

**New Visions Regional Operations and Safety Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 30, 2014
Meeting Minutes**

ATTENDEES

Barbara Tozzi, City of Troy
Bill Trudeau, City of Albany
Christopher Lavin, Chief of Police, Town of East Greenbush
Christopher O'Neill, Capital District Transportation Committee
Christopher Wallin, City of Schenectady
Jim Mearkle, Albany County
Leonard Fornabia, New York State Police
Mark Bellingel, New York State Police
Mark Kennedy, NYS Department of Transportation R1
Mark O'Connor, New York State Police
Mark Pyskadlo, NYS Department of Transportation R1
Michael Franchini, Capital District Transportation Committee
Michael Loftus, NYS Thruway Authority
Mike Doody, NYS Department of Transportation R1
Paul Overbaugh, Governor's Traffic Safety Committee
Robert Cherry, NYS Department of Transportation R1
Robert Limoges, NYSDOT
Rocco Ferraro, Capital District Regional Planning Commission
Russ Reeves, City of Troy
Sandy Misiewicz, Capital District Transportation Committee
Sree Nampoothiri, Capital District Transportation Committee
Thomas Werner, CDTC Policy Board

Welcome and Introductions

Chris O'Neill welcomed the group, provided a brief explanation of the origins of Regional Operations Committee, and reorganization of the committee as an advisory committee for the long range transportation plan update (New Visions 2040) as well as inclusion of the topics safety and security. The attendees introduced themselves.

New Visions Update Process

Chris O'Neill presented a briefing about the New Visions 2035 Plan and the 2040 Update. The 2040 Plan process is expected to take two years with an aim for a final approval by Policy Board in September 2015. The Regional Operations and Safety Advisory Committee (ROSAC) is one of nine subcommittees working on New Visions 2040. The ROSAC is expected to develop a

Working Paper by June 2014 including New Visions accomplishments, issues and needs assessment, updated priority networks, performance measures, realistic targets and aspirational targets, and key issues that should be presented to the public. It is expected that some of these tasks might be longer term beyond June 2014. The ROSAC will also be asked to provide input on operations and safety project candidates.

Safety Planning

Sandy Misiewicz presented an overview of safety statistics, datasets, and national priority requirements. New York State has a better safety performance than the national average but there is still work to do, especially on pedestrian safety. The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) intends to reduce fatalities and injuries on all public roads. It also has new data-drive reporting requirements. The NYS Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) presents strategies and performance measures and includes seven emphasis areas. The MPO planning process and long range plan should be consistent with the SHSP. CDTC has access to NYSDOT's Accident Location Information System (ALIS). CDTC collaborates with NYSDOT, NYSATSB and GTSC/NYSP on various programs and data sharing. The NYS Association of MPOs (NYSAMPO) Safety Working Group is involved in developing training, fact sheets, and safety assessment toll development. New Visions supports complete streets and has introduced various safety initiatives through its Linkage program and bike-ped safety programs (Capital coexist, Law enforcement training, etc). CDTC has mapped out crashes into a GIS platform. CDTC also supports DOT in its safety programs. CDTC considers safety benefits as part of it TIP evaluation and ranking.

Rocco Ferraro suggested the use of a GIS platform to make different datasets compatible. Rob Limoges mentioned that NYSDOT is in the process of including countdown pedestrian phases in all State-owned traffic signals. Mark Kennedy commented that NYSDOT Region 1 is ahead of other regions in implementing this. Mark Bellingel suggested taking a proactive role in safety planning by conducting traffic forecasts and crash rate analyses.

Chris Lavin mentioned that County data reports and State summaries include incident contributing factors. In response to Rob Limoges' suggestion of utilizing MV104A as well as information on www.safeny.org, Mark O'Conner mentioned that State Police already use them. Chris Lavin asked if CDTC or DOT did any recent projects in response to identified contributing factors. Rob Limoges mentioned that NYSDOT analyzes data for State highways to identify crash rates and statistically significant locations (PIL/HAL) and Regional offices look into it while developing projects. Sandy Misiewicz mentioned that DOT uses these data often but locals may not be using it. Tom Werner suggested that CDTC could help local police and planning/engineering staff in doing such analyses since locals have resource issues.

