

BMTS Article Digest

April – May 2024

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed from the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page at <http://bmtsonline.com/about/committees>.



Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Messenger e-Newsletter

Go to <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/newsroom/newsletters.cfm>.

Subscribe to the new monthly PBIC Messenger. Send news for future issues to editorial team member Linda Tracy.

FREE Webinars

Go to <https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/webinars/>.

Come out and play in Broome County

Go All Out Broome County is your simple guide to hundreds of places and thousands of acres in your own backyard or just down the road. Easily locate hidden gems and local favorites then map your next outdoor adventure in Broome County. Go to www.GoAllOutBroome.com.



See the **Two Rivers Greenway Pedestrian & Bicycle Monthly Counting Reports** at <http://bmtsonline.com/data/bikeped-counts>.



[Press and Sun-Bulletin](#) | [Page A01](#)
Sunday, 14 April 2024

Binghamton man sentenced in fatal Oakdale Commons crash

A Binghamton man will serve several years in prison following his guilty plea in a 2023 hit-and-run carpedestrian crash that killed a Johnson City woman.

Rajee Al-Mashni was originally indicted on charges of second-degree murder, second-degree manslaughter, second-degree vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of an accident, stemming from the March 2023 death of 72-year-old Elizabeth Atkinson outside the Oakdale Commons shopping center.

In Broome County Court on Jan. 11, Al-Mashni pleaded guilty to second-degree manslaughter and driving with ability impaired by combined influence of drugs and alcohol.

He also pleaded guilty to second-degree attempted assault, stemming from a June 27, 2022 motor vehicle accident at the corner of Leroy and Chapin streets in the City of Binghamton which left several people seriously injured.

This week, Broome County Judge Carol A. Cocchiola sentenced Al-Mashni to five to 15 years in prison — the maximum allowed by law — for the manslaughter plea, and a one-year conditional discharge on the driving with ability impaired charge.

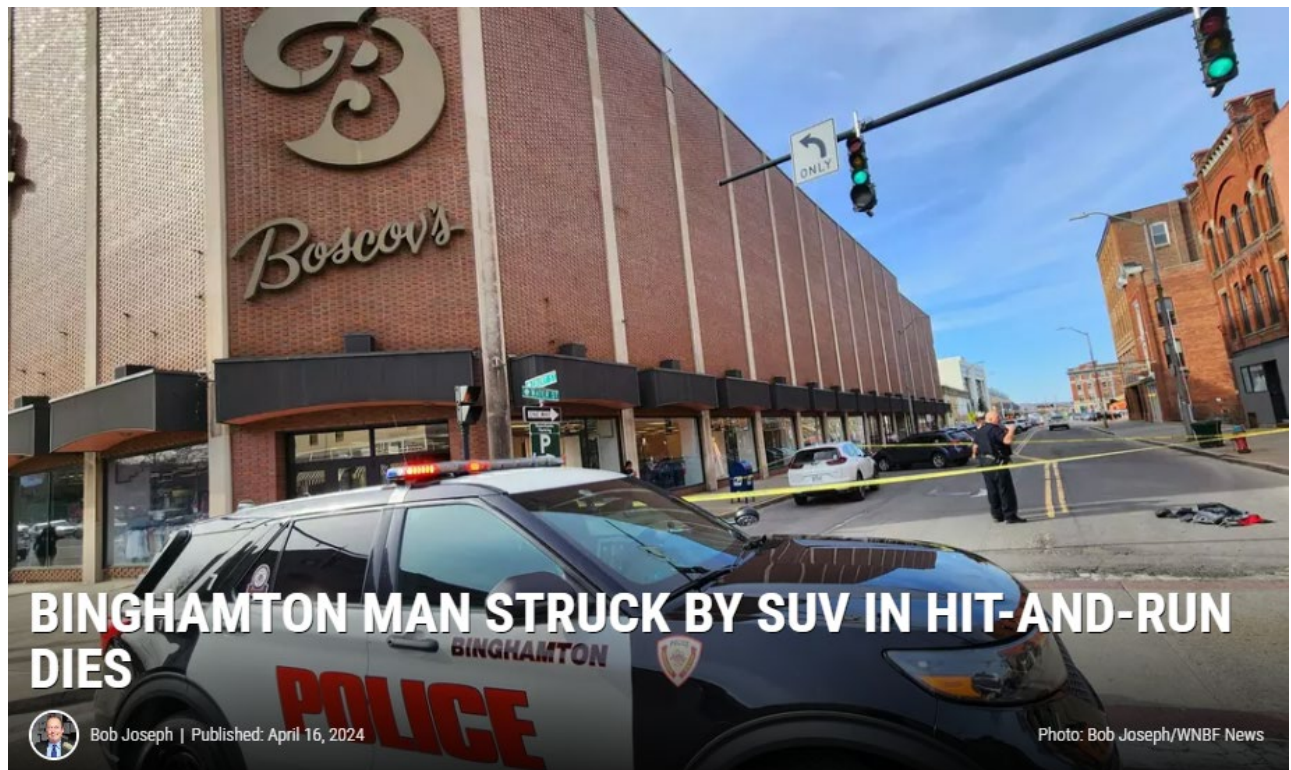
Cocchiola also sentenced Al-Mashni to one to three years in prison for the attempted assault conviction. The sentences will run consecutively.

