

# SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the June 23, 2021 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

### Voting Members

Brian Schultz - Chair  
Corey Driscoll-Dunham – Vice Chair  
David Bottar  
Joe Driscoll  
Daniel Kolinski  
Robert Simpson  
David Smith  
Stephanie Webb  
Jerrin George  
Marty Voss  
David Knapp  
Dan Kwasnowski

### Organization

CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
City of Syracuse, Administration  
CNY RPDB  
City of Syracuse Common Council  
Empire State Development  
CenterState CEO  
NYSDOT  
NYSDEC  
NYSTA  
Onondaga County DOT  
Onondaga County Legislature  
Onondaga County Planning Board

### Also Attending

Christopher Tuff  
Neil Burke  
Mark Frechette  
Jennifer Terry

CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
City of Syracuse, Administration  
NYSDOT  
FTA

### SMTC Staff

James D'Agostino, Mario Colone, Andrew Frasier, Meghan Vitale, Michael Alexander, Kevin Kosakowski, Jason Deshaies, Aaron McKeon and Lori Irvine

### BUSINESS MEETING

Mr. D'Agostino completed a roll call by Agency and announced that the meeting is being recorded and broadcast live on YouTube.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER/ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Chairperson Schultz called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Mr. D'Agostino indicated there were no additions or changes to the agenda.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Schultz inquired if there were any changes to the January 20, 2021 minutes.

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that a couple of typos to Chairperson Schultz's name have been corrected.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Driscoll moved and Mr. Smith seconded the Approval of the Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**

#### **A. 2021-2022 UPWP STATUS REPORT**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated the following updates: A new agency newsletter will be going out following the results of today's meeting noting the projects acted on today. We have been keeping the community aware of various opportunities for federal monies that have occurred so far this year through direct mailings to municipalities. The new program year began April 1, 2021, and all projects are fully underway and on schedule as per the adopted UPWP. A virtual meeting for interested parties was held to discuss the draft Public Participation Plan before releasing for public review and comment. The draft 2021 Public Participation Plan had a 45-day public comment period and is later on today's agenda. Additionally, community engagements were held for a new committee forum called the FOAT (Forum on Active Transportation) with great attendance and input. We are working on getting similar forums started for "general motorized transportation concerns" as well as one for job access issues and priorities.

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that there is a lot of speculation on a federal infrastructure bill, that if approved, there will be a lot of money for projects for members around this committee so we will have to wait and see on that progress. Additionally, a new transportation bill is needed within the year and the preliminary one being discussed would set a new baseline funding level over the 5-years of \$303.5 billion for the Department of Transportation programs for highways, road, and bridges. A significant increase, so we are paying attention to progress on that. SMTC staff have been reviewing several proposed changes to federal regulations for defining urban area boundaries given the new Census and how this may affect MPO's. Mr. D'Agostino feels that this will in some way impact the geographic definition of the SMTC area. A new consultant for Traffic Count Assistance has been selected and a contract is with our host agency for signature. Also doing summer data-collection are interns and staff who are out daily collecting sidewalk data for the City of Syracuse. Mr. D'Agostino indicated that in regards to Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning there was a second Forum on Active Transportation that he spoke about earlier. For the Bridge & Pavement Condition Management System, a finished project is on the agenda for later and we are currently collecting data for the next iteration. SMTC staff is in a holding pattern working with SOCPA on the layout of the Empire State Local Economic Opportunities Plan as we are waiting for information from SOCPA to wrap that project up. Similarly, we are waiting for information from Onondaga County Department of Transportation to wrap up their new County Map. We will be in need of a LRTP amendment once the I-81 project goes on to its next step. Staff continue to coordinate with NYSDOT and FHWA as necessary in anticipation of this. Later in the agenda is the modification to our Operations Plan that explicitly outlines the process for this amendment to occur. In regards to Rail, Truck & Transit Planning, staff is updating the area's Coordinated Plan and work is underway on a transportation services questionnaire that was distributed to human-service organizations and providers of public transportation. For Local Comprehensive Plan Assistance, we have the Town of Skaneateles that will be addressed later on the agenda. The Safety Assessment project is complete and will be addressed later on the agenda. We have a draft scope of work and project outline which was approved by the Planning Committee for the Joint TMC Co-Location project which will be addressed later in the agenda. There will be an update on the Dome Traffic Management study later on the agenda. Staff began developing exhibits of the proposed corridor improvements on the Tuscarora Road Corridor Study that will be shared at a June SAC meeting. The SMTC finalized the Travel Demand Model (Model) assessment on the US Route 11 Corridor Plan in Mattydale and will be reviewing their findings with a SAC soon and develop various concept plans based on input from the SAC and the Town

