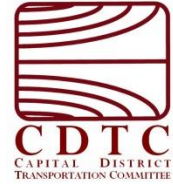


Regional Operations and Safety Advisory Committee

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting Summary



In Attendance:

Leslie Bassett, NYSDOT TMC
Chris Bauer, CDTC
Mark Castiglione, CDRPC
Jen Ceponis, CDTC
Tim Crothers, FHWA
Valerie Deane, NYSDOT Region 1
Mike Franchini, CDTC
Jim Huber, NYSDOT Region 1
Mark Kennedy, VHB
Peter Knutson, Schenectady County
Maureen Kozakiewicz, GTSC

First Sergeant Tracy Mance, Albany County Sheriff
Jim Mearkle, Albany County
Sandy Misiewicz, CDTC
Rima Shamieh, CDTC
Jordan Solano-Reed, CDTC
Andrew Tracy, CDTC
Bill Trudeau, City of Albany
Commander James Rexford, Bethlehem PD
Chris Wallin, City of Schenectady
Tom Werner, Saratoga County

1. Introductions

Sandy Misiewicz welcomed attendees via zoom and reviewed the meeting agenda.

2. 2019 Crash Data Analysis and High Frequency Crash Location Data

Sandy Misiewicz reviewed regional crash data trends and location data. Federal safety performance measure targets set by NYSDOT and adopted by CDTC were submitted to FHWA. In 2018, New York State met three of the five safety performance targets. In the same year, the Capital Region experienced increases in three of the measures: number of serious injury crashes, the rate of serious injury crashes and non-motorized fatal and serious injury crashes.

The 2019 CDTC regional fatal and serious injury crash data indicate a fairly even split between crashes occurring on state vs. non-state owned roads. The crash types with the most fatalities are fixed object and pedestrian. The top police reported contributing factors are unsafe speed, failure to yield right away, alcohol impairment, driver inattention, and pedestrian error or confusion. CDTC staff is creating a county level crash profiles to highlight the crash types, where crashes are occurring and police reported contributing factors.

CDTC staff is also exploring new crash analysis tools available in ArcGIS Pro, ESRI's next generation mapping software. Of particular interest is the crash per mile tool which generates color coded crash density maps based on crashes per mile calculations. This could be an alternative network screening tool when traffic count data is lacking for calculating crash rates.

3. Capital Coexist Mini-Grant Program Discussion – CDTC's Safety Education Program

Sandy Misiewicz shared that in CDTC's New Visions 2050 regional transportation plan, a holistic approach to safety was emphasized including engineering, education and enforcement. Vulnerable roadway users such as pedestrians, cyclists, children, seniors, and people with disabilities will receive particular attention. Key Safety recommendations include developing

Capital Coexist into a comprehensive safety education and awareness program, providing law enforcement with data and tools, and expanding CDTC's collaboration with safety stakeholders.

Jen Ceponis provided an overview of CDTC's Capital Coexist Traffic Safety Ambassador program. The program was launched in 2016 to provide mini-grants to support regional and local bicycle safety education efforts. Eligible projects include safe routes to school and walking school bus programs, slow down campaigns, and many others. For the 2021 mini-grant program, \$25,000 is available and eligibility has been expanded to any safety education project that addresses one of the emphasis areas identified in CDTC's Local Road Safety Action Plan. Applications are due on January 29, 2021.

Tracy Mance stated that many school safety outreach programs have been placed on hold due to COVID as and remote or hybrid learning. Tracy also shared that a great deal of positive feedback has been received from schools on the safety outreach programs that occurred in the past. Chris Wallin shared that the safe routes to school and bike rodeo events held in Schenectady have been successful.

Maureen Kozakiewicz shared that GTSC is reaching out to college-aged and younger drivers to communicate the message that drowsiness is a driving impairment. Maureen has connected with staff at nine colleges throughout the state and has been working with 'New Choices' in Schenectady County to connect with student leaders to spread safety outreach messages. It is important for virtual safety programs to be interactive to keep students attention.

4. Transportation Incident Management (TIM) Committee Update

Andrew Tracy discussed the idea of a regional TIM Committee which was a recommendation in CDTC's New Visions plan. Helpful information was received from Rebecca Gibson-Schott from NYSDOT's Main Office. Rebecca was involved in establishing regional TIM committees in many other urban areas around the state and provided guidance documents, example agendas, and contact information for local individuals that might be interested.

