

NHDOT Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and Economic Impact Study

Complete Streets Advisory Committee/Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Meeting Date: 27 February 2019

Notes Issued: 5 March 2019 by Alta Planning + Design



See attached for list of meeting attendees

Meeting Summary

Phil Goff from Alta Planning + Design began the Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan portion of the meeting by introducing Tech Memo #1, highlighting changes to the Vision, Goals, and Objectives, and seeking input on the gaps analysis maps. Discussion about Technical Memorandum #1 occupied the rest of the meeting time until adjournment. A summary of the discussion items included the following:

- Shoulder widths data issue and LTS notice to proceed
- Scott got the NTP from DOT on the LTS analysis. Scott forwarded agreement to others. How to mesh LTS model PSU has with the Alta model? Kyle James reviewed python scripts for PSU model and determined that it handled data limitations in NH similarly to the way the Alta model would handle it. Regarding coordinating scopes: The MPOs and Central NH RPC would carry forward with urban areas and Alta would carry forward with the four rural RPCs.
- Regarding data: Scott agreed to talk to DOT traffic bureau about a data layer that DOT has for speed limits.
- Tim said that we should note that the shoulder-width GIS information is not reliable. There is a document online that talks about each of the different attributes in the roadways later and our confidence level for each layer is relatively low, especially for paved portions of the roadway (see https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/gis-data-catalog/documents/2018RDIUserGuide_Oct30.pdf for additional info, starting on p. 52).
 - Tier 4- Non-numbered roads owned by DOT. (Shoulder widths NOT accurate)
 - Tier 3- Town to town connections, numbered highways. (Shoulder widths NOT accurate)
 - Tier 1 and 2 – interstate highways and limited access state expressways, respectively (Shoulder widths are generally accurate)
- Data Collection Vans – HPMS is the federal reporting that DOT has to do. They provide sample sections to DOT. DOT was required to add the shoulder-width attribute field, but they did not fill it in accurately. Van is not a feasible option for getting the shoulder width information at this point in time. The shoulder-width data issue may change how Alta will approach the project recommendations, and likely changes Alta’s ability to perform the LTS (TBD).

Detailed Meeting Minutes

Craig – Introduced Alta. Matt Watkins from Nashua on the phone.

Phil – Thanks for having us on the agenda, I hope you had the opportunity to look at TM#1. Based on earlier discussion, the Shoulder Maps will certainly be changed (or simply removed.) Vision Goals Objectives are at the end of TM#1. One highlight is that Objective 2.4 was re-worded to expand shoulder widths on highway reconstruction projects.

Sylvia – Overarching goal should be coordination with other departments and agencies on walking and biking safety. We're doing a lot of work with senior agencies, also considering younger adults, we know that everyone wants walkable communities. We know it's important when we look at the age issues.

- **Action Item:** Alta to include new objective related to coordination with other departments and agencies

Tim D – Tim's interpretation of the 2'-6" shoulder expansion goal is primarily construction oriented, and that it would cost tens of millions of dollars to achieve that and may cause drainage issues, and would require the need to talk to property owners about easements. Perhaps a more achievable goal is to expand all shoulders to 2'-6" min. on **numbered** state routes? Un-numbered roads are typically 24' wide, so adding 2'-6" might be impossible.

- **Action Item:** Alta to differentiate between numbered (Tier 3) and un-numbered state highways (Tier 4) in Objective 2.4. Also, to consider differentiation of shoulder width inside of and outside of Urban Compact Areas.

Larry – The intent of that is not to **add** space, but **reallocate** space by potentially narrowing the travel lane and shifting the fog line. Seems to be an achievable goal on a lot of state highways.

- **Action Item:** Alta to clarify that the 2'-6" shoulder goal specifically discusses the restriping / reallocation of space. Not new construction.

Sylvia – I don't see the 10, 11, or 12-foot lane number in the Goals. Please introduce this topic as a road diet, not pouring fresh pavement on the side of the road. (*See above action item*).