On March 6, 2023, Johnson City police officers responded to Oakdale Commons to check on the welfare of a man who witnesses said was intoxicated and had entered as many as two vehicles in the parking lot.

When officers approached the suspect, later identified as Al-Mashni, he reportedly fled the scene, driving south at a high rate of speed.

Seconds later, Al-Mashni's vehicle struck Atkinson as she was leaving a store at the mall, police said. She later died at a local hospital. Al-Mashni was taken into custody after a police pursuit.

"It is my hope that Tuesday's sentencing brings some closure to the victim and victim's family, whose lives have been forever changed by the senseless actions of Al-Mashni," said Broome County District Attorney Paul Battisti. "While these sentences may provide some closure, let us never forget the lasting pain endured by all impacted by his heinous actions."



A pedestrian who was seriously hurt in a hit-and-run incident near the Binghamton Boscov's store has died as a result of his injuries.

45-year-old Virgil Chastine was struck while crossing Water Street around 4:20 p.m. on April 9.

Witnesses said a sport utility vehicle "hit him hard" as it turned from Court Street. They said the driver stopped "for a couple of seconds" after striking Chastine. The Ford Escape then raced away from the scene.

Chastine appeared to be conscious but unresponsive as he was being placed into an ambulance. He had been reported in critical condition at Wilson Medical Center in Johnson City before he died the following day - nearly 24 hours after he was hit.

That same day, Binghamton police arrested a 17-year-old Johnson City boy in connection with the hit-and-run incident. The suspect - whose name was not released - was charged with leaving the scene of a serious injury accident, a felony. He was released on an appearance ticket.

A person familiar with the incident said the pedestrian was in the crosswalk and "had a green light" when he was struck.

Binghamton police detective Captain Cory Minor told WNBF News the investigation is continuing and further charges against the driver are possible.

A memorial service for Chastine is to be held at Coleman and Daniels Funeral Home in Endicott on Saturday at 7 p.m.

[Press and Sun-Bulletin](#) | [Page A01](#)

Friday, 19 April 2024

Police: Driver in fatal crash could face new charges

A Johnson City teenager charged April 9 with leaving the scene of a serious injury accident in Binghamton could face new charges in connection to the deadly pedestrian crash, according to investigators.

Police said a pedestrian, 45-year-old Virgil J. Chastine of Binghamton, was crossing at Court and Water streets at about 4:30 p.m. April 9 when he was struck by a vehicle turning onto Water Street.

Police said the vehicle involved in the incident fled the area.

The same day, Binghamton police arrested a 17-year-old male on Conklin Street, charging him with felony leaving the scene of serious physical injury

accident. The teen was released on an appearance ticket and was to be arraigned at a later time.

Chastine was taken to a local hospital with critical injuries after being hit. Police had not previously identified Chastine but later confirmed he was the person struck and that he later died from his injuries.

Binghamton Police Capt. Cory J. Minor said Wednesday the crash 'remains under investigation and further charges are possible' against the driver.

Anyone with information may contact the Binghamton Police Detective Bureau at 607-772-7080.

A memorial service for Chastine will be held at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Coleman & Daniels Funeral Home, 300 E. Main St., Endicott. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Saturday from 4 p.m. until the time of the service.



