

**GENESEE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING**

June 11, 2020

8:30 a.m.

Due to physical distance requirements during the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting was conducted online rather than in-person.

GTC BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jerry Davis, Wyoming County (Chairman)
Timothy Cuter, Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC)
Daniel Hogan, Monroe County – At Large
David LeFeber, Livingston County
James McIntosh, City of Rochester At-Large
Douglas Paddock, Yates County
William Santos, Monroe County Planning Board
Rochelle Stein, Genesee County

ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Kevin Bush, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), representing Marie Therese Dominguez
Bill Carpenter, Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA), representing Donald E. Jeffries
Sean Carrington, NYS Thruway Authority (NYSTA), representing Matthew Driscoll
Tim Frelier, Monroe County, representing Adam Bello
Stephen Golding, Empire State Development Corporation, representing Eric Gertler
Carlos Gonzalez, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), representing Richard Marquis
George Hebert, Monroe County Legislature, representing, Dr. Joseph Carbone
Peter Ingalsbe, Ontario County, representing John Marren
Scott Johnson, Wayne County, representing Ken Miller
Scott Leathersich, Monroe County At-Large
Mitch Rowe, Seneca County, representing Robert Hayssen
Timothy Walsh, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, representing Basil Seggos

GTC BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT AND UNREPRESENTED

Stephen Goodman, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Lynne Johnson, Orleans County
Loretta Scott, Rochester City Council
David Seeley, Monroe County Supervisors Association
Steven Urlass, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Lovely Warren, City of Rochester
David L. Watson, Rochester City Planning Commission

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rochelle Bell, Monroe County
Jody Binnix, GTC staff
Joe Bovenzi, GTC staff
Angela Ellis, Livingston County
Alex Kone, GTC staff
Lori Maher, GTC staff

Chris Reeve, NYSDOT
James Stack, GTC staff
John Thomas
Chris Tortora, GTC staff
David Zorn, G/FLRPC

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Alex Kone, GTC staff, called the roll; a quorum was present.

2. Public Forum

Lori Maher provided one comment received through PublicInput.com:

- "Would it be possible to have a bold plan to reintroduce the Rochester Subway in the cities future?" (Anonymous)

She noted GTC staff's response:

- "Thank you for your interest in the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) and taking the time to provide a comment. GTC staff will share your comment with the Board at its June 11 meeting. For your information, we are just beginning the next cycle of our *Long Range Transportation Plan 2045*, looking into the next 25 years, and we will offer more opportunities for input about the overall transportation system."

3. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Davis noted that draft minutes from the February 27, 2020, GTC Board meeting were included in the meeting package.

William Santos moved to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2020 Quarterly Meeting; George Hebert seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

Chairman Davis added that draft minutes from the May 14, 2020 Planning Committee meeting were provided for informational purposes.

4. Communications and Announcements

James Stack reported that at the last meeting in February, the Federal Highway Administration New York Division successfully pursued a grant to support a technology transfer peer review that will share the lessons learned on the Inner Loop project with representatives from Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, Ulster County, and New York City as each of those places looks at possible conversion of expressway facilities. We were working to hold the workshop sometime in May. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 situation forced us to postpone the event. Since a major part of information sharing would be walking the sites and seeing the development, we cannot hold the event until the rules for physical distancing provide enough flexibility to do so. We are coordinating with the FHWA NY Division and the other participating MPOs on rescheduling before September or we will need to reapply for the grant.

5. Reports and Action on Old Business

a. Planning Committee Report

Scott Leathersich reported that, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Planning Committee did not meet on April 16th, as scheduled. The Planning Committee did meet remotely on May 14th and recommends that the GTC Board:

- Accept reports as evidence of completion of six Unified Planning Work Program tasks:
 - Genesee-Finger Lakes Region Local Update of Census (Task 4103);
 - Honeoye Falls Circulation, Access, and Parking (CAP) Study (Task 6812);
 - Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan (Task 7702);
 - Genesee Active Transportation Plan (Task 8774);
 - Sodus Point Active Transportation Plan (Task 8775); and
 - Maple Ridge Road Corridor Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations Feasibility Study (Task 8776).
- Amend the *FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program* to reflect the contribution of actual FY 2019-2020 rollover amounts.
- Amend the *FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program* as requested by the Town of Brighton, RGRTA, and NYSDOT.