Phil – we often don't include lane widths in the V/G/O as that is too detailed for an objective, we will certainly include that elsewhere in the plan (policy section and/or guidelines section).

Dave – Is there a DOT policy memo on lane width based on speed limit for state roads?

Sally – There is not a memo on that yet. There are a lot of parameters. On new roadway projects, we ask, is there a reason we can't do 5' shoulders? We really need to incorporate others at DOT in this discussion. We need to bring the right people together from planning, highway design, etc. to look at the document and the process. We need to get people to join in, in the beginning of this effort. Let's work with Phil, Larry, and Erica to set up a meeting to get the right people at the table.

Scott – My understanding is that the bike/ped program has shifted from Bureau of Rail and Transit to Highway Design.

Tim D – Lets bring this to DOT front office for approval. Every committee like this one is supposed to report to a Work Group. Every Work Group reports to a Director. I'd start with the Work Group and go up the ladder from there.

Larry – This committee pre-dates that system of having Work Groups.

Sylvia – Having had conversations with bike/ped people, one thing I don't see here is upkeep of the roads themselves via maintenance. Making the road network user friendly for all users. Keeping the roads in good shape. Reducing the level of stress of drivers, will also reduce the level of stress for bicyclists. Help drivers navigate, where day or night, by funding fog line striping and maintenance.

Scott – On un-numbered state highways, is it safer to have a fog line or not have a fog line? Some would result in having a 6-inch shoulder...is that better or worse?

Larry – This roadway space allocation issue is problematic because if you have less than 30 inches of shoulder space bicyclists basically don't have any space at all. In those cases, I'd rather not have a shoulder or it creates the illusion that it is where cyclists are supposed to be.

General Discussion about what the thresholds for including both fog/edge lines and yellow centerlines on a given roadway. Although some thought that below 3K vehicles per day, centerline and / or fog line not required, the MUTCD includes the following guidance:

- Section 3B.07 – Warrants for Use of Edge Lines, states that edge lines shall be placed on a) freeways, b) expressways, and c) rural arterials with traveled way of 20 feet or more and a minimum ADT of 6,000 vehicles per day
- Section 3B.01 – Yellow Center Lone Pavement Markings and Warrants, states that center line markings shall be placed on “all paved urban arterials and collectors that have a traveled way of 20 feet or more in width and an ADT of 6,000 vehicles per day or greater.” They are also required on two-way streets and highways with three or more lanes of motor vehicles traffic.

Dave – I agree with Sylvia, but is also proven fact that if roads are made with bicycles in mind it's also safer for motorists. We have to have a policy in place to get what we want at the end of the day.

Craig – Objective 3.4 “(on limited access highways)” I would prefer to not have that escape clause.

- **Action Item:** Amend objective by removing “on limited access highways”

Sylvia – Let's give a number for the bike/ped plan update frequency. Probably 5 or 10 years. Obj 3.10. Back to the agency coordination, that towns/communities have a go-to person to talk to when they want to have a conversation with DOT. Many people don't know who to talk to.

- **Action Item:** Reference the NHDOT Guide to Walking and Biking Accommodations in the appropriate place or two per Sylvia's comments.

Craig – Please consider pointing out hotspots visually where folks don't have access to a car.

Phil – we include info like that in our prioritization process but can look into putting that into a map too

- **Action Item:** Alta will try to generate a heat map showing people's access to a car

Sally – Sally will provide a variety of written comments on TM #1 by scanning her notes. Here are some:

- Page 5 or 7, one side of the street OK with mid-block crosswalks or other safe and effective traffic control. Also add lighting. Speak to different safety benefits for peds crossing the roads.

- Page 8, spending more money *than what* per month? Explain bullet more.
- In health benefits, 2nd and 3rd bullet, can we find a US example? Hard to relate to the Netherlands.
- Page 9, “post-war Suburban” remove post-war or add just regular suburban.
- page 10, beneath the photo, “highlights the need for improved transit”

Karen – Health Benefits: creating more human level, face to face contact

Dave – Page 16, Salem Rail Trail = Salem Bike Ped Corridor. Take out “rail trail”

- **Action Item:** Check Salem Bike Ped Corridor label (remove “rail trail”) on all maps and throughout document text, photo captions

Craig – Where does the “470 miles” number come from? (Phil explained that it likely means rail corridors but not necessarily improved trails)

- **Action Item:** Add asterisk and explain the inclusion of abandoned rail corridors and/or recalculate

Dave – Page 38, Gap Analysis, first photo, connects to Windham rail trail, not Derry.

