



# New England Transportation Consortium

## NETC Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

**DATE:** Tuesday, April 28, 2020, 11:00am – noon ET

**LOCATION:** GoToMeeting Link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/628554149> Dial-in: 646-749-3122;  
Access Code: 628-554-149

|                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ulrich Amoussou-Guenou, MaineDOT | Emily Parkany, VTrans            |
| Alex Bernier, UConn              | Dale Peabody, MaineDOT           |
| Ed Block, ConnDOT                | Ann Scholz, NHDOT                |
| Jim Bryce, UME                   | Kirsten Seeber, CTC & Associates |
| Colin Franco, RIDOT              | Jo Sias, NHDOT                   |
| Chris Jolly, FHWA                | Maina Tran, CTC & Associates     |
| Matt Mann, UMass                 | Christos Xenophontos, RIDOT      |
| Tanya Miller, VTrans             | Nicholas Zavalas, MassDOT        |
| Lily Oliver, MassDOT             |                                  |

### 1) Open Project Review (April 2020)

| Project # and Title   | PI, Organization<br>AC Liaison<br>CTC Project Manager<br>TC Chair                   | Update  | End Date<br>Budget     |
|---|---|---|------------------------|
| <a href="#">18-1: Development of MASH Computer Simulated Steel Bridge Rail &amp; Transition Details</a> | Chuck Plaxico, Malcom Ray, Roadsafe LLC<br>D. Peabody<br>K. Seeber<br>J. Folsom, ME | Final report and fact sheet posted on the NETC website. PI will deliver the fact sheet and poster this week. CTC working with PI to set up the webinar at the end of May or early June.   | 6/1/20<br>\$199,936    |
| <a href="#">18-2: Framework of Asphalt Balanced Mix Design for NE Agencies</a>                          | Wala Mogawer, UMass Dartmouth<br>A. Scholz<br>M. Tran<br>Joseph Blair, NH DOT       | Tasks 3- 5 are in progress. PI requested a contract extension due to delayed project start. ME is working on an amendment to extend the contract from 6/30/20 to 12/31/20. A project update status meeting will be scheduled for early/mid-May. | 6/30/20<br>\$127,499   |
| <a href="#">18-3: Integration of Unmanned Aircraft Systems into State DOTs</a>                          | Adrienne Lindgren, WSP<br>E. Parkany<br>M. Tran<br>Jeffrey DeCarlo, MA DOT          | Task 3 is in progress and on target. No anticipated project issues due to COVID-19 restrictions. Former PI Jon Gustafson has left WSP and has been replaced by Adrienne Lindgren.   | 3/31/2021<br>\$146,632 |
| <a href="#">19-1: Curved Integral Abutment Bridge Design</a>  | Adam Stockin, WSP<br>E. Parkany<br>K. Seeber<br>Alex Bardow, MA DOT                 | WSP provided a proposal about instrumenting one bridge (Stockbridge Bridge in VT), which would cost an additional \$35k. See below for discussion.<br><br>No anticipated project issues due to COVID-19 restrictions.                           | 6/30/2022<br>\$151,316 |

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|---|---|--|------------------------|
|   |   | ME working on contract extensions for 19-1 and 19-2.   |                        |
| <a href="#">19-2: Multi-Scale Multi-Season Land-Based Erosion Modeling and Monitoring for Infrastructure Management</a> | Aimee Mountain, GZA<br>A. Scholz<br>M. Tran<br>Neil Olson, NH DOT | Task 1 is in progress and on target. Research team still needs survey responses from two states. A project update status meeting will be scheduled for early May. No anticipated project issues due to COVID-19 restrictions.  | 6/30/2022<br>\$148,035 |
| <a href="#">19-3: Experimental Validation of New Improved Load Rating Procedures for Deteriorated Steel Beam Ends</a>   | TBD<br>N. Zavalas<br>K. Seeber<br>Alex Bardow, MA DOT             | ME finalizing the award the week of 4/27/20. Dale will negotiate with the awardee on costs and the contract should be finalized in a couple of months.   | TBD<br>\$200,000       |
| 20-1: In-Service Performance Evaluation of NETC Bridge Railings   | TBD<br>D. Peabody<br>K. Seeber<br>Jeff Folsom, ME DOT             | Need full TC so CTC can schedule the SOW review meeting. Draft SOW with TC Chair and AC Liaisons for review and feedback. Draft SOW will be sent to TC prior to the kick-off meeting.<br><b>TC</b><br>CT – <b>Need member</b><br>MA – <b>Need member</b><br>ME – Jeff Folsom (chair)<br>NH – Chelsea Noyes<br>RI – <b>Need member</b><br>VT – Chris Mooney                   | TBD<br>\$120,000       |
| 20-2: Current Status of Transportation Data Analytics and A Pilot Case Study Using Artificial Intelligence (AI)         | TBD<br>A. Scholz<br>M. Tran<br>Susan Klasen, NH DOT               | Need full TC so CTC can schedule the SOW review meeting. Draft SOW with TC Chair and AC Liaisons for review and feedback. Draft SOW will be sent to TC prior to the kick-off meeting.<br><b>TC</b><br>CT – <b>Need member</b><br>MA – <b>Need member</b><br>ME - Colby Fortier-Brown<br>NH – Susan Klasen (chair)<br>RI – <b>Need member</b><br>VT – Ian Degutis/Mandy White | TBD<br>\$200,000       |
| 20-3: Investigating Thermal Imaging Technologies and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to Improve Bridge Inspections             | TBD<br>D. Peabody<br>M. Tran<br>John "Sam" Maxim, ME DOT          | Need full TC so CTC can schedule the SOW review meeting. Draft SOW with TC Chair and AC Liaisons for review and feedback. Draft SOW will be sent to TC prior to the kick-off meeting.<br><b>TC</b><br>CT – <b>Need member</b><br>MA – <b>Need member</b><br>ME – Sam Maxim<br>NH – Nick Goulas<br>RI – <b>Need member</b><br>VT – Evan Robinson                              | TBD<br>\$175,000       |

