

**Herkimer-Oneida Counties
Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee
November 30, 2017**

The Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee (GP&L) met in Room 116 of the Alumni College Center at Mohawk Valley Community College on November 30th, 2017. Chairman Anthony J. Picente, Jr. opened the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

Voting Members Present:

Anthony Picente, Chairman	Oneida County Executive
Bernard Peplinski, Vice-Chairman	Herkimer County Legislature Chairman
Jim Wallace	Herkimer County Administrator
EJ Moses	CNYRTA/Centro of Oneida
David Wood	Representing George Joseph, Oneida County BOL Majority Leader
Nicolas Choubah	Region 2 Director, Representing Paul Karas, NYSDOT Commissioner
Chris Lawrence	Planner, Representing Robert Palmieri, City of Utica Mayor
Terry Leonard	Mayor of the Village of Ilion
Mike Waterman	Oneida County Legislator, DPW Chairman
Philip Sacco	Oneida County Legislator
Vincent J. Bono	Herkimer County Legislature
Raymond Smith	Herkimer County Legislator
Scott Musacchio	Town of Verona Supervisor
Joseph Smith	Town of Trenton Supervisor
Emil R. Paparella	Oneida County Legislator
Stephen R. Smith	Herkimer County IDA

Others Present:

Debra Windecker	NYSDOT, Region 2, RPPM
Bob Rice	NYSDOT, Region 2
Sandra Lusher	NYSDOT, Region 2
John Kent, Jr.	Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program, Program Director
Mike Farmer	Town of Webb, Tourism Director
Joe Caruso	Mohawk Valley Economic Development District Executive Director
Dana Crisino	HOCTS Program Manager
Barb Hauck	HOCTS
Katie Davis	HOCTS

Approval September 7, 2017 Minutes

Chairman Picente asked for a motion to approve, as mailed, the minutes from the September 7, 2017 TPC meeting. Such a motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Opportunity for Public Comment

This is in accordance with HOCTS Public Participation Plan 2016 Update.

Chairman Picente asked for any public comments. It was noted that none were made.

Presentation: PSAP Solicitation for Local Projects

Dana Crisino presented on the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP): Local Call for Projects. The PSAP is a five-year, \$110 million statewide initiative to reduce the pedestrian injury and fatality rates by

addressing systemic problems in urbanized areas, where the majority of crashes involving pedestrians occur. The call for local projects will grant a total of \$40M in funding for local roads statewide, aiming to investigate and treat hot spots, and implement low-cost systemic improvements at ~2,400 signalized intersections and ~1,350 uncontrolled/midblock crosswalks in urban areas outside of NYC. Utica has been identified priority recipient of this funding.

Eligibility requirements state that applicants must be located within the 2010 federal adjusted urban area. Previously ineligible touring routes were announced as eligible, at the November 14th webinar hosted by NYSDOT Main Office, provided they were locally owned or maintained. HOCTS has identified 36 municipalities within the MPO as eligible for funding, and notified potential applicants on October 27, 2017. NYSDOT Region 2 office mailed letters to 21 municipalities outside of the MPO area that are also eligible for this funding. GIS staff at HOCTS has also mapped eligible roadways within the MPO, which can be viewed at <http://arcg.is/1erb4i>.

Projects must be low-cost solutions addressing systemic pedestrian safety issues. Eligible projects include improving multiple uncontrolled crosswalks and signalized intersections within an area. Ineligible projects include intersection widening and the installation of turn lanes at one signalized location, or the rebuild of an outdated traffic signal, as these projects are neither low cost, nor improving upon the system as a whole.

Projects are eligible for 100% funding in amounts ranging from the minimum project cost of \$250k to the maximum project cost of \$5M. These funds can also be cross purposed to meet ADA requirements. Counties and municipalities are encouraged to bundle projects in order to meet the minimum project cost; in this case, one singular sponsor must be responsible for the delivery of all locations. It is also possible for applicants to work with a consultant before and after the application, but there are requirements for noncollusion, and costs accrued before the application are not eligible to be covered by the award.