After years of planning, the long-awaited reconstruction of Washington Avenue in Endicott is underway.

Employees of Economy Paving Company of Cortland have started working on the north end of "The Avenue," which runs from North Street to East Main Street.



Construction equipment and material staged on the south end of Washington Avenue in Endicott. (Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)

Village Mayor Nick Burlingame said Washington Avenue now is an "active construction zone." He said surveying work was conducted in recent days with the cutting of the existing pavement beginning Friday morning.

While there will be "some minimal road closures," pedestrians will be able to

continue using sidewalks. Alternate lane closures will occur as work on the \$11 million project moves forward.

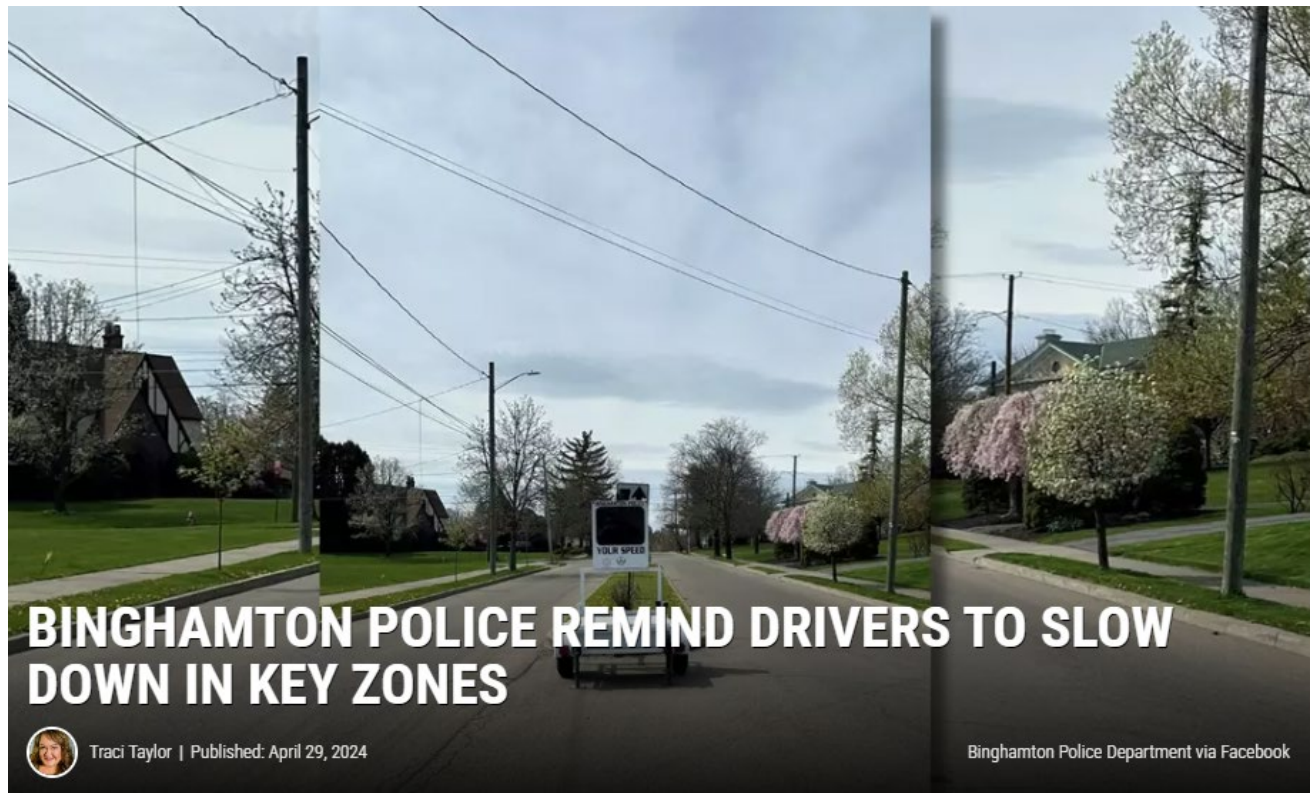
Workers speaking with an Endicott police officer on Washington Avenue on April 19, 2024. (Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)

Burlingame told WNBF News the target end date for the project remains November 14.