Additionally, the Planning Committee took the following action:

- Approved the Scopes of Work for six Unified Planning Work Program tasks:
 - Village of Waterloo Circulation, Accessibility & Parking (CAP) Study (Task 6815)
 - West Main Street Multimodal Transportation and Placemaking Study (Task 6816)
 - Village of Perry Transportation Safety and Access Study (Task 6817)
 - Beh Industrial Park Traffic Optimization Study (Task 7705)
 - Regional Fleet Electrification Study (Task 8552)
 - Canandaigua Waterfront Active Transportation Plan (Task 8751)
- Approved two administrative modifications to the *FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program* as requested by NYSDOT:
 - Deferring phases of the Railroad Crossing Improvement Project at Quaker Rd and Canandaigua Rd project; and
 - Increasing the Total Cost of the Rt 19 and Rt 98 over the Erie Canal Rehabilitation.

b. GTC Staff Report

James Stack provided the following reports:

COVID-19 Impact on GTC operations

Like all of you, COVID-19 has impacted how GTC is operating. The most obvious impact is that, as non-essential workers, all staff is working from home. As you know, RGRTA is our Host Agency and provides our human resources department. The work from home arrangement began on March 17 and, based on guidance from the RGRTA People Department, this will continue until at least July 6.

Even before we closed the office, New York State gave indications that we would need to reduce staffing to 50 percent and there would be widespread impacts. Around March 12, State procurement rules were relaxed which allowed us to rapidly acquire equipment to work remotely. For the six staff that did not already have laptops, we were able to order them on March 13 for delivery on March 18. I want to acknowledge Chris Tortora's efforts to quickly get the equipment setup and configured to allow for all staff to work from home.

We also accelerated our efforts to pursue tools that would allow for remote meetings, both among staff and with staff from our partners. In addition to Chris' efforts, Alex Kone and Bob Williams were instrumental in getting our Microsoft Office 365 package upgraded and reconfigured for working on a shared platform rather than needing to remotely connect to our desktops in the office.

The need for physical distance forced us to cancel the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for April 16. Given the circumstances, we had excellent communication with BJ Scanlon and Erik Frisch to make the adjustments. I want to thank the City of Rochester for their willingness to host the April meeting.

Staff continued to pursue ways to work more effectively and Lori Maher worked hard to establish the mechanism we are using today to hold this meeting, which was also used for the May 14 Planning Committee. Although Governor Cuomo relaxed some aspects of the Public Meetings Law, he rightly added requirements to ensure the public still has an opportunity to observe and participate in the meeting, as they would have if the meeting were held in-person. We have been able to leverage our PublicInput.com subscription that took effect April 1 to meet and exceed the public interaction requirements of the Executive Order. The staff at PublicInput.com has been extremely flexible and adaptable and fully engaged with us even before the contract took effect.

Lastly, all our UPWP partners have been adapting to a new way of working and finding ways to get the projects back on track with various tools and techniques. We appreciate everyone's efforts and recognize that all schedules have been impacted and will need time to be completed in manner that provides a product each community can embrace.

2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

At the last meeting in February, I mentioned that staff has laid out a timeline for various milestones, including two separate public engagement cycles, before developing a draft Long Range Transportation Plan. A new Plan has long been scheduled to be adopted next June. Due to COVID-19, we have needed to reassess our public engagement for the Plan. Jody Binnix provided an update to the Planning Committee at its May meeting.

Physical distancing guidelines have prohibited sizable in-person gatherings; therefore, staff is now planning to conduct all public engagement virtually and relying heavily on the capabilities of PublicInput.com. Staff has concerns that conducting virtual public engagement alone is not enough. As a staff, we are hesitant to rely exclusively on virtual outreach methods. Our main goal is to provide meaningful opportunities for the public to participate. Jody and Lori Maher had a call with Carlos Gonzalez from the FHWA NY Division and he was very helpful in thinking about ways to effectively gain input from the public. We will continue to explore ideas to get broad community input.

Conversations with our federal partners have already begun regarding extending deadlines on major work products, such as the LRTP, due to these concerns. The initial feedback is that the federal agencies will be taking hardships due to COVID-19 into account. However, formal guidance has not yet been received. Staff will be moving forward with virtual engagement and looking to our fellow MPOs for best practices during these challenging times until clear federal guidance is provided.

c. Old Business

(1) Federal Legislative and Funding Update

Progress on a reauthorization of the surface transportation legislation stalled as Congress and the Administration focused on the COVID-19 crisis. However, on May 12th, the Speaker of the House released the text of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act or the HEROES Act. While the media has focused on more visible items such as additional direct payments to individuals, the bill includes some provisions that benefit transportation projects. This is a short-term bill related to economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.

