

BINGHAMTON METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
POLICY COMMITTEE

MAY 30, 2007

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Carol Sweeney, at 2:00 PM

Roll call:

Members present

Supervisor Carol Sweeney, Chair, Town of Owego

Mayor Matthew Ryan, City of Binghamton

County Executive Barbara Fiala, represented by Patrick Brennan

Supervisor Margaret Turna, Town of Chenango

Supervisor Michael Marinaccio, Town of Dickinson

Supervisor John Bernardo, Town of Union, represented by Lou Caforio

Robin Alpaugh, Empire State Development

Elaine Jardine, STERPDB

Commissioner Astrid Glynn, NYSDOT, represented by Jack Williams

Others Present:

Mark Whalen, Broome County Legislature

Ron Hayes, NYSDOT Policy and Strategy Division

Pam Eshbaugh, NYSDOT Region 9 RPPM

Douglas Bickford, NYSDOT Region 9

Steven Gayle, BMTS staff

John Sterbentz, BMTS staff

Scott Reigle, BMTS staff

Jhomo O'Connor, BMTS staff

William Grady

- Approval of minutes of February 28, 2007. Moved Jardine, second Marinaccio.  
Approved by consensus.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair offered an opportunity for comment. None was offered.

ACTION ITEMS: 2008-2012 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Steven Gayle distributed final project tables for the 2008-2012 TIP. He prefaced his review by reminding the Committee that severely constrained finances had made this update difficult. No new local projects were added to the program, extending the list of unfunded candidate projects. NYSDOT had been able to add very few state system projects either. He noted that NYSDOT Region 9 and BMTS staff had worked well together in developing both the TIP and Region capital program; and that the latter was still being reviewed in Albany.

Mr Gayle reviewed the major project initiatives on the program. He noted that the financial situation may lead to rescoping some projects that are programmed. The Front Street Gateway, for example, is very expensive because it involves full reconstruction. Other treatments can restore the pavement, while saving money that may be used on other deficient urban arterial streets. The BMTS Planning Committee will be addressing this in more detail next week.

Carol Sweeney noted the addition to the program of NY 434, Marshland Rd to Court Street, and said it would be very positive for Owego and Tioga County. Jack Williams noted that Region 9 had now full responsibility for Tioga County, although resource issues were still being addressed.

Steven Gayle asked Doug Bickford to provide an update on the I-86 designation projects. Mr. Bickford noted that the I-81/NY 17 Interchange (Prospect Mountain) project was moving toward design approval. He distributed copies of a new design alternative for interchange 4. There will be public hearing on the design report the second week of July. The letting is expected to be May 2009, with construction extending over at least 4 years. Jack Williams indicated a decision had not yet been made on construction proceeding as the originally planned two phases, or as a single bid. Steven Gayle noted that because NYSDOT had designated the designation of Interstate 86 as a "project of statewide significance", there would be nearly \$300 million in construction just in the Binghamton region without otherwise affecting the Region 9 allocations.

Steven Gayle reviewed the transit program. He noted that Broome County's first 6 hybrid buses would not arrive until 2009 due to extremely long delivery times. He further noted that there was no identified funding for the replacement of 15 buses next year and 23 buses in 2010. BMTS will have to work with Broome County to figure out how these needs can be funded.

- Resolution 2007-06, Approving the 2008-2012 BMTS Transportation Improvement Program. Moved Marinaccio, second Ryan. Approved by consensus.

#### ACTION ITEM: CERTIFICATION

Steven Gayle stated that Federal law requires that MPOs perform an annual review to determine if they are in compliance with all Federal laws and regulations governing the metropolitan transportation planning process. This certification must be done cooperatively with the state.

NYSDOT provides a certification checklist from which staff builds a narrative. Findings for this year are very positive. The long term problem of a traffic engineering staff vacancy has been solved by following the direction of the Program & Finance Subcommittee. Working with Broome County Personnel, BMTS staff titles have been realigned to eliminate the traffic engineer title, create a transportation analyst title, and free up a senior transportation planner. Recruitment has been successful, and a new planner will begin in June.

- Resolution 2007-07 Certifying a Finding that the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study is in compliance with all Federal law and regulation governing metropolitan transportation planning. Moved Brennan, second Turna. Approved by consensus.

#### ACTION ITEM: 2006-2010 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Steven Gayle reported that NYSDOT Region 9 had requested an amendment in order to advance two projects during FY 2007; the newly approved TIP does not take effect until October 1, FY 2008. The first project entails improvements to a railroad grade crossing on Crocker Hill Rd. The second is a bridge project on NY 17C over Patterson Creek, near Hooper Road. Although the construction letting is scheduled for FY 2013, NYSDOT needs to obligate funds for preliminary design this year. There were no questions.

- Resolution 2007-08, Approving an amendment to the 2006-2010 BMTS Transportation Improvement Program. Moved Marinaccio, second Ryan. Approved by consensus.

#### ACTION ITEM: COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Scott Reigle briefed the Committee on the plan, which had been approved as a draft by the Planning Committee at their March meeting. He explained that SAFETEA-LU created the requirement for this plan in order to obligate funds under three Federal Transit programs that address the needs of elderly, disabled, and low-income populations. The intent is to inventory all transportation services, including those provided by human service agencies, identify both gaps and redundancies as they apply to the target populations, and develop strategies for improvement. Building on existing work on the Broome County Aging Futures project, BMTS assembled an advisory committee for the project. BMTS is partnering with the Rural Health Network on a web-based inventory of all transportation services in Broome and Tioga Counties.

The three FTA programs now require a competitive application process. Pending further guidance from NYSDOT, BMTS will be moving into the project phase later this year.

- Resolution 2007-09, Approving the BMTS Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. Moved Marinaccio, second Turna. Approved by consensus.

#### DISCUSSION ITEM: THE FUTURE OF FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

Steven Gayle did a special presentation on the future of Federal transportation finance. He informed the Committee that he had been a member of the organizing committee of a national summit on the topic, co-sponsored by AMPO, the MPO national association, and AASHTO, the association representing state DOTs.

There being no other business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.