Meeting Minutes

Monroe County Countywide Active Transportation Plan

Project Advisory Committee Kick-Off: 2:00 – 3:30 pm, March 23, 2022

Location

Virtual (Zoom)

Attendees

Monroe County Planning
Yixuan Lin
Pat Gooch
Rochelle Bell

Consultant Team
Michael Blau, Toole Design
Wendell Joseph, Toole Design
Tom Robinson, Barton & Loguidice
Grace DeSantis, Barton & Loguidice

Project Advisory Committee Members

Genesee Transportation Council, Bob Williams | MC Dept. of Parks, Renee Casler and Ryan Guerra | MCDOT, Tom Polech | NYSDOT, Lora Leon and Caroline Carrion-Rivera | Empire State Trail/Erie Canalway Trail, Chris Morris | Regional Transit Service, Julie Boasi | Center for Disability Rights, Ayisha Salifu Mamudu | Rochester Accessible Adventures, Anita O'Brien | Common Ground Health, Mike Bulger | Reconnect Rochester, Renee Stetzer and Jesse Peers | Black Girls Do Bike: Rochester, Kecia McCullough | Rochester-Monroe County Aging Alliance, Bill McDonald | City of Rochester, Darin Ramsay and Adrienne Davis (AmeriCorps) | Town of Henrietta, Christopher Hauser | Village of Brockport, Robert LeSuer | Town of Brighton, Evert Garcia and Brendan Ryan | Town of Greece, Scott Copey and John Caterino

Sign Language Interpreters

Sign Language Connection, Inc.: Alicia Brand and Wanya Jefferson

Introductions

Yixuan Lin started the meeting at 2:03 PM and welcomed the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to the Monroe County Countywide Active Transportation Plan (CATP), thanking them in advance for their time and participation in the process. A brief overview of the meeting agenda was followed by a round of introductions from the Project Team – Monroe County Planning, Toole Design, and Barton & Loguidice (B&L) – then PAC members introduced themselves by stating their name, organizations, roles, and by sharing their favorite place(s) to walk or bike in Monroe County.

Project Overview and Committee Roles & Responsibilities

Yixuan presented an overview of the project, first starting with a definition of active transportation: human-powered, non-motorized transportation that provides healthy, sustainable, and practical alternatives to mobility, serving both recreational and commuting uses. The CATP builds on current key policies and initiatives and will promote county cooperation on active transportation issues that extend across jurisdictional boundaries.

The CATP aims to create an **equitable and data-driven** blueprint for future policy development, decision-making, and infrastructure investment; advance the **function, equity, and resilience** of the countywide active

transportation network; and **enhance transit access** and further broaden the reach of an integrated multimodal transportation network.

The role of the PAC in this effort will be to expand stakeholder engagement with Monroe County communities, offer technical expertise and local knowledge to guide the plan development process, and review and comment on major deliverables.

Project Scope and Schedule

Michael Blau presented the overall project scope and schedule, which spans approximately from February 2022 to June 2023. The process is broken into seven tasks:

1. Project Coordination
2. Public Engagement Plan
3. Existing Conditions Analysis
4. Needs Assessment
5. Network Improvement Concepts and Policy Recommendations
6. Implementation Strategies
7. Development of Final Report

The **Existing Conditions Analysis (Task 3)** will include reviewing existing land use and transportation plans; engaging with community leaders to identify key recommendations from previous plans and gaps in local planning processes; cataloging existing physical elements that support active transportation; and analyzing operating and safety conditions of a selection of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The **Needs Assessment (Task 4)** will include a Bicycle Network Analysis and a Trip Potential Analysis.

Bicycle Network Analysis (BNA) is a way to measure how effectively people can connect to destinations via bike on comfortable, "low-stress" routes. The BNA algorithm evaluates each street and trail to measure how traffic speeds, traffic signals, and bike facility design affect riders' stress levels. It then looks at all destinations within biking distance, and what proportion of those destinations can be reached by low-stress connections.

BNA has three main steps:

1. Level of Traffic Stress – The analysis helps identify appropriate bicycle facilities that are comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.
2. Block-to-block connectivity analysis – During this step, we route bicycle trips from every census block in the county to every other census block, and summarize the proportion and types of destinations available in each census block. These fall into several categories, like recreation, retail, transit, population, and employment.
3. Aggregation of destinations – It looks at all the destinations that are within biking distance, then evaluates what proportion of those are reachable on low-stress bikeways.

Each of the above steps can be customized in many ways so that the analysis reflects project priorities. BNA can also be used to measure impact of future network improvement scenarios on connectivity, as you can see in the map here.

The trip potential analysis will forecast future demand for biking and walking trips in Monroe County. A bicycle and pedestrian trip potential analysis determines which areas of a community are more likely to generate active transportation trips. We use a number of factors that have been shown to increase the potential for bicycling and walking trips including: Population density; Employment density; Intersection density (walking only); and Proximity to destinations such as schools and universities, transit, and shopping. Identifying areas with the highest potential for active transportation trips can be a critical input to help guide Monroe County's infrastructure investments.

Draft Public Engagement Plan

Wendell Joseph provided an overview of the draft public engagement plan (PEP), which sets a foundation for the public engagement process for the CATP. A copy of the draft PEP was sent to the PAC before the kick-off meeting. The goals and objectives of the engagement process are to understand longstanding and emerging active transportation concerns, public perceptions, and local dynamics; connect with and learn from those most impacted by existing conditions and proposed changes; make engagement easy, accessible, and relevant to stakeholders and the community; leverage opportunities to coordinate engagement with existing and emerging local and county planning efforts; and build a vision for active transportation for Monroe County.

Wendell also shared key questions that will frame the Project Teams engagement throughout the planning process, and strategies that will be used to engage with the public in different ways.

Draft Project Website

Grace DeSantis provided a demonstration of the draft project website, which will serve as the information hub for the CATP. From the website, the public will be able to access project updates, interactive surveys, meeting notes, media (photos, videos, etc.), and a learning center, featuring relevant plans, studies, and key documents.

Visioning and Goalsetting Activity

Using the interactive survey platform, Mentimeter, Michael led a vision and goalsetting activity in which the PAC responded to and discussed the following questions:

- What public engagement strategies work best in your community?
- What is your community's biggest active transportation success?
- What is your community's biggest active transportation challenge?
- What is your vision for active transportation in Monroe County?
- What are the most important elements that the plan should address?
- In ONE WORD, describe your top priority for the plan.
- How will you remain involved in the planning process?

Responses are available here.

Next Steps

- PAC members were asked to provide feedback on the draft PEP by Tuesday, April 5th.
- Following the PAC's approval, online and in-person engagement will launch in early April.
- The existing conditions analysis will begin in the coming weeks.
- The PAC's next meeting will be in **May 2022** (date TBD).

The Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.