



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Boehlert Center at Union Station
321 Main Street, Utica, NY 13501
Phone: 315.798.5710 E-mail: transplan@ocgov.net
Director: Dana R. Crisino, AICP

Minutes for the February 15, 2024
Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Planning Committee
Oneida County Department of Planning Conference Room
Union Station
321 Main Street, Utica, New York

Administered by: Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Council (HOCTC) MPO

Call to order at 9:31 AM made by Matthew Baisley, Chairman

1. Welcome and Introductions

Voting Members Present

Matthew Baisley	Chairman, Commissioner, Oneida County Department of Public Works
Mark Nagele	Vice-Chairman, Superintendent, Herkimer County Highways Department
Jeff Quackenbush	Representing James Genovese, Oneida County Commissioner of Planning
Deborah Windecker	Regional Planning and Program Manager, NYSDOT Region 2
Andy Karas	Engineer, City of Utica
EJ Moses	Director of Facilities, Central New York Regional Transportation Authority
Garret S. Wykoff	Representing Matt Andrews, Community & Economic Development, City of Rome

Non-Voting Members Present

Mark DeRocco, PE	Assistant Regional Planning and Program Manager & HOCTC Liaison, NYSDOT Region 2
Christine Labuzzetta	Associate Capital Program Analyst, NYSDOT Region 2
Nicholas DeGennaro	Deputy Commissioner, Oneida County Public Works Department
Kelly Walters	Executive Director, 50 Forward Mohawk Valley
Dana Crisino, MBA, AICP	Director, HOCTC
Barb Hauck	Principal Planner, HOCTC
Julie Richmond, MPA	Transportation Program Manager, HOCTC
Amy Heiderich	Senior Planner, HOCTC

Zachary Zupan
Maya DeFazio
Joshua Dahlan

GIS Technician II, HOCTC
Planning Specialist, HOCTC
Planning Specialist, HOCTC

2. Approval of the Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2023, meeting as submitted made by: Jeff Quackenbush
- Seconded by: Mark Nagele
- Voting: Passed, 7-0-0

3. Public Comment

- No public comment

4. Director's Report

Director of HOCTC, Dana Crisino, gave a synopsis of HOCTC activities for the past quarter.

- The PEL/Exit 31 Study – Planning and Environmental Linkages Study kickoff happened in November. The consultant team is gathering data and beginning to develop their public engagement plan by reaching out to stakeholders to determine how the plan will be shaped. HOCTC is starting to work with DOT and Federal Highway partners for data collection and work on baseline year data to determine how the plan will move forward. HOCTC is ensuring that all partners are working together in coordination with other projects happening in the Exit 31 project study area since there is the RAISE Grant for the two bridge replacements on Genesee St. and the safety plan for the ramps to upgrade the connection onto the NYS highway system.
- The Safety Action Plan is finally under contract with kickoff meetings in January after losing a few months in the contracting process. Federal Highways is moving up their release for the next round of SS4A funding from May 2025 to February 2025, so the timeline has been condensed to 11 months. The consultant is confident that they can still deliver in time to meet the next round of funding deadline. This plan is moving aggressively so a lot of the committee members have either been involved or will be asked to be liaisons with the community since this is looking at the local level road network. HOCTC will be asking for assistance moving forward.
 - SS4A question about Sharepoint – it is still under construction and not populated yet.
- The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is also on a short timeframe for update. This plan has to be adopted by the GP&L and back to Federal Highways before December 31, 2024. These three plans overlap in what is being used for some overall data, demographic data, and safety statistics. Both the safety plan and the LRTP look at the entirety of the two counties, so the teams will be looking at the same content to determine what impacts the transportation network. There is an opportunity to link public engagement and

attend events for both projects to prevent engagement fatigue in the community. Between now and May, many will hear from staff about public engagement. The Safety Action Plan will be referenced heavily in LRTP.