The mayor is encouraging people to support restaurants and other businesses along Washington Avenue while the construction work is underway. He noted access to many places is available from the rear side of buildings near public parking lots.



While most of the construction activity is occurring on Washington Avenue, motorists will see some related work on nearby cross streets.



As Binghamton comes alive with the warmer weather, the Binghamton Police Department is issuing an important reminder to all drivers: slow down and stay alert, especially in residential areas, park zones, and school zones.

With more people out and about, it's so important to be aware of children, pedestrians, and pets. To reinforce this message, the Binghamton Police has deployed speed trailers across the city.

These portable speed trailers serve as a visual representation of real-time speeds compared to the speed limit, increasing awareness and encouraging drivers to reduce their speed. The trailers are strategically positioned to cover various areas of Binghamton, ensuring continuous coverage as the spring season progresses into autumn.

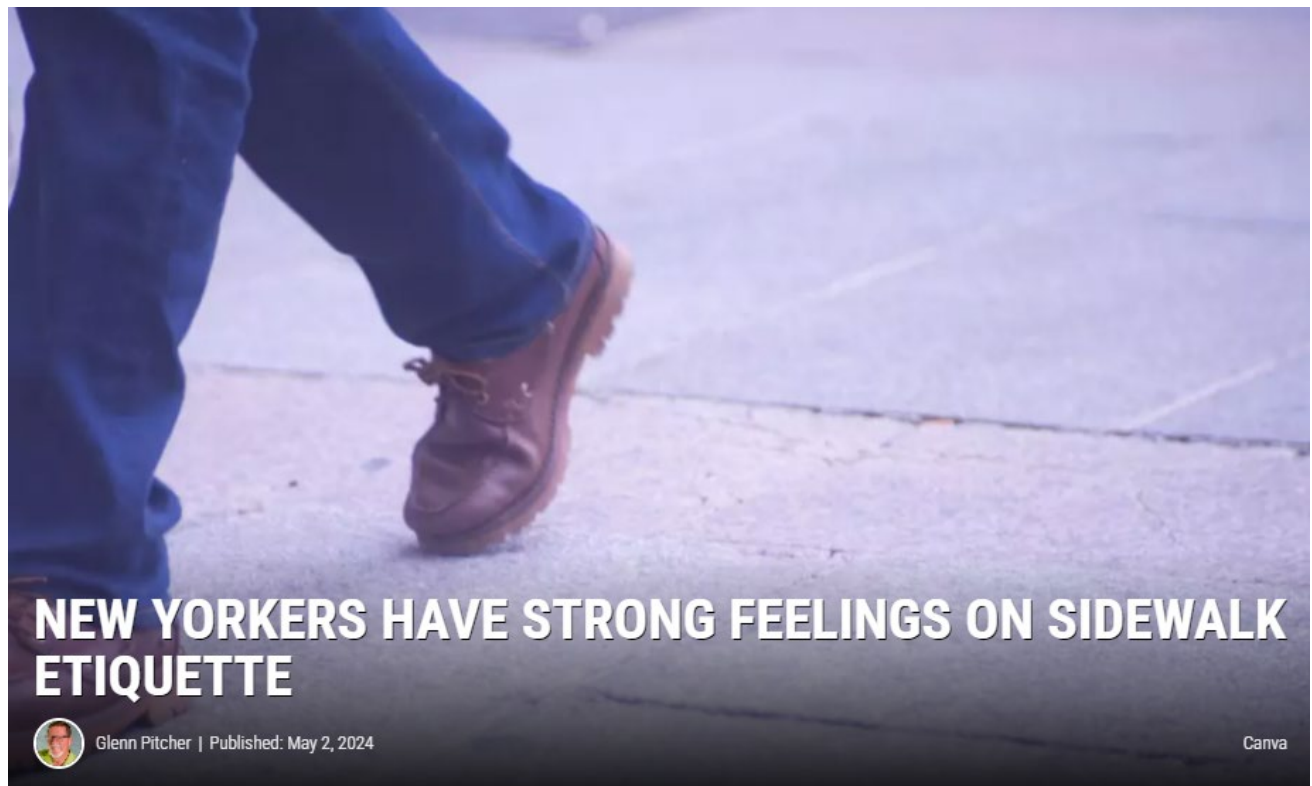
Speed trailers not only display drivers' speeds but also can collect traffic count data and speed data throughout the day. This feature allows authorities to identify and address the most dangerous traffic times when additional enforcement may be necessary.