CDTC staff discussed the TIM Committee with Leslie Bassett and Jim Huber of NYSDOT in November. Leslie manages the Traffic Management Center in Latham, and Jim Huber is the emergency manager for NYSDOT Region 1. Leslie and Jim were tasked by NYSDOT with establishing a Region 1 TIM Committee.

Jim Huber discussed the formation of the TIM committee. Jim reached out to emergency managers in Region 1's eight counties and to sheriff's offices with many individuals interested in participating. Jim also reached out to other TIM managers throughout the state for guidance. ROSAC members were encouraged to reach out to Jim and Leslie if they are interested in participating or can provide contact information for potential TIM committee members.

5. Transportation Trends Update: COVID – 19

Andrew Tracy provided an update on COVID transportation impacts in the CDTC region. VMT data provided by StreetLight suggests that regional VMT returned to pre-COVID levels in June 2020. Similar data provided by Google Mobility Reports suggests a large decline in retail, recreational, and transit station trips but an increase in residential trips. Apple Mobility data also suggests that VMT recovered in June. However, CDTA ridership data shows a reduction from the previous year and has not yet recovered. NYSDOT traffic count data indicates that while travel on Wolf Road declined, other regional corridors including Route 9 and I-87 have

recovered to pre-COVID levels. COVID has had a profound impact on the time-of-day and geographic distribution of travel that is difficult to quantify and more data is needed.

Chris Wallin suggested collecting parking utilization data by reaching out to Metroplex and Albany Parking Authority. Bill Trudeau also stated that parking utilization is down in Albany, and it's not clear where everyone is driving. Sandy stated that there may be a greater number of delivery trips, which Andrew said was supported by StreetLight Data's recent reports.

6. USDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

Sandy Misiewicz shared highlights of the new USDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan published by NHTSA as part of October's national pedestrian safety month. New York State shifted its See! Be Seen! campaign to October to piggyback on the national event. The USDOT report emphasizes speed reduction in areas with pedestrian activity, roadway designs for pedestrians, improved vehicle technologies to protect vulnerable street users and funding limitations that often prevent state and local governments from making needed pedestrian safety improvements. Since there is a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) in New York, the USDOT plan should be viewed as another resource.

That status of local PSAP projects was discussed in Albany and Schenectady. Bill Trudeau noted Albany participated in the October enforcement campaign and is progressing its pedestrian safety infrastructure project. PS&E documents are to be completed in spring 2021 with construction in summer 2021. Chris Wallin noted that Schenectady is on the same timeline. A challenge has been balancing the PSAP goals with scope and budget. Signal and other costs continue to go up and both sponsors have had to cut back the number of sites being treated. Schenectady has been conducting pedestrian safety education and enforcement on Route 5 and the county sheriff and local police are working together.

7. Status of Upcoming Planning Activities

- NYSDOT Roadway Departure Safety Action Plan Update – The draft report is being reviewed internally with expected release in summer 2021. HSIP funds may be set aside for a systemic program much like the PSAP program. The data analysis indicates CDTC's region will not have any roadway departure focus communities.
- Linkage Program – Solicitation for 2021 is out with a December 16, 2020 deadline. Transportation operations and safety related initiatives are eligible.
- Community Planning Technical Assistance Program – CDTC and CDRPC are accepting applications through the end of December.
- Bus Lane Feasibility Study – A draft RFP is being reviewed internally by CDTA. The draft scope of works will be shared with local government partners and NYSDOT for comment. ROSAC will be involved throughout the study process given the safety and operational implications of the project.
- Regional Signal Timing Program Update – The project remains on hold until traffic reaches a new equilibrium. Hopefully an RFP can be issued next year.
- NY 378 Bridge Study – The project is on hold as NYSDOT revises the scope of work to better fit the criteria of a Planning and Environmental Linkage study.

8. 2021 Meeting Schedule and Wrap Up

Sandy Misiewicz stated that the next ROSAC meeting will be held in early February. A calendar of 2021 meetings will be prepared and shared with ROSAC members.