


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
06/14/17

Members Present:

Tom Young, Town of Litchfield	Dan Boissonneault, Nashua Emergency Management
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	Veronica Mack, Nashua Emergency Management
Steve McFadden, Town of Merrimack	Sarah Marchant, City of Nashua
Andrew Bullock, Town of Merrimack	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

Others Present

Dirk Grotenhuis, AECOM	Linda Dusenberry, NHDOT
Suzanne Fournier, Brox Environmental Citizens	

STAFF PRESENT

Julie Chizmas, Senior Transportation Planner	Karen Baker, Program Assistant
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner	Tim Roache, Executive Director
Cassie Mullen, Regional Planner/Circuit Rider for Mason	Jen Czysz, Assistant Director
Stephen Meno, Regional Planner/Circuit Rider for Wilton	

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chizmas opened the meeting at 12:10pm with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 10, 2017

Chizmas referred to the minutes of May 10, 2017 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. She asked if there were any corrections. There were no corrections. Approval of the minutes would be at the next TTAC meeting.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS) STAKEHOLDER INPUT MEETING

Chizmas informed the group that the last ITS Plan update was done in 2006. She introduced Dirk Grotenhuis from AECOM who is also a Strafford RPC Commissioner. She noted that AECOM will be assisting NRPC with the update to the ITS Plan.

Grotenhuis greeted everyone and briefly summarized his presentation agenda noting that he would be discussing what ITS is, what ITS means to you and to the region, projects happening in NH & the US, ongoing or planned projects, possible future projects, and what projects do communities want and do they fit into the NRPC's vision for the region.

Grotenhuis first explained that ITS include roadway devices, communications systems, operations centers and websites and software to provide innovative solutions to traditional transportation problems. He noted some of the examples of ITS projects in NH and how they work, and what's involved such as highway ITS, smart work zones, adaptive traffic signals, and intersection conflict warning systems which he passed around a handout on. Last he provided examples of ITS projects in the US such as railroad ITS, transit, tolling, regional operations centers and freight parking. He concluded his presentation and asked the group what ITS projects are planned or ongoing and have any been proposed in the communities?

Chizmas noted that NHDOT was piloting the intersection conflict warning system for the Old Gage Hill intersection in Pelham to address the hill and bad site distance which has been the site of accidents. In addition, she was looking at a 4 way intersection location on Mammoth Rd, also in Pelham where people

miss the stop sign. Gowan was very excited for this and hoped it makes a difference and reduces fatalities and accidents. He added that travelers do not realize they are crossing a state highway.

Waitkins asked the group if anyone notices any ITS applications in their travels. Marchant said only one she can think of is the “number of miles/times to certain locations” on the Everett Turnpike. Fournier said she notices those and always wants to prove them wrong. Gowan referred to the good messages he has seen about not crowding the plows.

Grotenhuis referred to a Weather Monitoring System which reports the temperatures back to DOT for certain distances of the highway. Marchant said she did not think that Nashua has any weather recording systems but noted that they do have a good coordination system in Nashua via word of mouth from the bus drivers and other City officials. She also noted that Nashua has two different signal coordination systems in place.

Chizmas asked about railroad ITS in Nashua and if there are any problems with railroad crossings. Marchant said there is a backup problem with the northwest train. If there was an ability to let folks know when the train crossing would be, that would be very helpful. She noted everything shuts down on E. Hollis, Canal and Bridge Streets and the Hudson side when the train comes through. Chizmas questioned whether the existing project on East Hollis Street could have a rail ITS component added. She also noted the potential benefits of coordinating signals between Nashua and Hudson along this corridor.

Boissonneault stated that for highway safety, they have traffic patterns that work around the scenes which are hard due to the timeframe of the scene; adaptive signs would be helpful if they could be updated with re-route info for traffic.

Grotenhuis asked what the priority projects are for the communities. Marchant felt a higher priority would be the Route 101A corridor and stated the issue with heavy traffic during her commute that backs-up along the corridor. She added that only if emergency management is on scene will you see a sign noting that traffic ahead is slow.

Fournier asked if the info reported on the message signs was centralized or localized. Grotenhuis said it was both, but the 101A corridor would be in the district of the state. Marchant said Nashua’s preference would be to control the messaging.

Boissonneault stated that ITS tools can be used for other than traffic control but for mass messaging, leverage the tools. Marchant said Nashua had looked at a dynamic sign that could indicate which way would be faster to the highway from 101A: via Continental or staying on 101A. Grotenhuis noted that there may be competing interests for directing travelers and suggested placing signs in places where planners don’t anticipate and general messaging to stay on the mainlines. Marchant commented that Nashua was open to ITS solutions at the 101A/Continental intersection. Chizmas again noted that there is an existing project at that location and an ITS component should be explored with the NHDOT project manager.

Grotenhuis asked the group if there was anything high level they wanted to see in any of the corridors region-wide or adaptive signs on the turnpike. There was mention of cameras. Grotenhuis noted that they are for current conditions only and video is deleted after 24 hours because law enforcement does not want every accident attorney calling for footage. Fournier referred to the Milford Oval and asked if there was some type of smart technology to inform drivers that they have to wait when entering the oval. Grotenhuis asked if it was any specific leg of the oval. Fournier said the whole thing. She noted that Milford is interested in changing the islands for flow with big trucks. Gowan stated that the Milford Oval is not a real roundabout like the ones in Pelham and noted that the drivers in the roundabout never see the signage indicating that

they have the right of way. He added that signage would not benefit for Pelham and the signage for the speed is too far out. Gowan did feel that signage for the Milford Oval would be beneficial.

