

Dutchess County Transportation Council
Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Wappinger Town Hall (Town Board Room)
20 Middlebush Road, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

1. Introductions – See attached list.

2. Announcements

Mark Debald (DCTC) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mark began by mentioning that everyone should have received the meeting materials with the meeting notice. Mark thanked the Town of Wappinger for hosting the meeting and noted that we will continue to rotate future meetings around the county.

Mark indicated that the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) applications were still under review by NYSDOT. No date has been established for the award announcements. DCTC staff will inform members as soon as they hear anything.

[Note: the TAP/CMAQ announcement was made on April 25th. One Dutchess County project was approved—a NYSDOT project to construct a roundabout at the intersection of 376/New Hackensack Road/All Angels Road in Wappinger.]

Mark announced that USDOT had recently opened the 2019 round of the [BUILD program](#). This is the successor to the previous TIGER grant process. Dylan sent an email to agencies and municipalities about the notice. Mark noted some highlights:

- \$900 million available nationally.
- Deadline for applications is **July 15, 2019**.
- Eligible projects can include fed-aid road or bridge projects, public transit projects, passenger and freight rail projects, and intermodal projects.
- For projects located in urban areas, the minimum award is \$5 million (i.e. total project cost would be \$6.25 million).
- For projects in rural areas, the minimum award is \$1 million.
- Maximum award for any single project is \$25 million and no more than \$90 million can be awarded to a single State.
- Follows a reimbursement process, where the sponsor must first provide the funding.

Aileen Rohr (Town of Hyde Park) asked whether it was an 80/20 match, and Mark affirmed that it was. Ms. Rohr noted that this funding could be a good candidate for a redesign of the 9/44/55 interchange in Poughkeepsie. Mark replied that DCTC, with the City of Poughkeepsie

and NYSDOT, is currently in the process of reviewing RFPs for a study of the interchange and arterials. The plan is to use that study, once completed, as the basis for an application to this program.

Dick Thurston (Town of Wappinger) asked whether a list of grant opportunities and their general deadlines could be developed for members to reference. Mark replied that many grants do not follow a regular schedule, but that staff would look into developing a list that provides as much detail as possible.

Mark also alerted the Committee to an Administrative Modification (#17-T) that was processed in April for the current FFY 2017-2021 TIP. The changes involved three projects:

1. PIN 806252 – I-84 pavement rehabilitation (Town of East Fishkill). Added Detailed Design phase to FFY 2019 at \$250,000 total.
2. PIN 881468 – Guiderail rehabilitation on State highways in Columbia, Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties. Moved from 2020 to 2019.
3. PIN 8TRD90 – Purchase and install major vehicle systems for Dutchess County Public Transit. Added \$35,000 in S.5339 funds to 2019.

Mark updated the Committee on the DCTC's upcoming meetings on May 22, 2019 (Planning Committee) and June 27, 2019 (Council-Voting, at Locust Grove).

3. Public Participation – Mark opened the meeting for public comment and announcements. None were received.

4. Draft FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

a. Draft Project Listings

The TIP serves as the five-year capital program that assigns federal highway and transit funds to transportation projects located in Dutchess County. The TIP lists the intended schedule and estimated cost for each phase of a transportation project. Mark noted that the TIP is one of our core documents, since it supports the goals and recommendations of the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). DCTC updates our TIP every three years.

Mark reviewed the current timetable for the new TIP. We expect to finalize the draft TIP in early May, so we can begin a 30-day public comment period in May (May 24, 2019 is a possible start date). We would then hopefully approve the TIP and Conformity Statement at our June 27, 2019 meeting. Most of the 14 MPOs in NYS are on track to meet the State's June 28, 2019 deadline for adoption (less NYMTC and OCTC, which are given special air quality considerations). Once the MPOs approve their respective TIPs, NYSDOT will assemble them into the Draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) during the summer. The TIP/STIP would go into effect on October 1, 2019 – the start of Federal

Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020.

Mark noted that staff at the DCTC and NYSDOT-Region 8 have been working diligently with project sponsors to update the costs, scopes, and schedules for the projects programmed in the new TIP. The listings provided today, as part of the meeting packet, represent the current draft program and may be subject to minor changes in the coming weeks; however, for the most part, the projects, costs, and schedules shown should remain unchanged as we approach the comment period and final adoption. Mark also thanked Region 8 for their diligent work in eSTIP to prepare the Draft TIP.

