

BINGHAMTON METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY
PLANNING COMMITTEE
June 5, 2008

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:05 AM.

Roll call:

Members present:

Daria Golazeski, Chair, Village of Johnson City
Luke Day, Vice Chair, City of Binghamton
Pam Eshbaugh, NYSDOT Region 9
Pat Brennan, Broome County
Elaine Jardine, Tioga County
Debra Standinger, Town of Owego
Louis Caforio, Town of Union
Gary Campo, Town of Vestal

Advisory Members present:

Robert Augenster, STERPDB
Lawrence Brinker, Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce
Kevin McLaughlin, Empire State Development

Others present:

Steven Gayle, BMTS staff
John Sterbentz, BMTS staff
Cyndi Paddick, BMTS staff
Jennifer Yonkoski, BMTS staff
Scott Reigle, BMTS staff
Brenda Longstreet, City of Binghamton
Tom Costello, City of Binghamton
Thomas Augostini, Town of Union Board

Approval of minutes of March 6, 2008. No errors or additions offered. Moved Campo, second Day. Approved by consensus.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None was offered.

ACTION ITEMS: 2008-2012 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Steven Gayle reported that the TIP Subcommittee had met on May 20 to review program issues. He provided background:

- ♦ As previously discussed, FHWA has imposed strict rules on amending the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as a consequence of the fact that the 2008-2011 STIP is overprogrammed by \$1.4 billion, much of it in the first two years. The STIP is required by law to be fiscally constrained to estimates of available revenue. Any cost increases or schedule changes, particularly from one fiscal year to another, require the

identification of an equal offset. Pam Eshbaugh and Steve Gayle are seeking clarification from NYSDOT on whether there is any flexibility.

- ♦ NYSDOT has imposed on the process a requirement that offsets for a TIP project must come from within the same TIP. From the MPO perspective, this is not tenable, especially smaller MPOs whose TIPs include relatively few projects. We are seeking relief on that issue.
- ♦ The City of Binghamton presented to the TIP Subcommittee a list of all of their projects. The list was distributed. Most projects have experienced cost increases and letting dates that move from FY 2008 to FY 2009. Luke Day reviewed the projects:
 - Front/Clinton intersection improvements (shown as 2008 letting) depends on how quickly the ROW acquisition proceeds
 - Court Street Gateway : City is awaiting SHPO and FHWA sign-off on environmental documentation to proceed with final design. Letting should be spring 2009.
 - Front Street Gateway: on schedule for 2010
 - Washington Street Gateway: had been deferred pending University center construction. Now may wait decision on adjacent private development, and potential for developer contribution; and decision on adjacent ramp and green space.
 - East Clinton and Exchange Street bridges. Both were put on the program as low cost deck replacement projects. The City's consultant has determined more work is needed, particularly on Exchange Street, which will move to 2009 at a cost of nearly \$1 million. There is a similar cost increase for East Clinton Street, but the City Engineer thinks that project may be able to be deferred.
- ♦ BMTS staff presented to the TIP Subcommittee schedule changes to the Local Traffic Signal Improvement Block. Have realized we solicit projects too late in the year, not allowing for the time required to get legal agreements with the municipality executed. For the three signals selected for FY 2008, the design money can be obligated, but the construction will come from the FY 2009 block. Staff will solicit early for the 2010 block.
- ♦ Tioga County presented to the TIP Subcommittee an IPP for Glen Mary Drive bridge over Catatunk Creek, which developed a deck area of failed pavement and exposed rebar. In order to expedite the project, Tioga County will pay design costs, seeking Federal aid only for construction, estimated at \$745,000. Their design consultant subsequently advised they could have the project ready for letting by the end of September, and that there would no ROW required.
- ♦ Steven Gayle distributed a summary sheet showing all of these changes and the fiscal consequences. He advised that no action be taken with respect to the City of Binghamton projects pending clarification of the offset issue from FHWA and NYSDOT.
- ♦ Steven Gayle asked Pam Eshbaugh to review DOT projects with obligations scheduled for FY 2008. Of particular interest are the two remaining NY17C/Main Street projects, with design phase scheduled; I-86 upgrades in Tioga County and west, ROW and construction; NY434 Greenway Phase I, design phase; Nichols rest are, design phase; and NY 96 over Owego Creek (Turner's Bridge), construction. Detailed information will follow.
- ♦ The Committee discussed adding the Tioga County bridge to the TIP, but only with the \$448,000 available from the signal block; and not taking any action on other projects at this time. There was agreement that this was a unique circumstance that could accommodate the action.