In response to Chris Wallin's query on ALIS being the standard program for State/local safety data, Rob Cherry mentioned that it is and all TraCS and paper reports are included in it.

Rob Limoges suggested linking HSIP funds to performance measures such as reduction in fatalities, reduction in injuries, etc. Several members raised incident of the pedestrian crossing

in front of stopped bus and getting hit by moving vehicle on the inner lane as a serious issue. Rocco Ferraro suggested the need for education partnerships with CDTA and other partners on this topic.

Sandy Misiewicz mentioned that other leading MPOs in the country have instituted Safety Task Forces/Advisory Committees and prepare Regional Safety Reports and Action Plans. These plans present goals, emphasis areas, statistics, and initiatives. Tom Werner suggested that the ROSAC could carry out public awareness programs. Chris Lavin suggested that the ROSAC could create a line of communication between local municipalities/agencies and NYSDOT regarding site specific issues from local perspective. This could avoid the need for Mayors and Supervisors to call DOT to get work done. Chris Wallin asked if this committee has input on funding/TIP decisions. Chris O'Neill mentioned that this committee will see the list of candidate TIP projects and give recommendations.

Operations and Congestion Management

Chris O'Neill presented a briefing of operations and congestion management provisions in the current New Visions Plan. It stresses incident management, operations, and demand management. The Plan looks at performance measures such as bike-, ped-, and transit access, quality of life, and safety in addition to congestion measures such as delays and level of service. Past studies suggested that while recurring delays are tolerable, unpredictable, non-recurring delays are not tolerable. CDTC has looked at measures such as hours of delay, reliability, and the planning time index using the MIST dataset to generate a picture of congestion in our highways. New datasets such as HERE data from FHWA are available to CDTC and DOT, which could give a clear picture on arterials too. While the MIST dataset includes information on incidents, HERE data do not.

Rocco Ferraro mentioned that the current rubric is good and should be continued. Bill Trudeau mentioned the need for congestion information on side roads. Chris O'Neill suggested having more communication between highways and arterials as well as better signal timing and coordination. Mark O'Conner mentioned the need to get the information onto media for dissemination. Mark also mentioned about the need for 911 dispatchers/police officers to be educated to tell the caller to move the vehicle from the lane to the shoulder. Tom Werner stressed the need for inter-municipality coordination and utilizing available resources from TRB and other national agencies.

Security

Sree Nampoothiri presented a brief about the SAFTEA-LU and MAP-21 requirements for transportation security to be considered as an independent element in long range plans. The plan should assess the vulnerability/resilience of transportation infrastructure to both natural and man-made incidents. Currently, security is under the purview of law enforcement agencies and the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. There are State and County level disaster preparedness plans. Counties have established Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) to coordinate and plan for emergencies. CDTC currently participates in local LEPCs. MPOs in the nation play different roles: traditional, convener, champion,

developer, and operator. The traditional and convener roles include acting as a forum for agency and municipality coordination and supporting law enforcement agencies and groups such as LEPCs. On the other end of the spectrum, operators go to the extent of administering 911 systems.

Sree mentioned that CDTC already provides model-based detour forecasts to DOT and other agencies for construction and other planned events. This could be extended to prepare emergency scenario planning to law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders. CDTC could also explore options of allocating funds for security-specific projects/programs.

Members felt that CDTC should stay in the traditional/convener role and support other agencies involved in security activities. Tom Werner enquired about the role SEMO/Police/LEPC play currently. Mark Kennedy mentioned that SEMO is taking the lead increasingly and pilot assessments are planned for Rensselaer and Saratoga counties. Tom Werner suggested that CDTC could look into evacuation and cross-county coordination issues in case of any incident at the nuclear facilities in the region. Chris Lavin suggested making interstate alternate detour signage permanent as well having a standard procedure on this. Russ Reeves suggested looking at the possibility of crisis management information dissemination. Rob Limoges mentioned that SEMO prepares Hazard Mitigation Plans with preparedness, response, and recovery phases. Rob suggested CDTC could do a lot in the preparedness phase while disseminating information of the other two phases to the municipalities.

Next Steps

The next meeting is expected to be in early March to further discuss the directions of the committee as well as giving inputs to the projects solicited for TIP Set-Aside funding.