- The Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) looks at human service agencies with transit support and how this links with the larger transportation network. The HSTP looks at vulnerable populations and how they are being helped. An update to this plan is required for Federal Transit Administration funding.
 - The Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) has been reinvigorated and is now on a monthly schedule after coming to a halt during COVID-19 since agencies had other priorities during that time.
 - The TPC may also be involved in the HSTP/LRTP conversation.
- It will be an intensive year of engagement. HOCTC is building an events list and contacts list and plans to attend several engagement events.
- NY Forward - A question was asked if this is a complete streets initiative. Oneida County will be working with the Town/Village of Boonville on the project to help incorporate the plans completed under the Oneida County Main Streets Program. The Town/Village also has a DOT project that will be going to construction this summer: the safety section in 2024 and paving in 2025 to redo the intersection at Stewarts. The Main Street project also has trail components. HOCTC is working to set up a meeting with Boonville to help coordinate the project, since they have the two funding sources.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) history and background:
 - Each director's report will contain a handful of slides on what MPOs are and what they do. This was brought up in the December GP&L Meeting and will be carried through throughout the year for new attendees and as a refresher for everyone else.
 - MPO's were formed in 1962 under the Federal-Aid Highway Act. In 1962, areas with a population greater than 50,000 were mandated to establish a "Three C" planning process for federal-aid transportation projects. HOCTC is an original MPO for the country, formed in 1963, even though it is a small urban area, it has always been an established urban area.
 - In 1973, the Federal-Aid Highway Act dedicated funding to planning activities and formalized the process, organization, and procedures. The planning and policy committees were devised to show how the money would benefit the regional population by identifying issues that impact the area.
 - The MPO and the Herkimer Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program (HOCCPP) was also formed to act as the regional planning board or commission but with no official authority as a planning board. HOCCPP can identify a regional planning project where funding can be used such as housing and transit initiatives through reciprocal planning services between Herkimer and Oneida Counties. HOCCPP acts as the balance if a project is not transportation related.

- Current support to Herkimer County through the Oneida County Planning Department includes transportation planning, DSS support, general human service planning, and census and mapping support.
- Bylaws for the GP&L were updated a few years ago when membership was changed for the first time since 1973.
- The “Three C” process is continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning based on the transportation network. Major programs carried through a 20-year vision, the 4–5-year capital program, the TIP, which identifies projects from the two counties of six in DOT’s region 2, and the annual work program (UPWP) to show what HOCTC staff is doing to deliver funds to the people of the two counties.
- The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is the newest requirement for all MPOs to have a published plan that dictates how the MPO is talking to the public to ensure inclusivity and equity. This is a very evolving field.
- Obligated projects have to be posted on the website every year. MPOs are to be a public forum for communities and agencies to bring questions to a larger body to make regional decisions as to how transportation planning funds are being spent.
- The current federal legislation is the IIJA/BIL. This will eventually change so priorities will lightly shift as legislation changes. MPO funding can only be used for planning, not capital projects. MPOs are to use the Federal Highway Administration allocation for planning to conduct technical studies, look at the larger vision, and work with partners to figure out opportunities and limitations within the region.
- HOCTC is designated an MPO by the governor. The 14 MPOs in NYS are based on population and federal lane miles, so the funding allocation is split between 14 MPOs. The newest MPO was devised due to the expansion of the Fort Drum population with more permanent assignments there.
- There are three committees for HOCTC:
 - The Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) is an advisory subcommittee that reviews issues before going to the Policy Committee or the Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee (GP&L) for final review and decision.
 - The Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) handles the human services aspect of transportation and is a subcommittee of the TPC. They may share information with the TPC.
 - The GP&L acts in an executive capacity. It is a 19-member board made up of elected or appointed positions between the two counties, with 80% membership being Oneida County and 20% membership being Herkimer County. There is representation from the transit authority, human services agencies, and the economic development sector.

5. NYSDOT Region 2 Report

Deborah Windecker reported on the activities that NYSDOT Region 2 has performed in the last quarter.

- Federal Grant Opportunity for transportation infrastructure is available. The Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst Program (NBRC).
 - There has been outreach to Boonville, Dolgeville, and Waterville, this can be used for sewer upgrades.
 - The NBRC can provide \$1-3M for bridge infrastructure using laminated wood, which would work for covered bridges.
 - There are two rounds of funding with 80% funding with 20% match required.
 - Dolgeville has the worst pavement in the six-county region and the issues have to be addressed with underground infrastructure.
 - The funding will be competitive.
- IJA is addressing lead pipe issues in communities that have to submit their Infrastructure Identification and they are not getting funding. There are a lot of mandates with not enough funding. Abatement must be complete in 10 years with this mandate. This may also dismiss lead from the curb to the home, which often cannot be addressed and is part of the infrastructure.
- Bridge NY Round 5 funding is in heavy review. The HOCTC Committee is meeting tomorrow for review. The DOT plans for a mid-2024 announcement but hoping for an earlier date to align with the weather. A press release announcing the funding will be made. The money provides a critical need for bridge funding, so the program should remain constant.
 - 14 Bridge applications for \$13.8M and 18 culvert applications for \$8.8M, showing that there is a lot of interest.
 - \$3M more this year than in 2022.
- As the State FY wraps up, the CHIPS Program is important to local areas – the amount of funding reimbursed for 2023/2024 is almost \$66M so it has grown. There has been a significant infrastructure investment put into budget negotiations. Almost half the investment is in bridges and half of that is into Bridge Local.
- Looking at SFY 2023/2024 – \$28.5M in projects will be let by the end of March for Herkimer and Oneida Counties and bridges are almost half. Bridge Local is almost half of that.
 - Bridges set for 2018 replacement in Herkimer County will be reconstructed this year – West Main Street over Moyer Creek in the Village of Frankfort and West German St. over Bellinger Brook in the Village of Herkimer.