The Association of MPOs has shared some initial analysis on these provisions. They note that the bill includes \$14.775 billion apportioned to states using a part of the formula in the 2020 appropriations bill for distribution of obligation limitation. This amount is sub-allocated to metropolitan areas based on the sub-allocation ratio in 2020 for funds apportioned to a state under the FAST Act. We don't yet have the actual amounts for individual MPOs. If enacted, States will have the option that the federal share of costs for funding that was made available in the 2020 appropriations bill that are obligated after the date of enactment, as well as funds in the HEROES Act, shall be up to 100 percent federal. There would be no August redistribution of obligation limitation in 2020,

and states can keep it until September 30, 2021 or a 12-month extension. The bill also includes another \$15.75 billion for public transportation. Specifically, \$11.75 billion in areas with population over 3 million, for which we do not qualify, and \$4 billion for grants to transit agencies that, as a result of coronavirus, require significant additional assistance to maintain basic transit services.

Looking more long-term, on June 3, the Democratic House Leadership released a new Surface Transportation Bill entitled, "The Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America" or the INVEST in America Act. This is a 5-year bill worth \$949 billion. The House provided a Fact Sheet and a section-by-section summary of the bill.

The bill includes \$319 billion for Highway projects. Highlights include:

- a focus on achieving a state of good repair of existing facilities before building new highway capacity;
- a requirement to spend at least 20 percent of certain fund sources on bridge repair and rehabilitation, providing about \$28 billion for fix-it-first projects and increasing the set-aside for local, off-system bridges from \$770 million to \$1 billion;
- a new apportioned program to support carbon pollution reduction valued at \$8.35 billion;
- a new apportioned program to support resilience and emergency evacuation needs worth \$6.25 billion along with a requirement that States and MPOs develop an infrastructure vulnerability assessment to guide investments under the program. I expect that the Regional Critical Transportation Infrastructure and Local Bridge Vulnerability Assessments we conducted several years ago will put us in an excellent position to fulfill this requirement;
- an extension of CMAQ eligibility for operating assistance if the project demonstrates net air quality benefits;
- a requirement that the FHWA adopt context sensitive design principles to provide for complete streets in urban areas and ensure the safety of all road users;
- an increase of Safety funding by about 30 percent over current levels;
- an increase in the Transportation Alternatives Program by about 60 percent over current levels;
- nearly \$49 billion over five years in dedicated funding to address local transportation needs; and
- discretionary programs for Projects of National and Regional Significance at \$9 billion, Community Transportation Investment Grants at \$600 million per year, Electric Vehicle Charging and Hydrogen Fueling Infrastructure Grants at \$350 million per year, Community Climate Innovation Grants at \$250 million per year to non-State applicants for projects that reduce Green House Gases.

The bill includes \$105 billion for Transit projects. Highlights include:

- a reframing of the transit program with an emphasis on boosting frequency and ridership over low operating costs;
- rules for Mobility on Demand to integrate new technology with transit as the backbone;
- a 150 percent increase in funding for buses to reverse cuts enacted in MAP-21;
- a fivefold increase in competitive grants for zero emission buses; and
- doubling of the set-aside of the low-income factor in the urban area formula and uses a measure of deep poverty by census tract to target the poorest urban neighborhoods.

The House has scheduled a markup session on June 19. I have not heard any indications of support or opposition from the Republican side of the aisle, though this may become more clear during the markup session. And, any House action will need corresponding Senate action or a Conference Committee. As divided as things are in Washington, I personally don't think a new transportation bill will be adopted before the election in November. This would require a Continuing Resolution to keep current programs funded after September 30.

On a related issue, AMPO has partnered with the National Association of Regional Councils, or NARC, and the National Association of Development Organizations, or NADO, to prepare two letters to Congressional Leadership. The first letter collectively requests that significant additional funding, specifically for local governments, be included in the next coronavirus response package.

Among the requests in the second letter are the following:

- Appropriate at least \$20 billion in flexible transportation funds through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) in the next bill;
- Sub-allocate these additional funds in the same manner as funds that were apportioned in 2020 for urbanized and non-urbanized areas under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program in the FAST Act. Eligible uses of these funds should be expanded to include serving as the non-federal match attributable to MPO and state planning activities and serving as the non-federal match for any program or programs under Title 23 (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 (Public Transportation). Further, any eligible uses for these funds should be allowed a 100% federal share;
- Support the passage of a long-term surface transportation bill before the FAST Act expires on September 30;
- Grant extensions to MPOs for requirements such as long-range transportation plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program update and approvals, Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) updates, FTA triennial reviews, quadrennial certifications, invoice processing, and other relevant deadlines that occur during fiscal year's 2020 and 2021;

- Extend deadlines for discretionary grant programs, including obligation deadlines, so recipients are not penalized with the loss of their grant due to an extended period of slowdown or stoppage of required work;
- Ease lapsing requirements if a State can demonstrate that an impact of the national emergency declaration is the proximate cause of the funding lapse; and
- Provide flexibility to states and MPOs to update required performance targets and set new targets as appropriate to adequately reflect the anticipated conditions. Further, allow for or automatically grant extensions of performance target setting deadlines as appropriate, including the MPO CMAQ Performance Plan which is currently due on October 1, 2020.