- ☑ Resolution 2008-08, Recommending BMTS Policy Committee approval of an amendment to the 2008-2012 Transportation Improvement Program to add Glen Mary Bridge over Catatonk Creek bridge rehabilitation to the FY 2008 element. Moved Jardine, second Campo. Approved by consensus.

DISCUSSION ITEM: TIP/CAPITAL PROGRAM UPDATE

Steven Gayle reported that NYSDOT has formed a working group to develop instructions for and monitor the upcoming capital program update cycle. Both he and Pam Eshbaugh serve on the group. They had their first meeting on May 14.

In addition to the fiscal issues previously discussed, the schedule also presents a challenge. The State transportation program is now in its last year, and will need to be reauthorized by April 1. DOT wants to have a project list ready by late fall in case a special session is called. The TIP schedule calls for Policy Commission adoption in June, and likely cannot be accelerated to meet the state needs. Program instructions are due out July 1. The likelihood is that we will not solicit new candidate projects.

DISCUSSION ITEM: TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Scott Reigle briefed the Committee. He noted that project applications are due by June 27. As in previous rounds, BMTS and NYSDOT Region 9 will rank their respective lists independently, submit them to NYSDOT Main Office. Final selection will be made by the Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee, and announced by the Governor late in 2008. Scott reminded members that he is available to assist with questions about project applications. The Town of Vestal and City of Binghamton indicated an intention to submit applications.

DISCUSSION ITEM: HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEY

John Sterbentz briefed the Committee on the upcoming Binghamton Regional Household Travel Survey. The survey is designed to collect detailed travel information from 800 households. Each household member will complete a travel diary in which they record every trip they make for a 24 hour period, including mode of travel, origin and destination, and time. Once this is compiled into a database, sorted by demographic factors like household size and auto ownership, John will use it to calibrate the Binghamton Regional Travel Model. This should yield more accurate forecasts for transportation plans and projects, since the model is currently based on national default data.

Dee Golazeski asked about the impact of high gas prices. Steven Gayle responded that, while it is a coincidence of timing, BMTS may actually have early data measuring the impact on travel behavior.

John reported that the consultant selection process is complete, and we will be using the ETC Institute of Olathe Kansas, one of a few national firms that specialize in this kind of work. The actual survey work will occur in the fall, after schools are back in session.

DISCUSSION ITEM: FREIGHT PLANNING

Steven Gayle reported on two topics. The Binghamton Regional Freight Study is once again progressing. He had put pressure on the consultant, and they are committed to delivering the

final report no later than the first week in September, after which they will no longer be paid. They have progressed to the point of an initial list of recommended projects for both highway and rail systems that will both respond to and prepare for economic development opportunities. These will be offered for review and response at a Project Advisory Committee and Stakeholder meeting on June 10.

The New York State Rail Plan is also under development. A driving force behind preparing this plan is the fact that Congress included in the recent Amtrak reauthorization bill a program to direct some of the capital improvement money to states. This money can only be used to pay for projects that are identified in an approved state rail plan. We had expected the Draft Plan to have been released for public review, which would have provided the opportunity to compare the rail recommendations in our freight study with those in the plan. Unfortunately, DOT is a bit behind schedule, and has rescheduled a public hearing on the plan in Binghamton from June 10 to possibly June 24. As soon as a date is released all BMTS members will be notified.

BUSINESS OFFERED FROM THE FLOOR

Steven Gayle reported that BMTS had been notified of Governor Paterson's order to develop a new State Energy Plan. He distributed copies of the Draft Scope for the plan; NYSERDA is accepting comments until July 31.

Robert Augenstern notified the Committee that the I-86 Coalition will be meeting in Binghamton on June 9. Kenneth Wester of the Appalachian Development Highway System will be in attendance. Route 17 west of Binghamton is Corridor T of that system, which receives separate allocation from Congress. There may be interest in proposing adding the mileage in Broome, Delaware, and Sullivan Counties to the ADHS.

There was no other business offered.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.