| Project # and Title   | PI, Organization<br>AC Liaison<br>CTC Project Manager<br>TC Chair    | Update  | End Date<br>Budget |
|---|--|---|--------------------|
| 20-4: New England Connected and Automated Vehicle Legal and Regulatory Assessment | TBD<br>E. Parkany/N. Zavalas<br>K. Seeber<br>Daniel Sullivan, MA DOT | Kick-off meeting scheduled for 5/15/20. Draft SOW with TC Chair and AC Liaisons for review and feedback. Draft SOW will be sent to TC prior to the kick-off meeting.<br><b>TC</b><br>CT – Pete Calcaterra<br>MA – Daniel Sullivan (chair)<br>ME – Kara Aguilar<br>NH – Kody McCarthy/Susan Klasen<br>RI – Christos Xenophontos<br>VT – Joe Segale<br>Friend – Ginna Reader (Eastern States Coalition) | TBD<br>\$100,000   |
| Creating a NETC that Works  |  | Funds have been set aside should the AC want to move forward with this effort.  | TBD<br>\$50,000    |

**Discussion:**

- 18-1 – Ann – Are the DOTs supposed to provide the project results to their FHWA offices? Dale –ME will be submitting the work done to show the rails are crashworthy, in lieu of crash testing. Jeff Folsom (ME) will share what he provides to FHWA with the other TC members. Dale will follow up with Jeff on this. Emily – VTrans has a guardrail meeting next month and they have the same questions.
  - MA is conducting crash testing.
- 19-1 – WSP’ proposal for instrumenting one bridge (Stockbridge Bridge in VT) for an additional \$35k.
  - Emily - The TC wasn’t exactly clamoring for this. This felt like an add on that the research team came up with.
  - Colin – If the TC comes up with a written statement on the value of this addition, and the AC agrees, then add the \$35,000 do the project. If the proposal is scope creep, then it should not be funded. Dale – Agrees. Ann – Rely on TC member to say if it is important.
  - **Action item:** Kirsten will send WSP’s proposal to the TC to see if they feel the proposal is valuable or if it is scope creep and then approach the AC for money, if needed. Kirsten will copy the AC on the email to the TC.
- 20-series
  - Christos – Colin has sent emails to identified TC members.
  - Nicholas – **Action item:** Kirsten will send a summary of each project to CT, MA and RI. They will reach out to staff to get members.
  - Emily – She is disappointed that the TCs are not complete because it has been four weeks since the project were selected. Colin – COVID restrictions has made talking with folks personally more difficult. Christos – This is above and beyond what they normally do. Because of being at home, they can’t walk to people’s offices to have a chat about securing TC members.

**2) Follow up to March AC meeting**

- Kirsten will have the minutes posted this week.
- Sharing Research Needs Statements
  - ~ Add an “Unfunded Research” page on the NETC website?

- ~ Dale – No harm in sharing the unfunded Research Problem Statements. The university reps previously reviewed them and provided insight to AC DOT members prior to the AC DOT members voting.
- ~ There is some concern on the academic side about the ideas being intellectual property. Jim – When UME submits a problem statement, they feel it becomes NETC’s property. He is fine with sharing.
- ~ Colin – In past, a professor threatened to sue them. When NETC requests problem statements, state that they may be shared publicly. Okay with sharing them.
- ~ Emily – Problem statements going forward should be labeled as public. She is a fan of sharing. They had a research project that cited a problem statement from years past.
- ~ **Action item:** Kirsten will create an Unfunded Research page on the NETC website and add all Research Problem Statements from the last two years.