Applications are due by March 9, 2018, with funding decisions expected to be announced in late Spring of that same year. Projects located within an MPO should submit applications to the MPO. The MPO will provide review and ranking, then forward projects to NYSDOT Main Office for final award decision. For more information regarding eligibility criteria, eligible improvements, the application process, or other related queries, visit <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/osss/highway/psap> for more information.

A committee member raised concerns regarding the aesthetic impact of increased signage in small villages, in particular citing the example of State Route 167, which also serves as Main Street in Dolgeville; this committee member cited 21 signs on Main Street, and expressed concerns that this level of signage “spoils the aesthetic of a small village.” Region 2 Director, Nick Choubah, agreed there needs to be a balance between aesthetics and safety; he explained that the implementation of improved signage is occurring on a national level in response to the increased need for safety.

Presentation: Old Forge-Thendara Community Shuttle

Dana Crisino gave a presentation on Herkimer County’s Rural Transit service, which operates the Old-Forge Thendara Community Shuttle on a seasonal basis. HOCTS acts as the administrator of the program on behalf of Herkimer County, with the local match component of the operating costs being covered by the Town of Webb, Central Adirondack Association Central Adirondack Partnership for the 21st Century, and, new this year, the Adirondack Scenic Railroad.

Changes made to the operating service this year include: the deletion of Sunday service (in response to low ridership in previous years), the expansion of the “Night Owl” evening service to include Fridays and run longer hours (from 6pm to 10pm), the addition of another bus for increased frequency of service, bus wraps (to identify and brand the buses), as well as the aforementioned new financial partnership with the Adirondack Scenic Railroad. New stops were also added to the route: two motels, the 19th Green Motel and the Adirondack Lodge, were added to the route at the southern end of town, as well as the Old Forge Camping Resort, located at the Northern end of the route.

Overall system ridership declined in 2017 from 2016 ridership numbers, however these numbers have not fallen below 2015’s baseline ridership number. This can potentially be linked to the lighter train passenger

traffic on the Adirondack Scenic Railroad this year; as Old Forge Shuttle and ASRR ridership correlate closely, this reduction in train traffic results in a direct reduction in shuttle ridership. Other potential causes of low ridership include the generally poor weather of the summer season; “Our September was a better summer than our summer,” Dana said. Indeed, 57% of days the shuttle was in operation were rainy in 2017, as opposed to only 46% rainy in 2016.

Mike Farmer, Tourism Director for the Town of Webb, was also present to provide local feedback regarding the shuttle. He stated that tourist attendance in Old Forge was indeed down by 30% across the board¹, which corresponds with the shuttle’s 32% drop in ridership from 2,669 passengers in 2016 to 1,813 passengers in 2017; all sources seem to indicate that the drop in shuttle ridership was not indicative of the shuttle, changes made to its service, or its capacity to perform, but instead reflective of a poor seasonal tourist season for the community in general. Mike emphasized the need to define the value of the shuttle to the Old Forge business community, as the Central Adirondack Association (CAA) is struggling to see their direct benefit from the system, and wants to see a “Return on Investment” regarding their share of the local match. The shuttle can be seen as a community building asset, and an opportunity to move tourists to and from local businesses as a means to increase sales; however, it is difficult to quantifiably measure an improvement to the quality of life, as well as the effects of the shuttle directly to increased sales for local businesses, especially if sales have dropped in a business community due to confounding influences (such as weather and poor tourist traffic).

Changes to address in 2018 include increasing advertising/promotion/marketing. Stops and service should be reevaluated, and ridership at the Park and Ride locations should be encouraged. It is also a goal to reach populations other than tourists. It is also worth further emphasizing the need to define the value of the shuttle to the Old Forge business community, and keep aware of new potential financial partnerships for the local match, as the CAA is considering pulling their partnership.