Chizmas asked what devices were currently in place and on which corridors should ITS implementation be focused. Marchant said west of Nashua for those who use 101A to get to the highway and MA, for notification when traffic is not good along the corridor. Other primary corridors mentioned were Lowell Road/NH 3A in Hudson, Route 3/DW Highway in Merrimack, NH111 through Nashua and Hudson.

Gowan asked what the cost was for these signs. Grotenhuis stated that a radar speed sign range is from \$3,000-5,000 and a messaging board can be around \$10,000. Gowan mentioned Sherburne Road in Pelham would be good area for signage recommending an alternate route. He noted that when the police are controlling traffic at the intersection of Sherburne and Mammoth Road, it runs smoothly, but if they are not, this would be helpful. Grotenhuis noted that only certain words are allowed by FHWA on warning signs.

Tuomala felt that traffic signal synchronization on the Daniel Webster Highway would be good when there are issues on the turnpike, noting the big traffic snarls on DW Hwy. She added that another potential congestion problem is at Continental and Executive Park Drive in Merrimack, where new development is currently under construction.

Grotenhuis asked about the bus system and ITS at the bus centers in Nashua. He asked if the busses had pre-emption for the busy roads in Nashua to give them priority. Marchant said they are aware of the technology but only emergency vehicles have pre-emption. All busses use digital technology and they are actively working to develop mobile apps. She noted that all bus drivers want pre-emption, adding that she would like to have a lower level of pre-emption for the busses and that Nashua is looking at the technology that senses busses by GPS so a bus can get through a signal that may be in close range to the stop.

Fournier asked if there was a website that she could use that would tell her when the best time is to leave Nashua at the end of her work day. Grotenhuis said that Waze is one amongst many out there that can give you that information. He added that the state 511 website is weather and incident based, but that there was nothing centralized. There was further discussion about the difficulty modelling traffic flows now that there are tools like Waze that reroute drivers through residential neighborhoods.

Boissonneault noted that bikes do not always get detected in the traffic loop systems and it would be good if there was something that worked with motorcycle riders. Grotenhuis stated that traffic loops are not good for motorcycles or bicycles and that some are going to video detection to trip the signal. Another comment was about speed feedback signs are good for safety. Grotenhuis thanked the group and said he would take this info back and come back with a draft report for NRPC.

TIP AMENDMENT 2 *ACTION ITEM*****

Chizmas reviewed TIP Amendment #2 noting that there was only 1 regionally specific project and 3 statewide projects. Below are the details:

REGIONAL PROJECT:

Merrimack: NH101A Improvements

Moving all FFY2017 PE to FFY2018 (not needed until FFY2018), reducing ROW (removing 1 year of inflation), and moving \$2M in FFY2020 Construction to FFY2021 (to maintain Fiscal Constraint of STIP).

She noted that public comment was received from Merrimack. Chizmas stated that she spoke with Fox and they said they would approve TIP A2 but wanted it noted of their disappointment in the continued delays and encouraged a meeting with NHDOT to relay importance of 101A improvements to the region.

Chizmas noted that the amendment is fiscally constrained and meets all applicable conformity requirements. She added that there will be a public hearing on Wednesday, June 21, 2017 at 7:00pm at the NRPC office. Staff has recommended the amendment be approved and will request a meeting with the NHDOT project manager to address the comments from Merrimack.

Chizmas noted that this is a State managed project so there is no local manager leading this project. Marchant suggested a caveat for the approval that Chizmas be the regional champion for the project and report back monthly. Chizmas suggested they wait until the project consultant is on board before coordinating a meeting with NHDOT and the 101A communities to stress the importance of the project to the region and confirm the scope and schedule.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS:

Commuter/Intercity Bus Replacement

- Revised figures based on actual contract amounts

Statewide Pavement Marking

- Added PE phase with \$5,000 in each FFY 2018 – 2020 and reduced construction by \$5,000 in each FFY 2018 – 2020

Statewide Transportation Innovation Councils (STIC) Incentive

- Added FFY2017 funding

Leedy, TTAC member from Amherst called in via telephone stating that he was in favor of approving the 2017-2020 TIP Amendment #2. After further discussion, Gowan motioned with a second from Young:

THAT the 2017-2020 TIP Amendment #2 be approved with the caveat that Chizmas be the project champion and report back monthly to TTAC. All were in favor.

STAFF UPDATES

Chizmas informed the group of June minor revision which was a requirement from Federal Highways that the inflation rate be reduced. The TIP will show decreases in most projects due to decrease in rate from 3.2% to 2.55%. She noted that the estimates on the projects are the same. Lastly, she stated that the first year of inflation will be FFY2019.

Next, Chizmas informed the group of the CMAQ call for projects round with a maximum project limit of 1,500,000, 20% match requirement and the 3 mandatory steps:

- Submission of a Letter of Interest (LOI) - DUE BY JULY 7, 2017 @ 4 pm
- Attendance at a mandatory informational meeting - JULY – AUGUST TIMEFRAME
- Submission of the CMAQ application - TARGETING SEPTEMBER 2017

Eligible CMAQ projects included alternative fuel projects, traffic flow improvement projects, transit investments, and bike and pedestrian improvements projects. Further info could be found on the DOT website at: www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/cmaq/index.htm. Chizmas asked that she be copied on the Letters of Interest so NRPC can plan for potential data collection for scheduling purposes, from any community that will be submitting.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Young. The meeting ended at 1:17pm. Tentatively there will not be a July meeting.