### 3) NETC Website Refresh

- CTC has put together a few options for the AC to review and provide feedback.
- Colin – Is New York State DOT still affiliated with NETC? Dale – NETC used to reach out to NYS after projects were selected and they would occasionally kick in money.
  - ~ Colin – Dale reach out to them to see what their level of interest. **Action item:** Dale will send an email to NYS to see if they are interested in any of the new projects.
  - ~ Nicholas – Has NY always been involved with NETC? Colin – NY asked to be a silent partner in the 90s. Asked to partner on projects beneficial to them. Nicholas – Find out if they are interested in them being recognized on the website. Colin – Need to be careful not to get swallowed up by them. He would prefer to not see them on the website at all.

### 4) Implementation

- Closeout webinars for past/closed projects
  - ~ 15-4: [Quick Response Project: Optimizing Quality Assurance \(QA\) Processes for Asphalt Pavement Construction in the Northeast](#). Webinar scheduled for Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-2:45pm ET. Thirty folks registered as of 4/27/20.
  - ~ 18-1: [Development of MASH Computer Simulated Steel Bridge Rail and Transition Details](#)
  - ~ Kirsten working with Chuck Plaxico to find a date and time, either at the end of May/early June.
  - ~ Emily – Can we find out if folks watching recordings? Kirsten to investigate.
  - ~ Colin – Who is attending them? Send the attendee lists to Colin. AC members should encourage materials folks to attend. Emily – Yes, send the invitations to your staff.

### 5) Final Reports – 508 compliance/technical editing

- Currently, research funded by SPR2 is exempt from 508 compliance but according to the NTL, that may change soon.
  - ~ Does the AC want to start requiring universities and private companies to make final reports 508 compliant prior to send to NETC for posting?
  - ~ Does any member have compliance guidelines that can be used?
  - ~ Ann – 508 compliance is like an ADA compliance. Nicholas – Reports are adapted so visually impaired folks can access them.
  - ~ Colin – Will it cost PIs money to make them compliant? Jo – She does this for FHWA reports. It is more effort for the researchers because they need to add descriptions to images/tables. Colin – Are there software costs? Jo – No, the software is on the reading side. Someone must do the compliance check on the PI side.

- ~ Nicholas – MA requires 508 compliance for their reports. Matt Mann was shepherding this for them. There is a software program that can be used to check the documents. This will be the normal requirement for researchers moving forward. He is not hung up on cost to researcher. From NETC’s point of view, he wants to make all the documents accessible. The bigger expensive is the technical editing (see below).
- ~ Colin – NCHRP has not required 508 compliance so far. Will we be ahead of the game? Emily – We are not ahead of the game at all. Every other federally funded report must be 508 compliant and transportation is late. She is not sure why NCHRP is not requiring it.
- ~ Matt – NETC should alert PIs to this requirement from the beginning. They can develop the graphs/tables to be 508 compliant prior to creating them. They assigned 508 compliance and technical editing to same person, so they are doing both concurrently. This saves money.
  - o Matt – Adobe Acrobat has a compliance feature, which goes through the formatting and charts to check color contrast. Descriptions need to be added to charts if they cannot be made 508 compliant. This will be required by NCHRP shortly.
  - o Maina – Adobe Reader has a tool that allows the document to be read out loud. The tool reads image descriptions (alt tag), so they need to be there.
- ~ Ed – CT has thought about this and will begin asking for compliance for new projects. Asking for compliance at the beginning of a project is much easier (time and money) than if a PI needs to go back and do it. For older projects, they will provide a 508 compliant abstract.
- ~ Dale – **AC okay with adding 508 compliance to projects and contracts? Yes.**
- ~ Lily – Anything on MA’s website must be 508 compliant. They require this for final reports. They ask the PIs to budget \$500-\$600 to use a professional editor to check for 508 compliance. This is not a heavy burden to PIs.
- Matt Mann raised a couple of questions about technical editing.
  - ~ Have final reports gone through a technical editing process in the past, either by the NETC Coordinator or by the PIs themselves?
  - ~ Is there a technical editing requirement in the project contracts? See above.
  - ~ Nicholas – Technical editing is important. PIs sometimes have grad students do some sections and the report doesn’t hang together in terms of one voice. Also, English is not always strong with some PIs, so a technical editor can deal with this. The PIs like this because there are no issues later, as long as they are told to do a technical edit up front. The end product ends up being better for everyone.
  - ~ Colin – Editing was an issue in late 90s and early 2000s. They recommended PIs take their reports to their English departments for review.
  - ~ **Action item:** Kirsten or Maina will see if AASHTO or NCHRP have technical editing standards.
  - ~ Lily – They rely on the technical committee to say if a report is badly written. It will get sent back to the PI for a rewrite. Their editor does copy editing and a 508-compliance check as well.
  - ~ Emily – NETC coordinator to read through them to see if grammatical errors. There are always issues that someone can fix.
  - ~ Keep this topic on the agenda. The AC would like to make decisions at the next meeting, so the language is added to RFPs. **Action items:** Dale and Kirsten will come up with language for RFPs. MA will send their language to Dale and Kirsten.

## 6) Other Business

## 7) Adjourn

**Next meeting:** May 26, 2020 from 11:00am – Noon ET