- Highway Program: Mark reviewed the proposed listing of local federal-aid highway projects in the upcoming FFY 2020-2024 TIP. Mark noted that the list is relatively short, due in part to flat funding projections, but more so to local sponsors being able to progress projects in recent years. For the highway program, the Draft TIP includes a total of 11 State and local highway projects (two NYSDOT and nine local -- this does not include pre-TIP projects in FFY 2019). These projects are mostly carryover projects from the current 2017-2021 TIP, with a focus on safety, bridge, and highway maintenance. Local sponsors include the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie, and Towns of Beekman, East Fishkill, and Pawling. Mark was pleased to note that the MPO and Region 8 were able to accommodate needed cost changes to progress some of the local projects. Mark also noted that the City of Poughkeepsie agreed to remove two linear projects (Academy St. and Grand Ave. reconstructions), which has helped us meet fiscal constraint.

Aileen Rohr (Town of Hyde Park) asked why certain NYSDOT projects did not appear on the TIP, specifically noting a Route 9 signal improvement project in Hyde Park. Sandra Jobson (NYSDOT) replied that sometimes similar projects—like signal timing—are grouped together under a single, region-wide project and PIN (Project Identification Number). Such projects usually appear on only one TIP, and NYSDOT generally places it on the TIP in whichever area most of the work is occurring. In our region, that is often the Mid-Hudson South TCC's TIP. Sandra said she could forward the list of multi-county projects that include work in Dutchess. In addition, projects that are 100% state-funded are typically not listed on our TIP.

The group engaged in a discussion of the challenges of securing funding for pedestrian safety projects on state roads—such as improving access to bus stops along Route 9. Sandra Jobson suggested that once the existing TIP projects are obligated, the group could consider a new project addressing pedestrian safety on state roads. In response to member concerns about delaying important projects until TIP funding is available, Ms. Jobson stated that if members have concerns about a specific location on a state road, they should work directly with Region 8.

The group also discussed ways to use federal funding more efficiently in the future, including by limiting use of the funds for large linear reconstruction projects and

focusing instead on projects with limited right-of-way needs such as a systemwide maintenance projects.

In response to member questions, Mark and Sandra clarified which projects contributed to the \$2.8 million/year target provided to the DCTC by NYSDOT, and which came from separate funding sources.

Transit Program – Mark then reviewed the proposed listing of federally-funded transit projects. Mark noted that the new TIP will no longer include City of Poughkeepsie transit projects, which will help streamline the listings. The draft TIP programs 10 transit projects (mostly for DCPT). These cover bus replacements (19 total), preventive maintenance, operating assistance, and project administration. It also includes a block PIN for the FTA Section 5310 program. Bob LaColla (Town of Fishkill) asked how the County's acquisition of the City of Poughkeepsie system has affected its finances. Mary Aldrich (Dutchess County DPW) noted that the County received a substantial amount of unspent FTA money from the City at that time. Bob LaColla also asked about the bus battery replacements noted in the TIP. [Dutchess County later responded, stating that since the new city routes were absorbed into our system and are not being tracked separately, they cannot easily determine if there was a negative impact. This was due to the fact that Dutchess County Public Transit made other changes at the same time, including a new transit employee contract.]. Mark stated that while the county-purchased fleet did not have any hybrid electric buses, six of the former City of Poughkeepsie buses are hybrids and require battery replacement.

- b. Fiscal Constraint: USDOT defines this as having a TIP/STIP where the amount of total FHWA funding programmed in each year does not exceed the total planning targets for that year. Mark reminded the Committee that FHWA, FTA and NYSDOT consider TIP years beyond the first four years as informational only. Mark stated that we received our highway and transit targets earlier this year, and successfully shaped the TIP to fit available funding. Mark reviewed the funding picture of the Draft TIP, noting that it currently programs well over \$50-million in FHWA and FTA funding over the five-year period (this may increase if we add Section 5337 funding for MTA). FHWA funding makes up 58% or \$29.4 million of this total, while the FTA program totals 42% or \$21.3 million of the TIP. However, Mark cautioned that the current federal transportation bill, the FAST Act, expires in 2020, so future funding levels are uncertain.
- c. Orphan Area Conformity Determination: As mentioned previously, the DCTC will need to demonstrate conformity for the TIP based on the 1997 ozone standard. This will be done in conjunction with OCTC and NYMTC as part of the Poughkeepsie Ozone Non-attainment Area. Mark noted that this requirement stems from the South Coast II decision and subsequent EPA guidance. The guidance applies to 'orphan areas' such as ours and requires us to demonstrate conformity for the 1997 ozone standard of 0.080 parts per million (ppm), even though we currently meet the more stringent 2015 standard of 0.070 ppm. A

significant component of the guidance is the removal of the need for orphan areas to use a regional emissions model. We are working with the ICG, NYMTC, and OCTC on the draft determination statement, which would likely be issued for public comment when the draft TIP is issued in late May. It would also need to be adopted at the June 27, 2019 meeting. The statement is less onerous than previous determinations (our last one was done in 2012), since a regional emissions analysis is not needed.

5. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- a. SFY 2018-2019 Year-end Reconciliation: Mark reminded the Committee that MPOs are required to produce a year-end reconciliation report at the close of the UPWP – our annual statement of work. The UPWP provides a description and budget for planning activities to be carried out during the State Fiscal Year (April 1- March 31). We expect to finalize our quarterly billing by the end of this month, which will allow us to complete the report. Initial indications show we may have some PL savings that will need to rollover into the current 2019-2020 program.
- b. SFY 2019-2020 Budget Amendment (PL Carryover Funds): Mark alerted the Committee to a looming federal rescission, which will negatively impact New York State and MPOs. The FAST Act contains a \$7.6 billion rescission that will take effect in FY 2020. The actual rescission will take place on July 1, 2020. The rescission applies to unobligated balances of contract authority apportioned under Title 23 USC (i.e. highway program). In New York, this may require the state to reduce its obligation of new federal-aid highway projects by approximately \$371 million. Some programs like the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Surface Transportation Block Grant Program are immune to the rescission. This means smaller programs such as TAP/CMAQ, Off-System Bridge, and Metropolitan Planning may feel the brunt of the pull-back. For us at the MPO, this means we need to protect our unprogrammed PL savings backlog, which currently stands at \$157,064, but will increase after we reconcile the 2018-2019 program. We will likely need to amend the 2019-2020 UPWP. We would need to do this before October 1, 2019, so Mark has proposed we address this at the June 27, 2019 meeting. For the time being, we could place the funds in our consultant budget for the Route 9/44/55 analysis. This doesn't necessarily mean we have to spend the funds, since they will be considered obligated (i.e. protected) once we program them in the UPWP.

6. Program/Project Updates

- a. Long-range Transportation Plan: Mark stated that we will begin the process of updating our long-range plan later this year. Mark asked Committee members to start thinking about the general direction and format we may want to take with the new plan, knowing that we must still meet federal planning requirements. Mark distributed a discussion guide that posed a few general questions to the group. Highlights included the following:
 - Should we focus on *mobility* and *access* rather than just *transportation*?

- Recent plans have been very detailed, partly due to the geographic focus of the plans (the sub-area strategy). Were they too detailed?
- Should we focus more on themes such as the ten FAST Act planning factors, and take a more macro look at mobility and accessibility? What issues should rise to the MPO level?
- As to format, should this be a more visual plan, and more digitally oriented?

The group held a discussion on how a long-range transportation plan could better support the goals of the Council and the community. Sandra Jobson discussed the possibility of going beyond transportation, mobility, or access to talk about quality of life and the economic impact of the transportation network. She suggested reviewing the Regional Economic Development Council's plan as a good model.

Bob LaColla brought up the relationship between land use and transportation, and the group discussed ways in which the plan and the planning process could work to bridge the institutional divide between land use and transportation decision making. As an example, Dick Thurston noted the County's desire to expand the Hudson Valley Regional Airport and the potential strain that could put on the local road network. The group also discussed other critical infrastructure such as water and sewer systems and considering how transportation planning fits into a well-planned community. Others suggested considering safety, access, ride-hailing/shared mobility, technological shifts such as autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles, and demographic trends. Sandra noted that Westchester County recently completed a study of Uber and Lyft.

Members suggested that DCTC staff meet with the Mayors and Supervisors Association to discuss the plan, and to find ways to communicate with legislative boards about how zoning policies impact the transportation system. Bob LaColla suggested providing best practice policies for Town Boards to adopt. Mark indicated that once we finish the TIP, we will look at the plan in more detail.

- b. 2019 Traffic Count Program: the initial schedule (almost 270 counts) has been established and Dylan Tuttle (DCTC) has been coordinating with local agencies to deconflict counts with pending road work and projects. DCTC will also be conducting pedestrian and bicycle counts at key locations, including on the rail trails, in the Pleasant Valley Town Center, and in Arlington, among others. Dylan noted that NYSDOT will also be conducting a large number of traffic counts across the county this summer.
- c. Mid-Hudson Valley Regional Transit Plan: Mark noted that the [Connect Mid-Hudson](#) plan is continuing to move forward. The consultants have been inventorying regional capital assets and should have a draft existing conditions report ready soon.
- d. Village of Pawling Pedestrian Plan: Mark stated that this project is going very well and is on track for completion this summer. Emily reviewed recent activity on the project including finalizing recommendations with the local Task Force.

- e. Arlington Main Street Redesign Initiative: Mark indicated that this project will create a Complete Streets design concept for CR 114 (Main Street) in the Arlington area of the Town of Poughkeepsie. We are currently finishing the consultant selection process for the RFP.
- f. Route 9/44/55 Analysis: Mark stated that the RFP was issued in March and responses were due April 15, 2019. The proposals are under review.

7. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Planning Committee –Wed., May 22, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at Hyde Park Town Hall.
- b. Transportation Council –Thur., June 27, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. at Locust Grove Estate, Poughkeepsie, NY.

Attendance: 04/24/19

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