While I think the requests in the letters are worth pursuing, I am precluded by the Hatch Act from any effort to influence members of Congress. Most of you and the agencies you represent are not subject to these same restrictions. AMPO, NARC, and NADO are requesting that their members and affiliates express support for the letters with their respective Congressional delegation. Following the May 14 Planning Committee meeting, I shared the AMPO request with Committee members to share within their agencies for consideration of supporting the effort.

2. TIP Staff Modifications Report

Chairman Davis informed the Board that the TIP staff modifications report was included in the meeting package and is being provided for informational purposes. There were no questions.

6. Action Items

a. Accepting reports as evidence of completion of a UPWP Task

Chairman Davis suggested grouping proposed Resolutions 20-12 through 20-17 into a single action; no Member or Alternate objected.

James Stack noted that Proposed Resolutions 20-12 through 20-17 were reviewed and recommended for GTC Board approval by the Planning Committee at its May 14, 2020 meeting.

(1) Accepting the *Genesee-Finger Lakes Region Local Update of Census Addresses* Executive Summary as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 4103 / Proposed Resolution 20-12

James Stack reported this project was conducted by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council staff. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 31 of the meeting package. The purpose of the project was to update the U.S. Census Bureau Master Address File or MAF for all nine counties in preparation for the 2020 Decennial Census to help facilitate greater participation rates and a more accurate Census count. The effort resulted in more than 113,000 addresses being added to the MAF. Our region accounts for about one-

third of all the new addresses statewide. This is directly attributable to the effort of G/FL staff and builds on the effort ten years ago that added about 80,000 addresses.

- (2) Accepting the *Honeoye Falls Circulation, Access, and Parking (CAP) Study* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 6812 / Proposed Resolution 20-13

James Stack reported that the project was conducted by the Village of Honeoye Falls. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 35 of the meeting package. The purpose of the project was to develop a strategy of interconnected projects that fosters a cohesive transportation network for the Village. The project tied together several conceptual planning activities previously completed for the Village. The project included a detailed analysis of the challenges facing the Village, including bicycle and pedestrian circulation; traffic calming and safety; and land use, access management, and streetscape improvements. The project included a detailed analysis of these problems and associated recommendations for addressing them.

- (3) Accepting the *Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 7702 / Proposed Resolution 20-14

James Stack reported that the project was conducted by the City of Rochester. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 42 of the meeting package. The project was coordinated with the City's comprehensive plan update, Plan 2034, and was intended to be the transportation component of that plan. The project resulted in five Focus Area reports. The first major product was a factbook of City transportation statistics. The project identified priority actions with alternatives and included a street typology and design guide. The final report summarized findings and actions and included performance metrics to guide implementation.

- (4) Accepting the *Geneseo Active Transportation Plan* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 8774 / Proposed Resolution 20-15

James Stack reported that the project was conducted by Livingston County in coordination with the Village of Geneseo. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 54 of the meeting package. The purpose of the project was to develop a well-connected, attractive bicycle and pedestrian network which is safe, convenient, and user-friendly for people of all ages and abilities that connects neighborhoods and activity centers within the Village and Town, while protecting the environment and local historic resources within the community. There was extensive stakeholder outreach throughout the planning process. The plan identified seven priority intersections, an increase in the original five identified at the start of the project, and included both regulatory and programmatic recommendations.

- (5) Accepting the *Sodus Point Active Transportation Plan* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 8775 / Proposed Resolution 20-16

James Stack reported that the project was conducted by the Village of Sodus Point. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 62 of the meeting package. The purpose of the project was to develop a safe and equitable bicycle and pedestrian network in the Village, while positively impacting residents' health

and economic development opportunities. The project produced a strategic plan for a cohesive multimodal network in and around the Village. Extensive public outreach was undertaken to identify potential implementation barriers and opportunities. Key locations for improvements were identified and design guidance prepared to facilitate the implementation of alternatives.

