

NYSAMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Group Meeting

Thursday September 18, 2014 – 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

HOCTS Conference Room,

MEETING NOTES

1. Introductions / Roll Call

MPOS:

A/GFTC – Kate Mance

BMTS - Scott Reigle (chair)

CDTC – Jen Ceponis

ECTC – Scott Shaw

HOCTS – Dana Crisino, Maureen Bishop, Ethan Brennan

OCTC – Ashlee Long

PDCTC – Emily Dozier

SMTC – Danielle Krol

UCTC – David Staas

NYSDOT:

NYSDOT Main Office – Cathy Kuzsman, Jim Ercolano

Region 2 – Sharon Heyboer, Beth Watts

Region 3 – Jeff Sterly

Region 4 – Steve Beauvais

Region 6 – Pauline Burns

Region 6 – Jim Rapoli, Lisa Mondello

Region 10 – Lenny Wexler

NYBC – Josh Wilson

NYSAMPO Staff: Corey Mack, RSG

MioVision Staff: Kyle Othmer

2. Vehicle, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Counting in New York State – Kyle Othmer, MioVision

The MioVision Scout traffic counting device uses a pole mounted camera to record video of an intersection or area of interest. The device can record and store up to 72 hours of video, with less battery life noted in a cold climate. The pole is 21 feet high and uses a fisheye lens to record a large area. The device can be securely and non-obtrusively mounted to existing street poles, or a tripod can be used in areas with no suitable poles. In all traffic collection experiences in New York City, there have been no reports of theft; one device was removed by law enforcement.

The device records video in AVI format and is reviewable by the client. The client uploads the AVI file to the MioVision data processing software and identifies features in the video, such as compass direction, street names, lanes and sidewalks, etc. The software processes the video and provides data as an end product. The resulting processed data can be outputted in a variety of formats and BIN times. The video is stored on the MioVision cloud system for a year and can be downloaded by

the client or consultant at any time; the resulting processed data is stored on the cloud system indefinitely and accessible at any time.

Many different vehicle types can be counted, and can separate, cars, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians, and other types. Custom vehicles, such as snowmobiles or golf carts, are possible for an additional fee. The device can count bi-directional in a lane, path, or sidewalk, such as wrong way bicyclists.

MioVision charges a per-minute fee for video processing. A variety of pricing arrangements are available: MPOs can purchase and contract processing services directly, the equipment can be jointly purchased and shared, or a third party vendor can be utilized to provide the equipment. Additional information on the traffic data collection devices, capabilities, and pricing were presented and are included as an attachment to these notes.

3. Discussion: Pedestrian & Bicycle Counts

a. NYBC Statewide Analysis of Bike / Pedestrian Counts – J. Wilson

The NYBC requested bicycle and pedestrian count data from all MPOs and DOT regions. The NYBC has received count data from many sources, including two organizations that followed the national Bicycle and Pedestrian counting methodology, and one that used modified ski race equipment. The data is currently being compiled and augmented with information from a recently released NCHRP report on estimating walking and bicycling trips.

NCHRP 770: Estimating Bicycling and Walking for Planning and Project Development: A Guidebook http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_770.pdf

The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project annual count / survey days were September 9 – 14. Emily Dozier noted that she coordinates volunteers throughout her region and enters their data into the documentation project format. The NYBC provided resources and assistance in coordinating volunteers.

More information on the Documentation Project and Methodology can be found at the project website: <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>

b. Potential for Sourcing MioVision Using of Existing Traffic Counting Contracts

MPOs and DOT Regions have requested clarification if MioVision resources, or MioVision-equipped consultants, can be contracted through traditional Traffic Counting and Data Collection Contracts. Jim Ercolano and Cathy Kuzsman were unsure of the specific contracting requirements. MioVision has provided specifications for competitive bidding of video data collection services.

Jim E and Cathy K to review the applicability of using these specifications to bid for video data collection and processing under NYSDOT Traffic Counting Contracts.

4. Review of Pressing Issues / Significant Items from Region Summaries

The Region Summaries are included as an attachment to these notes. Discussion:

Emily Dozier asked if the MPOs or Regions had specific details for bicycle detection and actuation at loop detectors. Emily noted that the settings of the signal controller can be adjusted to detect bicycles, but the adjustment should not be so sensitive to detect adjacent vehicles; this setting will need to be adjusted based on asphalt depth, loop location, loop type, and other factors. Corey Mack noted that newer signal equipment often utilizes vehicle detection cameras rather than loops; these cameras can detect bicycles and do not need to be adjusted based on loop sensitivity. **MPOs and Regions to discuss with local traffic signal programmers to determine any bicycle detection best practices.**

Kate Mance asked if other MPOs / Regions had any experiences with Shared Lane Marking (SLM) educational campaigns. Emily Dozier noted that the City of Beacon modified an example SLM educational campaign from a mid-west community. Jen Ceponis noted that there is an example educational board used by the CDTC. **Emily D and Jen C to forward examples of SLM educational materials to Kate M.**

