

**ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL  
Technical Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Summary**

February 9, 2012

SUNY Ulster, Stone Ridge, NY

**Members**

**Present:**

Ralph Swenson	City of Kingston
Paul Hansut	Town of Lloyd
Elaine Rivera	Town of Lloyd
Richard Peters	NYSDOT Region 8
Joel Brink	Town of Ulster
Stephen Osborn	Town of Marlborough
Vince Buono	Village of Saugerties
James Bruno	Town of Saugerties
Susan Ronga	UC DPW
David Bolles	UC DPW
Edward Pine	UC DPW

**Others**

**Present:**

Anne Noonan	New York Trailways
David Gilmour, AICP	Gilmour Planning
Alma Rodriguez	Cornell Cooperative Extension
Kristen Wilson	Cornell Cooperative Extension
Gregg Swanzey	Kingston Conservation Advisory Council
Gregory Roy	Mcfarland Johnson

**UCTC Staff**

**Present:**

Sweta Basnet	UCTC Staff
Dennis Doyle	UC Planning Board/UCTC Staff
Brian C. Slack	UCTC Staff

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dennis Doyle at 10:00am. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

## **CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mr. Doyle asked if there were any citizen's comments. Mr. David Gilmour, AICP of Gilmour Planning delivered comments to the Committee, all of which were within the context(s) of sustainability, community livability and community economic development. Regarding the Ulster County Transit Plan that is under development, the "Loop" bus to New Paltz, when ending service at the end of the evening, travels back to Kingston, empty; this seems like a waste of resources and should perhaps be better managed through any variety of means. There is a need for service on weekends and evenings throughout the County; the resource should be managed as efficiently as possible so that those demands are met. Likewise, is there a study underway for Rt. 44/55 to Rt. 209? If so/if not, such a study should be incorporated into the Transit Plan in an effort to provide a public/quasi-public service over the ridge is important to overall transit planning in the region. Regarding the proposed UPWP, journey to work data collection and analysis should be performed if no such information is provided through Census 2010. Further, regarding the update of the TransCAD model, he encouraged greater public access to the information that is produced through that software/process. Regarding long range planning priorities programmed under the UPWP, it seems that support for statewide energy planning is rather low. Further pertaining to New Paltz intermodal facility analysis, he would urge further elaboration regarding the scope of that study. The project should be scoped to include benefit/cost analysis of alternative locations, including land use impact analysis and health impact assessment. Under short range planning transportation impact reviews, he would encourage there to be health impact criteria incorporated within that process. Public access considerations should be integrated into the design of that program. As a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners and as a representative of the American Planning Association Metro-West Section, the inclusion of bus rapid transit and further regional transit development in the context of the Tappan-Zee Bridge is important. He encouraged the Council to consider making statements that would support including bus rapid transit on the bridge.

No additional public comments were submitted.

## **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 12, 2011 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

Mr. Doyle asked for a motion to adopt the meeting summary from the previous Joint Policy and Technical Committee Meeting. **Motion made by Joel Brink; second by Susan Ronga. No further discussion; motion carried.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Update of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

Mr. Doyle stated that given anticipated future reductions in TIP funding allocations, proposed amendments to the existing TIP adopted in September of 2011. These amendments attempt to "right-size" the TIP budget through the elimination of or deferral of projects. He explained that it would be most helpful to go through the proposed administrative modifications proposed by DOT and bring them to the Policy Committee to adopt any changes. Absence change, the current TIP is not fiscally

constrained, so the capital program will need to be reduced in order to reflect available funds. Mr. Richard Peters of NYSDOT was then asked to provide an overview of the process and anticipated outcomes.

Rich began by providing historical background and context to the issue. Continuing resolutions by Congress have been a primary source of transportation funding, and that funding has been in steady decline. A point of contention within Congress exists regarding the highway trust fund. The steady reduction in dollars allocated to the national highway trust fund combined with an increased need for dollars to repair aging transportation infrastructure has created shortfalls. NYSDOT is left with the task of attempting to predict amounts of funding available year to year through continuing resolutions given the absence of a federal transportation bill. Funding has therefore been left at former levels; those amounts are then projected over the next five years. That results in an approximately 35% decrease in the amount of federal funding available than was anticipated when the TIP was originally developed; this is our target for reduction. The emphasis of the program is on preservation of the system, which focuses on maximizing efficiencies and system longevity in an effort to stretch dollars while maintaining the transportation system and keeping it operational.