- **Action Item:** Fix caption on first photo per above.

PG – Gap analysis is looking at those key conditions to understanding where gaps exist between destinations and communities. We are also attempting to understand Spot Gaps VS. Corridor Gaps.

Sally – Your gaps photos show nice wide shoulders. Grouping those roads with gaps isn’t necessarily a gap.

- **Action Item:** Find new “gaps” photos that include narrow / no shoulders.

Sylvia – Your photo examples, and Routes 114 or 33, do not express how fast the moving traffic is.

PG – If we’re agnostic about what’s out there now re: shoulder width, and identify the road as a gap, we can look at context later—ie. speed and shoulder width—when developing our recommendations. Then make a recommendation to either add signs, reallocate lane space, widen road or install Shared Use Path within ROW, based on context.

Tim – Agree with Sylvia point about photos of roads with big wide shoulders. Example: Route 111 from 4 corners down to Epsom. There is the giant hill with the truck lane. No one rides that stretch.

Craig – Why not use LTS results for gap analysis? PG answer: we’ll use LTS to inform / overlay on gap analysis in the future when it’s complete. Craig – Why not just wait and use shoulder data and do gap analysis per LTS?

Sylvia – Great opportunity in Newmarket to get off of Route 108 by the Ship and Shore restaurant. How should we ID those parallel routes?

PG – Online public input map and comments from this Complete Streets committee. We designate gaps to inform our project recommendations in the next phase of planning.

Sylvia – Do the RPCs have bike ped count data? (Phil – its limited...we have looked at Strava however)

Sally – So the LTS is for cyclists and our gap analysis is for planners and engineers to do maintenance?

PG – No. Both are steps towards the ultimate goal of creating a long list of recommended improvements on state owned highways in New Hampshire.

Sylvia – Crash maps should be shared with other bureaus within DOT for their input.

Scott – Where do things stand with DOTs long range plan? Related to any reference to bicycle or pedestrian facility improvements? State LRTP that was done, probably within the last 5 years. (*Alta note: per <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/lrtbp.htm>, the LRTP was federally approved in July 2010*)

- **Action Item:** Alta to summarize the State LRTP within the updated Tech Memo.

Sylvia – I thought you mentioned at TAC meeting acknowledgement of other bike / ped plans that other communities have done? Also “stress tests”. Nashua does a stress test. Manchester recently did one. Portsmouth has done one.

PG – We’re relying on community input or folks on TACs which roadways in their communities need to be integrated in our work.

Simon – I’m inviting people to come to meetings and talk about community needs, which will provide input on regional walk/bike needs.

Craig – Reminder that we have no meeting in March. See you in April.

Additional Action Items:

- Include **transit served** park and rides in addition to rail stations. Look at DOT’s park and ride page, it will ID which are transit served. Call rail ‘transit’. Designate as transit hubs.
- Some roads have ridership currently but no bike facility, and aren’t ID’d as gaps: Routes 202 and 9/Pleasant Street, and Mountain Road/Route 132 from Canterbury to Concord.
- Show some Future Funded facilities as gaps. Dashed orange on top of the light green line to indicate that it is both a gap and a future facility that was previously planned.
- Central-Southern NH RPCs have a trails plan. Alta to summarize in TM1. Include in our T.O.C.
- Gap Analysis – DOT has maps of the existing unused rail corridors. Milford – Nashua. It might make more sense to put the gap line on 101A from Milford to Nashua because the existing rail bed is next to 101A.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm

NHDOT CSAC, STATEWIDE PED/BIKE PLAN SIGN-IN 02/27/2019

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