Emily Dozier asked BMTS if there were any best practices for involving City of Binghamton Department of Public Works personnel in the identification of Complete Streets improvements. Scott Reigle noted that BMTS organized a meeting with the DPW and regional stakeholders, including the United Way, Health Department, and BACPAC. This meeting focused on implementing Complete Streets principals on upcoming capital roadway projects in the City of Binghamton. The upcoming projects were reviewed and discussed for applicability based on wide streets with low traffic, adjacent infrastructure, and connectivity to the existing network of bike lanes and paths. Several Complete Street applications were identified, and a walking audit is scheduled for October 1, 2014 to validate the initial applicability. Scott noted the keys to agreement include:

- Coordination with capital budget – no new work, just features within existing projects
- Be mindful of construction schedule – review upcoming projects as soon as possible to coordinate any proposed improvements into the capital project seamlessly

Josh Wilson asked if any MPOs or Regions were aware of local applications of bike boxes. Plattsburgh is considering bike boxes at one intersection and was seeking regional examples. Jim E noted that Ithaca uses bike boxes, and Emily D noted New York City's use of bike boxes. Lanny Wexler asked if there were any applications of colorized bike lanes throughout the state. Danielle Krol noted that Syracuse has a green cycletrack and noted that a 900 series highway may have green bike lanes.

Danielle Krol sought suggestions for advertising a recent SMTC pedestrian safety campaign. Jen Ceponis noted that the CDTC used the "See! Be Seen!" campaign materials (<http://www.capitalcoexist.org/education-safety/education-materials/see-be-seen-2/>). The NYCDOT "LOOK" campaign is a good example, but may be copyrighted (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pedestrians/look.shtml>). Corey M noted that several organizations use stencils on the sidewalk with slogans to raise pedestrian safety awareness. Kate M noted that bus wraps can be inexpensive, gain attention, and tend to remain on the bus well after the initial ad run is finished.

Emily D asked for further information on the SMTC Onondaga Sustainable Streets Coalition project. The reference document can be found online here: http://walkbikecny.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Sustainable-Streets-Sidewalks-DRAFT-3_10_14.pdf. Kate M commended

SMTC on their pedestrian demand model; a similar methodology was recently applied to a project for A/GFTC.

Emily D asked about insurance requirements for organized group bicycle ride events. Sharon Heyboer noted that the insurance requirements can be difficult to meet. Scott R noted that the annual Binghamton Bridge Ride has been cancelled in the past due to increases in insurance rates. Danielle K offered to research the insurance requirements of a local Syracuse group bicycle ride event.

5. Work Plan Implementation

a. Survey of Past Funding Recipients

Danielle K noted that the survey deadline has been extended through December. Seven responses have been received and more responses would be preferred. Additional materials have been compiled and are attached to the meeting notes.

b. Questions on Driving Exam

It was discussed that the proposed questions for the driving exam were already in the question pool. Given this, the group in the past shifted focus to the legislation for “bicycle and pedestrian safety” components in driver’s education classes. Josh W stated that the bill failed to make it out of committee and will need to be reintroduced; there are no sponsors identified to reintroduce the legislation. Josh W stated that the NYBC will continue to seek sponsors for the reintroduction of the legislation.

Until then, there was some discussion of updates to the Driver’s Manual to include recent changes in traffic laws, like SLMs and minimum passing distances to bicyclists. The Driver’s Manual can be viewed here: <http://dmv.ny.gov/driver-license/drivers-manual-practice-tests>

c. Develop Fact Sheet on Bicycle and Pedestrian Laws

Bicycle laws have been compiled locally by organizations like Capitol Coexist and Walk Bike CNY, plus statewide organizations such as SafeNY and NYBC. Fact sheets could be developed to educate different audiences: one for law enforcement and judicial personnel, and another for bicyclists. The Fact Sheet should be editable for municipalities to account for local variation in laws, such as riding a bicycle on sidewalks, or riding side-by-side. Kate M cited concern that the fact sheet may be ignored by personnel, whereas hands on training for enforcement officers may be more effective, albeit expensive.

Emily D suggested a podcast could be developed with short segments of explanations of different laws.

Scott R will look into contracting with RSG to prepare two Bicycle Law fact sheets, editable for individual communities.

6. NYSDOT Initiatives

a. Transportation Alternatives Program – Cathy Kuzsman

Mary Harding is transitioning to a new position within NYSDOT; a replacement for her position has not been named. Cathy noted that 135 applications were received for TA

projects, with \$126.2 million in funding requested and only \$52 million available. The MPOs and DOT Regions are ranking the proposals, with an announcement expected October 8.

There will be no TAP solicitation in 2015. The DOT has decided to pause on further solicitations and allow the funding source to grow while current projects develop.