- There is an extended Federal Aid Funding tie-in as to how the Highway Trust Fund is funded through the gas tax and the history of the Federal Aid Highway Program should be presented in June.
- 2024 is a Capital Program Update Year and has to be completed by June 2025. HOCTC has to wait for allocation that may be a little different due to the FHWA accepting the Urban Area Boundaries (UAB). Formulas may change due to federal lane miles and population along with any new transportation legislation.
- The TAP status – It is under review now and has to be completed by next week to submit to the DOT Main Office. Follow the same timeline as Bridge NY, spring to early summer after all budgets pass. There were eight applications within the MPO, double than that of the previous round.

6. NYS Thruway Authority Report

Dana Crisino for Sara Sherlock, NYSTA Assistant Engineer, gave a synopsis of NYSTA activities for the past quarter.

- 2024 Tentative Projects
 - Pavement resurfacing with a Winter 2024 completion date from 197 to 210.
 - Bridge rehabilitation over Sterling Creek with a Winter 2025 completion date.
 - Thruway bridge replacement over Mohawk St. in the Town of Schuylar (Route 28) with a Winter 2026 completion date.
 - Bridge replacement over Oriskany Blvd. (Route 69) in the Village of Whitesboro with a Winter 2026 completion date.
- Tentative 2025 Projects
 - Rehab of N. Genesee St. Bridge (away bridge) in North Utica, letting 1st quarter of 2025
 - Replacement of Route 46 Bridge over the Thruway, letting 3rd quarter of 2025
 - Safety upgrades, letting 1st quarter of 2025.
- Oneida Service Area recently opened.
- If there are any questions, HOCTC staff can get in touch with NYSTA staff to answer them.

7. Other Reports

- None

8. Presentations

- None

9. Old Business

- None

10. New Business

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024-01: Approval of the 2024 Public Participation Plan (PPP)** - *Presenter: Julie Richmond, HOCTC*
 - As mentioned in the MPO 101 discussion, MPOs exist to address transportation-related issues and to plan for and make use of federal transportation funds.
 - As a requirement to receive federal funds, HOCTC must maintain the three C process, and to continue to be eligible for these funds that process must be documented and directed by current federal transportation legislation.
 - The purpose of the PPP is to serve as the MPO's primary approach to shaping public engagement by describing the methods, means, and formats to provide the opportunity for public input. It must also define which populations should be included in the process. It then must ensure that all citizens have reasonable, equitable, and accessible means to participate.
 - This plan is being updated in alignment with updates to the LRTP and HSTP and the initiation of the PEL Study and the SS4A grant.
 - This document was released for a 45-day public review upon its completion in December 2023. The review yielded comments on evaluation metrics and Virtual Public Input Tools.
 - Revisions included additional evaluation metrics, reorganized content, the use of tables to link goals and objectives with metrics, providing the schedules for the MPO Planning Products, and all revised outreach strategies along with virtual engagement strategies, presented in a toolbox format.
 - The new document provides a well-defined process that serves as a guidebook for either HOCTC staff or a public engagement consulting firm to achieve the goals of the HOCTC public engagement process.
 - Discussion: None
 - Motion to approve the resolution made by: Mark Nagele
Seconded by: EJ Moses
Voting: Passed, 7-0-0

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 02: Approval of the 2024 – 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**
Presentation, discussion, and request to approve the 2024-25 UPWP.
Presenter: Julie Richmond, HOCTC
 - This plan is effective April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025. The UPWP identifies planning activities such as transportation

planning studies and technical analysis, as well as administrative and support functions proposed for funding received in an annual allocation.