FHWA requires MPOs to conduct these reviews and produce reductions to account for budget shortfalls. NYSDOT has been forced to reduce its own capital program by 1/3 and local programs by 1/3; in order to do so, some local projects are being deferred to a later date while others may need to be temporarily dropped. Local MPOs are then being asked to sort out which projects should proceed under the limited funding availability and which should be removed from the TIP. UCTC must therefore review the UCTC TIP program and begin to reduce it by approximately \$6 million. It is very important to keep in mind, however, that the entire TIP will be updated this summer. Therefore, projects that are dropped during this iteration will have an opportunity later in the year to be re-listed in the new TIP, essentially re-starting the process.

Mr. Doyle requested that the Tech. Committee begin the process by reviewing the initial UCTC TIP Admin. Modifications and Amendments [provided in meeting packet]. Mr. Peters noted that an additional \$6mil. in project funding would still need to be removed in addition to the proposed changes in the TIP listed in these two documents. Administrative modification to local projects were reviewed first and comments were requested from Committee members. There was brief discussion regarding utilizing 5307 transit dollars to fund local park and ride facilities rather than state dedicated funds. This conversation is presently taking place; NYSDOT and the Mid-Hudson MPOs are looking into finding ways to fund local park and ride facility upgrades. If the MPO is able to do so, it would expedite the scheduling of park and ride facility improvements.

Discussion moved on to state projects, a number of which are being deleted. Mr. Peters again stressed that the new federal highway bill, when completed, may allow DOT to reconsider some of these project deletions and deferments. Mr. Peters noted that the Governor has been making a number of economic development announcements that include special funding for certain transportation projects across the state; Committee members should therefore stay tuned for possible special announcements therein from the Governor's office.

Minor points of clarification were raised. Regarding I587, Kristen Wilson noted that the Mayor of Kingston indicated during a recent conversation that the city would like to pass a resolution supporting

the findings of the 2011 UCTC “Kingston Intersection Study.” Regarding project #8t0443, Rt 209 Ellenville-Kingston, Mr. Peters noted that this was money allocated to conduct a study of the corridor when necessary. No significant need for or support for such a study had ever arisen, therefore it was deleted at this time. Mr. Doyle noted that in the event that casino gambling is legalized in NYS, an increase in traffic may necessitate such a study. Mr. Peters noted that the purpose of the study would be to analyze land use in the corridor.

Regarding project # 8T0449 Kingston Area Intermodal Center, the project would be deleted. Mr. Doyle noted that UCTC has devoted significant resources to justify the need for such a center but the City of Kingston and Ulster County were unable to act as lead regarding the findings. The need for the facility has not diminished; however, no locations have been identified that communities could agree on; no municipality has been willing to put forth the necessary financial match, and allocated dollars are insufficient given preliminary and final facility designs. Mr. Doyle noted that this is a project that should be put back on the TIP when it is re-written in the spring/summer. Mr. Gregg Swanzey, Kingston Conservation Advisory Council, asked if the city’s master planning revision process could or should attempt to address this problem? Mr. Doyle stressed that the UCTC has devoted significant resources and has drafted several studies that stress the need for this project. Further, it is identified in the UCTC LRTP. Mr. Swanzey asked would be necessary in order to encourage project progress. Mr. Doyle noted that the identification of a site that project sponsors and transit carriers could all agree on would be critical.

Members of the Technical Committee had no additional comments on the amendments as they were presented.