Recently, Mary H sent out an email with information regarding the FHWA TAP Performance Management Guidebook under currently development. Participation in the development process is requested.

b. Complete Streets – Cathy Kuzsman

Four Complete Streets Workshops were piloted around the state. The workshop was developed by the National Complete Streets Coalition (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>). Most communities that participated have Complete Streets Interest Groups organized based on these workshops. The communities also generally have Complete Streets policies, but these policies need to be more integrated with local public works and planning departments. Further information can be found from the National Complete Streets Coalition (above) or the Cornell Local Roads Program (<http://www.clrp.cornell.edu/>).

The Complete Streets Checklist continues to be under development under Patty Coulter. The checklist is being revised and updated after receiving around 300 comments from various organizations and groups; responses to the comments may be posted. The final checklist isn't expected before mid-October. Once completed, the Complete Streets checklist will replace the Pedestrian Generator checklist and will be used by planning staff. Recommendations from the checklist will be sent to the designers for review in the design process of the project.

c. Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

An updated New York State Pedestrian Safety Action Plan is under development. NYSDOT and their consultant are preparing the document with FHWA, the GTSC and others. The plan may identify corridor specific treatments and statewide system improvements. A draft of the plan is expected by the end of the year.

The 2011 – 2015 New York State Pedestrian Safety Action Plan can be viewed here: http://blog.tstc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Pedestrian-Safety-Action-Plan_draft3.pdf

d. Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Administration Transition

Jim Ercolano stated that Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Administration will transition to the Office of Traffic Safety and Mobility (OTSM). Jim E identified the three reasons for this transition: to energize office, including the addition of a program coordinator; to clarify goals and focus; and to better align bicycle and pedestrian program efforts with the overall safety program, with the intention of making the bicycle and pedestrian program more safety oriented. Jim E requested any suggestions for goals, focus areas, issues, especially safety oriented issues, and emphasis areas be emailed to him at jim.ercolano@dot.ny.gov. These concerns and suggestions will be reviewed and addressed as the transition process develops.

7. Rule Making Update – Metropolitan & Statewide Planning

Steve Gayle to update.

8. Group Discussion Items

a. Economic Benefits of Cycling and Walking Plan in New York State

There were two local economic benefits studies conducted for smaller regions: the Greenways and Trails Economic Benefit Report (http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/greenways/publications/economic_benefits.pdf) and the Canal Communities Report Bicyclists Bring Business (http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/canalway_trail/b3/Bicyclists_bring_business.pdf). There are no statewide resources at this time.

Go Bike in Buffalo is preparing assessment and measurement tools for the economic impact of bicycling in their region – this may be a future discussion presentation.

The benefit of walking and bicycling would be important to quantify for future funding opportunities, but is a very complicated number to calculate. For instance, the study could account for tourism only, it could attempt to quantify the health benefits of active transportation, or it could quantify time lost in commuting due to additional vehicles on the road.

Emily D to compile a list of all relevant studies of the economic benefits of bicycle and pedestrian activity.

b. Yielding Behavior at Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)

The group watched a video of Scott R attempting to cross at a relatively new RRFB. Several vehicles are observed to ignore the beacon, with one lane of travel yielding, but not the opposing lane, even after Scott R has entered the crosswalk. The group discussed; Corey M noted higher observed yielding rates in other locations; Kate M described a bucket and flag system employed at a crosswalk in Glens Falls; Jim E noted that a HAWK system may have better compliance rates.

c. Strava Labs Bicycle and Walking Data

Interesting heat maps are available online that illustrate widely used bicycle and pedestrian routes, typically for commuting and recreational / exercise purposes. Additional detailed data can be extracted from Strava as a pay service; no one in the Working Group had any experience with the data Strava can provide.

Strava Labs: <http://labs.strava.com/heatmap/#7/-76.83933/42.72385/blue/bike>

9. Events

a. Park(ing) Day, September 19

Park(ing) Day is an annual event where organizers set up a temporary pop-up park in a metered parking space. The event often coincides with education on the allocation of public resources to parking or other information. Jen C noted that the CDTC typically holds an

event in Albany, and Danielle stated that the SMTC has organized events in the past. The event is historically a grassroots, activist led event, so it may not follow the usual channels of planning and announcement – be aware of any events you may encounter.

b. Walk to School Day, October 8

Walk to School Day is usually led by schools that have received Safe Routes to School funding in the past. If the School registers, they often receive prizes to hand out to children. Active parents, staff, and PTA members are important to keep an activity like this running.

c. Traffic Skills 101 Training, October 1,3, and 4

NYBC and PDCTC have organized this training. The training is a requirement to become a league certified instructor. The training hasn't been advertised significantly due to scheduling issues, but the timing has recently been finalized. The training is intended for local community members, and will be advertised.

10. Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

a. Conference Call: Thursday, December 11 (10 AM – 12 PM)

b. In-Person Meeting: Thursday March 12 (10 AM – 4 PM) at SMTC in Syracuse