- Think of the UPWP as the short-term planning, the TIP as the medium-range planning and the LRTP as the long-range planning. These plans cover all modes of surface transportation.
- The framework for the UPWP is derived from goals listed in the LRTP that are built around the two county goals for the provision of mobility, accessibility, safety, economic vitality, and the preservation, maintenance, and resiliency of the existing transportation network. The long-term goals feed into the short-range planning of preliminary planning, data collection and analysis.
- The work that HOCTC staff do to administer the two-county shared vision for the transportation network ensures that the mobility provided reaches everyone sustainably and equitably. This is accomplished through public engagement efforts.
- The UPWP must also match up with national planning emphasis areas specified by federal regulations: Climate – reducing environmental impacts and building a resilient transportation system, Equity/Justice 40 – data-driven support monitoring by HOCTC staff, Complete Streets – Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan, STRAHNET – Strategic Highway Network for the use of roads for emergency mobilization and movement of heavy equipment to support US Military Operations, Other Agency Coordination – HOCTC is required to coordinate with all the federal land management agencies. This process must be interwoven throughout the UPWP environmental planning activities. Planning and Environmental Linkages – Interstate 90 Exit 31 PEL Study, Transportation Planning Data – data-driven analysis completed with every task.
- The Work Plan is structured into Task Categories that align with and reflect the requirements of national planning objectives and LRTP goals. The categories represent Program Support and Administration, General Development and Comprehensive Planning categories, TIP Maintenance, and completion of the individual planning projects that develop and maintain the four core documents. These are the highest priority of HOCTC's planning process and how the funding is distributed throughout the UPWP.

- The major activities included in the 2024-2025 UPWP include updating HOCTC’s Long Range Transportation Plan and Human Services Transportation Plan, continuing support of the 2023-2027 TIP, Exit 31 PEL Study, Safe Streets for All grant, and public engagement for these initiatives.
 - This UPWP identifies \$1.1M in federal and non-federal funding for these efforts. Part of this is the contractual work to complete the PEL Study and the LRTP/HSTP update.
 - Discussion: None
 - Motion to approve the resolution made by: Mark Nagele
 Seconded by: Deborah Windecker
 Voting: Passed 7-0-0

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 03A: Amendment to the 2023 – 2027 TIP to revise a Traffic Systems Improvement Project**
 Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.
Presenter: Mark DeRocco, NYSDOT
 Description: PIN 2806.55 – Traffic Systems Improvement Project 24
 - This project involves the modernization of the signal systems at several locations across the region to provide highway safety benefits and improve equipment reliability and includes elements to address signal systems issues as needed.
 - Project revisions: Moving funds from one project to another – The total project cost shall be decreased from \$3.031M to \$2.719M. The \$.312M shall be moved to PIN 2806.52
 - Signal work will now be done under PIN 2806.52 contingent with Resolution 2024-03B.
 - Discussion: None
 - Motion to approve the resolutions 2024-03A and 2024-03B made by: Jeff Quackenbush
 Seconded by: EJ Moses
 Voting: Passed 7-0-0

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 03B: Amendment to the 2023 – 2027 TIP to revise an Intersection Improvement Project**
 Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.
Presenter: Mark DeRocco, NYSDOT
 - Description: PIN 2806.52 – Intersection Improvement Project 23 – Traffic control devise and/or minor geometric improvements at various intersections to provide highway safety benefits.

- Signal work for Wright Settlement Rd. at the Mohawk River Trail will now be done under PIN 2806.52 creating a total project cost increase from \$.583M to \$.939M.
 - Discussion: None
 - *Resolution passed in previous motion.*

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 04: Amendment to the 2023 – 2027 TIP to revise a Safety Improvement Project**
Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.
Presenter: Mark DeRocco, NYSDOT
 - Description: PIN 2088.06 – State Route 912W/Burrstone Road Intersection Safety Project that addresses crash rates and other safety issues associated with lane configurations, lane geometry, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, highway lighting, and travel speeds.
 - The word intersection will be removed from this project.
 - HSIP funds will be added for sidewalk work and to cover inflation and design.
 - Total project cost shall be increased from \$3.31M to \$3.941M.
 - Discussion: This project will be let in the summer. The intersection is dangerous for pedestrians. A TAP application has been submitted for sidewalks along Burrstone Rd. It would be ideal to unify these projects with sidewalks and safety measures to the intersection near St. Lukes.
 - Motion to approve the resolution made by: Jeff Quackenbush
Seconed by: Deborah Windecker
Voting: Passed 7-0-0

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 05A: Amendment to the 2023 – 2027 TIP to revise a Block Fund Bridge 26 – Preventative Maintenance Project**
Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.
Presenter: Mark DeRocco, NYSDOT
 - Description: PIN 2TB2.61 – The total project cost shall be decreased by \$4.995M from \$7.581M to \$2.586M. The \$4.995M shall be moved to PIN 2065.40 contingent on Resolution 2024-05B, a new Bridge Replacement project.
 - Discussion: None
 - Motion to approve the resolutions 2024-05A and 2024-05B made by: Jeff Quackenbush
Seconed by: Deborah Windecker
Voting: Passed 7-0-0

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 05B: 2024 Amendment to the 2023 – 2027 TIP to add a Bridge Replacement Project**

Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.