Staff will contact municipal officials and inform them of the amendment of the following three projects:

- PIN No. 878021 Gardiner Sidewalks – project programmed FY 2012
- PIN No. 8T0444 Rt. 299 New Paltz – project deferred
- PIN No. 8T0452 Rt. 213 Rosendale and Marbletown – project deferred

This concluded the review of existing proposed TIP amendments. Mr. Peters noted that \$6mil. in funding reductions now need to be addressed. The minimal goal would be to get some of the local projects moved from 2014 into 2015 to get them off of the STIP. There is about \$24m in local obligations between 2012 and 2014 (~\$5.7m in FFY 2012; ~\$5.9m in FFY 2013; ~\$8m in FFY 2014; ~\$4.4m in 2015; and ~\$1.9m in FFY 2016) but we have about \$18.2m in federal dollars programmed, equating to ~\$6m that needs to be addressed through a reduction. The problem with this process is that there are not that many large projects. Therefore, we need to move some projects at least into the next fiscal year. Those projects that were discussed include:

Pin # 875713 Rt. 213 Extension Tongore Bridge Replacement (slip to Oct. 2014)  
Pin # 876027 Abeel Street: Dock Street to Hudson Street (Stage 1)

These two projects need to be pushed beyond Sept. 30 2014 for an obligation. TIP amendments will therefore need to be made reflecting these proposed changes. Rich will have Kathy Monroe prepare these and forward them to UCTC as soon as possible.

Draft 2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):

Brian Slack provided a brief overview of the 2012 UPWP. He explained that the budget is still preliminary and undergoing internal review, but the estimated federal allocations have been provided by DOT and are as follows: FHWA funding of \$354,803; FTA funding of \$54,397 for a total of \$409,200. Brian then provided a brief overview of three significant additions to the 2012 UPWP:

- Ulster County Greenway Compacts
- Boices Lane Rail Safety Study
- Analysis of Priority Investigation Location (PIL) Data among Congested Roadway Segments in Ulster County

Descriptions of these and all projects can be found in the draft UPWP online at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/upwp.html>

Regarding the Boices Lane project, Joel Brink inquired if NYSDOT would be able or willing to assume control over any new signals installed here or elsewhere in the town, citing the increased difficulty and costs associated with finding qualified personnel to address the maintenance of signals, some of which utilize 40 year old technology. Mr. Peters noted that DOT would likely cover costs of capital work and develop a signal scheme that works best for the town and CSX. However, DOT does not presently plan on assuming responsibility for signals on town or county roads.

In addition, Dennis briefly reviewed and commented on the following projects. The advantage of conducting the Cost/Benefit Analysis of County Bridge Inspection Program project was briefly discussed. A number of other projects will be carried over from last year, including Safe Routes to School, traffic monitoring, sustainability and NYSERDA initiatives, and census data analysis. It was also recently announced that the UCTC region would remain “in attainment” with respect to air quality, making it unnecessary to conduct an update to the TransCAD model at this point in time.

Mr. Doyle asked the Committee for consensus to approve the draft UPWP as it is currently written. There were no objections.

#### Draft Resolution 2012-01: Transfer of FTA Section 5307 funds to CDTA

Mr. Doyle provided a brief background regarding this resolution which will result in the purchase of buses by Adirondack Trailways for use in UZA 89. [A full history and background can be found in the December 12, 2011 Technical Committee Meeting Summary]. This will be done as a capital cost of contracting transfer for administrative purposes. Mr. Doyle asked for consensus that the Technical Committee move this resolution to the Policy Committee for consideration. There were no objections.

#### FFY 2011 Annual Obligation Report Status:

Brian presented a draft list of project obligated during FFT 2011. This list was provided by DOT from their internal accounting system. Brian noted that while this list likely comprises the essence of the report, UCTC will still follow-up with municipalities to confirm the obligated figures.

Information for discussion only; no action requested.

#### **OTHER/OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Peters noted that Construction Readiness Review forms have been sent out by NYSDOT to communities where upcoming construction projects are pending. UCTC only had one project programmed for Construction phase funding. The Village of Ellenville has not returned it at this time. UCTC staff are working with Mayor Sheeley in Ellenville and DOT to get the forms completed.

UCTC has had some correspondence with County DPW with regard to additional funding necessary for the South Putt Corners Road design work. UCTC has received indication that the County should pursue preliminary design work at this time and if additional funds are required for detailed design, those funds would be programmed at that time. Normally, however, contracts cover both preliminary and detailed design, so setting up a contract may prove difficult to do by the County; restructuring of the contract will therefore be necessary.

Mr. Brink noted that the park and ride lot maintained by NYSDOT located near the Kingston/Rhinecliff bridge is in poor condition. The surface is a compacted dirt surface; potholes are a routine issue.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/PROJECT UPDATES**

None provided

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:15

~bcs