The deployment of these speed trailers aligns with the Binghamton Police's desire to enhance road safety. By visually signaling to drivers when they are exceeding speed limits, the trailers provide immediate feedback without requiring an officer to be present. This cost-effective measure serves as a valuable tool in promoting

responsible driving behavior, especially in areas with high pedestrian and cyclist activity.

Speed trailers work in conjunction with neighborhood speed watch programs and other safety education initiatives to address speeding concerns in residential areas. The ultimate goal is to create safer and more secure road environments for everyone, ensuring that pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicle traffic are all safe.

As the [Binghamton Police](#) take proactive steps to enhance road safety, they are urging all community members to play their part in reducing the risk of accidents and promoting a safe environment for all road users.



Did you know that there is a thing called "sidewalk etiquette?" There is and New Yorkers have spoken up, and they have some strong opinions about the dos and don'ts of this topic.

The next time you find yourself on a sidewalk with other New Yorkers, Gothamist says this is the sidewalk etiquette that we all should all know and follow.

Keep to the Right

Treat this like you would if you were driving on the road, where the pedestrians should be on the right side of the sidewalk. This provides a smooth flow of foot traffic and can help to avoid colliding with walkers that are coming your way.

Move Quickly and Never Stop

Think of the sidewalk like a busy highway, where if you stop quickly or move at a snail's pace, you can cause chaos for everyone behind you. Keep up the pace, pay attention, and step aside if you need to.

Zero Hate for Seniors

There is a proper order when it comes to sidewalk walkers with seniors and dog walkers given top priority. Tourists and business people on-the-move are next, while parents with babies in strollers, teenagers, joggers, and people on e-bikes or scooters at the bottom of the pecking order.

Three is a Crowd

Are you walking in a group? Make sure to only walk two wide or in a single file if your on a narrow sidewalk. If there are three or more of you, make sure you leave space for other people to pass through or around you.

No Spitting

You would think that we wouldn't have to tell you this because it's a universal rule - no spitting on the sidewalk. It's unsanitary, disrespectful, and it makes you look uncivilized. YUCK!!



[OUTDOORS](#)

An Upstate NY Urban Waterfall to be Centerpiece of a Brand New State Park

Updated: May. 02, 2024, 6:45 p.m. |
Published: May. 02, 2024, 7:00 a.m.

A new state park is planned around Rochester's downtown High Falls with 40 acres and a possible waterfall view that hasn't been seen in 100 years. Denis Tangney Jr | Getty Images

By Sunny Hernandez |
ahernandez@nyup.com

A 96-foot cascade will be the star of the latest New York state park to be built.

[Rochester's High Falls](#) will be developed into High Falls State Park, first announced in 2022 by Gov. Kathy Hochul.

Girls on the Run hit the pavement with the goal of inspiring young Chicago girls
Girls on the Run hit the pavement with the goal of inspiring young Chicago girls

The most recent rendering of the proposed [High Falls State Park](#) shows a waterfall view looking south at the base of the Genesee River gorge. This river-level vista has not been open to the public in more than 100 years.

In total, the urban park is planned to span 40 acres starting at the falls and traveling down the river. There could be a restored meadow and public access to the river which also hasn't happened in a century.

Now organizers want the public's input on the design.

According to [NPR News](#) the Executive Director of Genessee Land Trust Lorna Wright, said public input will be crucial in building the new High Falls park.

The Genessee Land Trust is partnering with the Community Design Center Rochester will be holding a [public input session](#) from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on May 4. High Falls residents, landlords, business owners, people who work in High Falls and anyone interested in preserving the quality of life in Rochester are invited to the Monroe Community College Downtown Campus to participate.

This event will allow the public to give immediate feedback to the designers of the new park.

High Falls is just one of three waterfalls along the Genesee River. Nestled into the the High Falls District, there are plenty of places to eat and things to do in the area.

The Genesee Riverway Trail is an off-road way to walk, run, or bike to follow the river and see Rochester's scenic gorge, three waterfalls, and eleven parks. Take this trail to the Pont de Rennes bridge where you'll get the best view of the falls.