- (6) Accepting the *Maple Ridge Road Corridor Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations Feasibility Study* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 8776 / Proposed Resolution 20-17

James Stack reported that the project was conducted by the Village of Medina. The Executive Summary of the project starts on page 66 of the meeting package. The purpose of the project was to evaluate ways to improve safety and access for pedestrians and bicyclists along the Maple Ridge Road corridor, with proper consideration for access management at the Medina Business Park and along the corridor. The project was focused on improving safety conditions along the corridor, especially for vulnerable users. The project included a needs analysis which led to the development of three alternate concepts. The concepts focused on improving transportation linkages within the project area. Public outreach was conducted to solicit input on the needs assessment and concepts. The plan included a strategy to guide implementation actions.

Bill Carpenter moved to approve proposed Resolutions 20-12 and 20-17; Rochelle Stein seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

- b. Amending the *FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program* to reflect the contribution of actual FY 2019-2020 rollover amounts / Proposed Resolution 20-18

James Stack noted that Proposed Resolution 20-18 was reviewed and recommended for GTC Board approval by the Planning Committee at its May 14, 2020 meeting. The adopted FY 2020-2021 UPWP includes estimated rollover amounts for several projects that were not expected to be completed by March 31, 2020. These estimated rollover amounts were based on actual expenses through the second quarter. Now that the accounting for FY 2019-2020 has been closed out, the budgets for these projects for FY 2020-2021 can be adjusted to reflect actual rollover amounts.

Individual projects for which adjustments between estimated and actual rollover amounts are required are presented in Exhibit 1 of the Resolution.

Scott Leathersich moved to approve proposed Resolution 20-18; Jim McIntosh seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

- c. Amending the *2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program* / Proposed Resolutions 20-19 through 20-28

Chairman Davis suggested grouping proposed Resolutions 20-19 through 20-28 into a single action; no Member or Alternate objected.

James Stack noted that Proposed Resolutions 20-19 through 20-28 were reviewed and recommended for GTC Board approval by the Planning Committee at its May 14, 2020 meeting.

James Stack provided the following report and noted that the amendments noted in items 1 through 8 are requested by RGRTA to realign the TIP with RGRTA's adopted Capital Improvement Plan

- (1) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by increasing the Total Cost of the Preventive Maintenance – RTS & RTS Access for FFY 2020 project / Proposed Resolution 20-19

This amendment is requested by RGRTA. The FFY 2020 cost has been adjusted to reflect the latest estimate.

- (2) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by deferring the Replace 40-ft Buses (FY 21/22) project / Proposed Resolution 20-20

The requested change realigns the TIP with the vehicle replacement cycle.

- (3) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Replace Paratransit Buses (FY 20/21) project / Proposed Resolution 20-21

The requested change realigns the TIP with the vehicle replacement cycle.

- (4) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by increasing the Total Cost of the Associated Transit Improvements (FFY 2020) project / Proposed Resolution 20-22

The requested change adds funding for passenger amenities and transfer hubs.

- (5) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Digital Display Replacements project / Proposed Resolution 20-23

The requested change adds funding for replacement digital information displays.

- (6) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Onboard Video Storage System Replacements project / Proposed Resolution 20-24

The requested change adds funding for replacement of the onboard video recording storage.

- (7) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Phone System Replacement project / Proposed Resolution 20-25

The requested change adds funding for replacement of the telephone system at the East Main Street campus.

- (8) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Connection Hubs project / Proposed Resolution 20-28

The requested change reinstates funding for the portion of the Connection Hubs project that wasn't obligated prior to the end of the last Federal Fiscal Year.

- (9) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the Highland Crossing Trail project / Proposed Resolution 20-26

This amendment is requested by the Town of Brighton. The change reprograms savings from Right-of-Way Acquisition to increase the federal share of the Construction phase. The funds are not available to any other project.

- (10) Amending the *2020-2024 TIP* by adding the 390 Multi-Use Trail project / Proposed Resolution 20-27

This amendment is requested by NYSDOT. The change reflects revised the estimate for Right-of-Way Acquisition. Resolution 19-16 amended the project alignment to be on-road along Lee Road from Ridgeway Avenue to Trolley Boulevard but only included a nominal amount for ROW Acquisition as a placeholder.

Scott Leathersich moved to approve proposed Resolutions 20-19 through 20-28; Bill Carpenter seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

8. New Business

There was no New Business.

9. Next Meeting

Chairman Davis stated that the next GTC Board meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2020 and is tentatively planned to be held at the Henrietta Town Hall, 475 Calkins Road in Henrietta. James Stack reported that he and Dave Zorn with G/FLRPC will coordinate regarding physical location and potential alternative online arrangements.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.