Presenter: Mark DeRocco, NYSDOT

- Description: PIN 2065.40 – Route 12B over Oriskany Creek Bridge Replacement (BIN 1009890) in the Town of Kirkland in Oneida County will replace a bridge and culvert and will include paving from the culvert replacement to the Route 12B/233 intersection.
- The project will be funded in the amount of \$4.995M with the FY 2024-2025 National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds from PIN 2TB2.61, contingent on HOCTC Resolution 2024-05A.
- Discussion: This project will be let in the fall of 2024 for FFY 2025. The bridge will not be multiple span. It is noted that there is fishing access at this location.
- *Resolution passed in previous motion.*

- **HOCTC Resolution 2024 – 06: Amendment to the HOCTC Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan 2021 – 2024 to update Appendix 1**

Presentation and discussion of the proposed resolution.

Presenter: Barb Hauck, HOCTC

- Description: Current federal transportation legislation requires a locally developed, public transit and human services coordinated plan be developed and maintained. Appendix 1 of the Plan is a list of potential Section 5310 projects for the following year. Section 5310 is The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program.
- The annual list of 2024 Section 5310 projects in Appendix 1 of the HOCTC Coordinated Plan Update was approved at the December 14, 2023 GP&L meeting. Since then, two additional agencies received NYSDOT approval to be included in the 2024 Section 5310 project list in Appendix 1: Katherine Luther Residential Health Care & Rehabilitation Center and The Arc, Oneida-Lewis Chapter. These two agencies had personnel changes causing them to miss the deadline for 2024 projects. This resolution is seeking approval to have Appendix 1 amended to include these two additional projects.
- Discussion: None
- Motion to approve the resolution made by: EJ Moses
 Seconded by: Jeff Quackenbush
 Voting: Passed 7-0-0

- **Administrative Modifications to the 2023 – 2027 TIP**
Presentation and discussion of the TIP Administrative Modifications Memorandum.

Presenter: Dana Crisino, HOCTC

- None for this quarter

11. Open Forum for Committee Discussion

- As part of the IJJA/BIL there is National Highway Freight funding that there is currently no regional allocation. NYS is now updating their state-wide freight plan with \$300M available. Region 2 was asked to submit projects that would meet the criteria for a freight corridor. Every four years the plan needs to be updated, so there should be funding announcements in the fall. Projects focused on bridges.
 - Freight money paid for Route 840 bridge replacement.
 - \$6M was received for the two bridges on N. Genesee St.
 - Supplemental money was received from the main office as well.
 - Applied for the RAISE grant for \$18M.
 - This is because these routes have become designated as freight routes.
 - There will be an ample amount of data with the PEL/LRTP/SS4A Studies which will give a really good idea of where the freight is traveling to include additional roadways.
 - One bridge identified is the Higby Road bridge.
 - Between Exits 30 and 31, there are a lot of roadways that could probably be added.
 - The counter only showed 10% truck traffic near Higby in 2019. 2022 data showed no increase but the traffic counter was set past the Tractor Supply entrance.
 - The regional office allows Oneida County to set counters on a state highway, as long as it is a part of the federal aid network.
 - The Higby Road bridge would be a replacement and needs to be addressed but do not currently have the funding. It has been submitted as a freight project.
- Funding for disinvestment – Possibly the EFC or DEC for environmental reasons.
 - Between CSX and Utica Barnes Ave. bridge should be removed.
 - There is no federal money available for that bridge at this time.
 - Railroad funding that comes through NYS could be a source of funding. Rail Grant solicitations are on the DOT website.
 - The City of Utica is hopeful with new people in office.
 - The bridge is becoming a hindrance to the Water Pollution Control Plant.
 - The Empire State Trail running through that area was mentioned. Most of the junk yards there have been converted back to

wetlands. A pedestrian bridge replacement would be an option to access the trail.

- Money for this area has been reappropriated in the past, so the area may have a negative connotation.

12. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting made by: Jeff Quackenbush
 - Seconded by: Mark Nagele
 - Voting: Passed, 7-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Heiderich