Crisino also gave a brief presentation on the new Fall Leaf Service addition to the Old Forge Shuttle. In only eight days of fall service, the Old Forge Shuttle saw 919 more riders than in the 24 days of summer service. Despite these high ridership numbers there were plenty of “hiccups” in the system; these high numbers are largely due to the captive audience arriving in Thendara from the Adirondack Scenic Railroad, which arrived in Thendara with an average of 320 to 400 passengers per train – a volume that the shuttle’s three, 18 passenger buses could not handle with the speed and efficiency desired. The ASRR had contracted extra transport from the private sector to aid the shuttle, but when these extra buses failed to arrive the Shuttle became overwhelmed with tourist traffic. Mike Farmer also emphasized that this divide reflects poorly on the community; tourists aren’t aware of who runs which bus service, and they don’t care whose fault it is: they only know that there isn’t enough available transportation to move them from Thendara Station into the Town Center. This lack of transportation is a “black eye on the community,” and it is further effecting local attitudes towards the shuttle. The ASRR will need to provide supplemental transport in the next operating year, as the shuttle is currently locked into a two-year funding contract, and will not be able to provide additional buses until the 2019 operating year, at the earliest.

It is also worth noting that the shuttle is currently still zero-fare, which is a rarity in the transit world. Currently there are no plans to implement a fare or donation box, but this could potentially offset operating costs, as well as possibly deter potential riders from electing to use the shuttle.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-43: TIP Amendment

Sandra Lusher presented a request for action to revise the existing project list for the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area.

NYSDOT Region 2 PIN 280600 – Culvert Repair / Replacement Project 19, various locations regionwide, shall have its Construction funds increased to address more culvert sites. The funding for the phases of Preliminary

¹ The data was measured by traffic counts, as well as admission sales to Enchanted Forest Water Safari.

Design, Detailed Design, and Construction Inspection shall also be increased. The total project cost shall increase from \$1,325,000 to \$2,670,000.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval HOCTS Resolution 2017-43 for the revision of PIN 280600 as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-44: TIP Amendment

Sandra Lusher presented a request for action to revise the existing project list for the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area.

NYSDOT Region 2 block PIN 2TM182 – Blocked Bridge PM, shall be deleted. PIN 280607 Bridge Rehabilitation 18, Various Locations Regionwide, shall replace it. Total project funds shall be reduced from \$4,000,000 in the parent PIN, to \$3,300,000 in the new PIN.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval HOCTS Resolution 2017-44 for the deletion of PIN 2TM182, and addition of PIN 280607 as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-45: TIP Amendment

Sandra Lusher presented a request for action to revise the existing project list of the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area. (*Resolutions 2017-45, 2017-45a, and 2017-45b were reviewed and approved all at one time as they are all related to the same Block PIN.*)

NYSDOT Region 2 block PIN 2TM193 – Blocked PM Pavement FA, shall be deleted, and its funds shall be redistributed to two new PINs, as described in Resolutions 2017-45a and 2017-45b. The total project cost to be redistributed is \$9,668,000.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-45a: TIP Amendment

NYSDOT Region 2 project PIN 280608 shall be created for the project State Route 12 – Utica City Line to Putnam Road – Preventative Maintenance: Single Course Overlay. The total project cost is \$6,245,000.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-45b: TIP Amendment

NYSDOT Region 2 project PIN 280609 shall be created for the project State Route 49 – SR 291 to Edic Rd – Rehabilitation: Concrete Repair. The total project cost is \$3,423,000.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval **HOCTS Resolutions 2017-45**, for the deletion of block PIN 2TM193 and redistribution of funds as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP, as well as **HOCTS Resolutions 2017-45a and 2017-45b** for the creations of PINs 280608 and 280609 as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-46: TIP Amendment

Sandra Lusher presented a request for action to add a project to the existing project list of the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area.

