation Process
- b. Implement process
- c. Complete actions identified in plan for meeting SAFETEA-LU compliance