NYSDOT Region 2 PIN 280559 – TMC / ITS Operations and Maintenance, shall be revised to have its funds increased with \$280,000 of STP Flex Funds in FFY 2018 for the purchase of Portable Message Boards. These shall be 16 variable message boards, and one speed trailer.

These items would be for use throughout all of Region 2, and their main purpose would be to increase driver awareness. It is not likely the speed trailer will be used for speed limit studies. It was also stated that the intent of purchasing in bulk is to provide that these message boards would require the same functional programming, for ease of operation.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval HOCTS Resolutions 2017-46 for the revision of PIN 280559 as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-47: TIP Amendment

Sandra Lusher presented a request for action to revise the existing project list for the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area.

NYSDOT Region 2 block PIN 2ADA19 – ADA Improvement Project, shall be deleted, and its funds shall be redistributed to a newly created PIN 280611 – ADA Improvement Project 19, Various Locations Regionwide, which shall replace it. Total project funds shall be increased from \$1,325,000 in the parent PIN to \$1,370,000 in the new PIN.

Sandra anticipated a committee question and stated that the sites have not been entirely determined yet. There was discussion regarding DOT's progress regarding ADA initiatives; staff is still taking an inventory and using GIS to get a handle on the what has been accomplished and where needs are still present. The conditions of villages are currently a priority. All new construction is ADA compliant, and as such costs are dovetailed when possible. Transition plans are in the works.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval HOCTS Resolution 2017-47 for the deletion of PIN 2ADA19, and addition of PIN 280611 as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

HOCTS Resolution 2017-48: TIP Amendment

Dana Crisino presented a request for action to add a project to the existing project list of the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Utica urbanized area, as Barb Hauk was under the weather and absent from the meeting.

On June 28, 2017, NYSDOT announced the availability of nearly \$28.7 million in funding through FTA Section 5310 for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities projects. These projects entail both Enhanced Non-Traditional projects and Traditional projects. Enhanced transportation projects are those that exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), improve access to fixed-route service, decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on complementary paratransit or provide alternatives to public transportation that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities. Traditional projects are designed to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities, which includes the purchasing of buses, vans, wheelchair lifts, ramps and transit-related technology systems. Applicants in each of these two funding categories can apply for Capital Purchases, Mobility Management Services and/or Operating Assistance. The following projects have been evaluated and forwarded to NYDOT Main Office for continued consideration:

ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING
ElderLife, Inc.	Mobility Management project	\$374,038
Katherine Luther Residential Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center	OGS Vehicle Purchase	\$413,487
NYSARC, Inc., Oneida – Lewis Chapter	OGS Vehicle Purchase	\$499,797
Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.	OGS Vehicle Purchase	\$84,706
Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.	Operating Assistance	\$118,157
St. Luke’s Home Residential Health Care Facility, Inc.	OGS Vehicle Purchase	\$195,036

Resolution 2017-48 would reserve PINs for the aforementioned projects prior to their funding award.

With no further discussion, Chairman Picente asked for a motion to recommend for the approval HOCTS Resolution 2017-48 for the addition of PINs, to be reserved for the Section 5310 projects, as an amendment to the 2017-2021 TIP. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Report of Administrative Modifications

Dana Crisino presented to the committee a report on the Administrative Modifications made to the TIP for the months of September, October, and November, which are as follows:

ADMIN MOD. #	PIN	DESCRIPTION	AGENCY
2017-12A	265047	Detailed Design phase moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018. Construction and Construction Inspection phases moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018, and increased with non-federal funds	NYSDOT
2017-13A	280584	Detailed Design phase moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018	NYSDOT
2017-14A	280577	Detailed Design and ROW Acquisition phases moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018	NYSDOT
2017-15A	280594	Detailed Design and ROW Acquisition phases moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018	NYSDOT
2017-16A	280581	Detailed Design and ROW Acquisition phases moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018	NYSDOT
2017-17A	280591	Detailed Design moved from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018. Federal Funds removed and replaced with State Dedicated Funds for a cost reduction of \$176,000 to \$50,000. Construction and Construction Inspection phases will be increased in FFY 2018 by \$314,000.	NYSDOT
2017-18A	280595	Construction and Construction Inspection phases moved from FFY 2018 to FFY 2019.	NYSDOT

NYSDOT Projects Update

Debra Windecker provided an update regarding the status of the projects within the MPO and Region 2:

- Appointment of the NYSDOT Commissioner: On November 20th, Paul Karas was newly appointed Commissioner of the Department of Transportation by Governor Cuomo. Karas has spent a career in the transportation industry, and holds a degree in Civil Engineering. He has worked for a transportation and building firm, was involved with the Port Authority of NY/NJ on the \$3.2 Billion JFK International Airport development program, and has also served as the Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Chicago. Karas is making rounds to all of the Regions, and is expected to visit Region 2 sometime in the near future.

Cathy Calhoun, previously Acting Commissioner of NYSDOT, has been appointed Director of State Operations.

- Bridge NY Program: DOT is getting ready announce Round 2 of the Bridge NY applications early in 2018, for \$200M bridges and \$50M for culverts. For bridges, 95% of the projects will be funded by the State, with only a 5% local match component. Culvert projects will be 100% State funded.

Region 2 in Round 1 of the Bridge NY program received \$13M for 11 projects; \$10M of which were allocated to projects in Herkimer and Oneida Counties. Lessons have been learned from this earlier round, and process improvement is planned for Round 2. This includes a pre-review of applications by a team of engineers familiar with the federal aid projects, to ensure the application has identified the correct scope of work, accurate cost estimate, and the deliverability risk to meet a project to be in construction 18 months after a signed state/local agreement. This pre-review will also help to identify any missing materials, and offer an opportunity to suggest comments to improve upon local sponsors' applications.

Any project costs beyond the award amount are the responsibility of the sponsor.

Based on last round guidelines, each sponsor/ (local or County municipality) can submit 2 bridge applications, and up to 3 culvert applications.

- Empire State Trail: The 750-mile trail aims to complete the 20% remaining gap in the route by 2020; much of this gap is in Region 2. A nearly \$4M project in Herkimer County will complete the Fort Herkimer trail section to Lock 18. DOT and Canals are working jointly on the gap from North Utica at Aqua Vino – off road section, to Dyke Road. The trail will then go on road on Dyke Road to Southside Road, through the Town and Village of Frankfort – back off road from the 5s exit ramp on Acme Road, to Route 28/5s in Mohawk. This will be a \$10M investment.

There was discussion regarding the impact of CSX flagger issues on the trail progress; Deb noted that it is a statewide issue. It was also noted that routing the trail through Frankfort will bring new opportunities to the local businesses there.

- Griffiss Parkway – Route 825: The project is ahead of schedule and on budget. Traffic was introduced on the new roundabout alignment in November.
- Route 51 Bridge in Ilion (over Mohawk River): The two-year, \$4.5M project is underway, with work continuing as long as weather permits.
- Burrstone Road Bridge Replacement: Superstructure repairs are underway. The project is on schedule for completion in October, 2018.
- Route 5S Safety Improvement, Oriskany Blvd, Utica: The project is being advertised this week for a spring award.
- Higby Road Resurfacing: The project is on schedule to be let in the spring.
- Pedestrian Action Safety Plan: Local solicitation will be occurring in Fall of 2017. Region 2 has been allocated \$1.23M of Federal Highway Safety Improvement funding. The projects will be 100% funded with no local match required. Utica has been identified as a focus community to be a recipient of these funds for systemic treatments to improved pedestrian safety and minimize pedestrian accidents at uncontrolled and signalized crosswalks. Examples include: high-visibility crosswalks, signage, flashing beacons, and upgrades to pedestrian signals for counter measures.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Closing

With all scheduled business completed and no other business presented, Chairman Picente adjourned the meeting at 10:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Davis – Research Assistant, HOCTS