of Salina. SMTC staff has summarized the select link analysis for the overlap of Routes 92/173 in the Village of Manlius. In addition, staff has held two virtual meetings to obtain feedback from the Village of Manlius businesses on how traffic affects their business operations. For the Village of Skaneateles Pedestrian Safety & Access Study, design concepts for pedestrian improvements throughout the village were compiled in a presentation which will be put online for SAC review this month. SMTC staff has prepared a data collection plan and summer data collection is underway for the Syracuse Sidewalk Planning Study. SMTC staff is in the process of updating a white paper for the Syracuse Residential Parking Permits Study. For the Syracuse Safe Routes to School Guide, the study is now in the creation of the draft guidebook phase. A school has been chosen (Grant Middle) for the case study and once a draft guidebook is created, it will be brought to the Study Advisory Committee meeting for review. Lastly, for the TIP Development and Maintenance, modifications to the SMTC TIP database were made for efficiency purposes. Staff participated in two FHWA Value Capture webinars and a Capital Projects Committee meeting is scheduled for mid-July to ensure all federal funds are expended on time and nothing expires as unspent.

Chairperson Schultz asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Kwasnowski questioned that statement Mr. D'Agostino made regarding the possible shrinking of the SMTC MPO area. Mr. D'Agostino explained that per the 2020 Census and preliminary calculated population trends he expects the SMTC MPO area to shrink but nothing is definite. Mr. Kwasnowski asked if it does will it affect funding and Mr. D'Agostino indicated that it could.

#### **B. UPDATE ON THE I-81 VIADUCT PROJECT FROM THE NYSDOT**

Mr. Frechette from NYSDOT provided a brief update to the committee members on the latest efforts regarding the I-81 Viaduct Project. Mr. Frechette indicated that the big news was that the first phase of construction to the I-81 Community Grid project was included in the state budget in the amount of 800 million. Expectations are that shovels will be in the ground by 2022. The DOT has had many internal conversations on how to break up the project into individual contracts to allow local contractors to compete. Phase one will include all the work along the Route 481 corridor to convert it to Route 81 and multiple projects downtown which will set the stage for the end of phase one which is when the viaduct can be taken down and out of service. It is anticipated that the construction work will take two years to complete phase one. Mr. Frechette indicated that prior to starting the project there are some critical steps that need to happen. The next public step is to release the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and hold a public hearing as there have been changes made from the comments received from the last public hearing in 2019. Due to COVID there will be a virtual and in-person hearing but no dates have been made yet for either but will happen this summer. That will take it to the final Environmental Impact Statement and the final Record of Decision. Mr. Frechette indicated that over the next year they will be working on the property acquisition process, but cannot make offers until the final Record of Decision, solicitation of contractors, final design work and continued work with the state, federal, city and county on the Workforce Development Plan. Mr. Frechette mentioned very sound steps have been made with the help from Mr. Simpson at CenterState with help developing apprenticeships, trainings and help for disadvantaged businesses as well as discussions with Syracuse Build. Mr. Frechette shared some good news received three weeks ago from our federal partners that Secretary Buttigieg approved Sec. 14 which allows the use of local hiring and now they are currently working with the City to see how they can fit it into the contract. Mr. Frechette indicated there is a lot of work to be done but is very optimistic and excited to get this project to the next stages.

Chairperson Schultz asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Simpson acknowledged the hard work of NYSDOT managing this project.

Mr. Driscoll asked Mr. Frechette how long the public comment period will be upon the release of the DEIS document and Mr. Frechette indicated it would be the maximum duration of 60 days.

No action is required as this is presented as an informational item.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

None

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **OPERATIONS PLAN**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated the following minor updates and/or additions were necessary to the SMTC's Operations Plan. The modifications include:

- Updated the number of times the Policy and Planning Committees shall meet from 3-4 to 2-4 per year, and as needed.
- Updated the Planning Committee member listing to reflect representation of the NYSDOT Region 3 Planning & Program Manager.
- Added that additional evaluation criteria may be considered in the consultant selection process pre-screening and evaluation.
- Added a Title VI notice to the beginning of the Title VI and Affirmative Action Policy Statement section; and
- Added a Guidelines for LRTP Amendments section.

Chairperson Schultz call for a motion.

Vice Chairperson Driscoll-Dunham moved and Mr. Voss seconded a motion that the Policy Committee adopt the update to the SMTC's Operations Plan.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. **TRANSIT SAFETY TARGETS AND TIP ANTICIPATED EFFECTS NARRATIVE**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that as required by the FAST Act, the SMTC has the option to either adopt the performance measure targets established by the area's provider of public transportation (i.e., Centro) or develop its own. Centro adopted transit safety targets for 2021 in December 2020 for the following performance measures:

- Number and rate of fatalities;
- Number and rate of injuries;
- Number and rate of safety events; and
- System reliability (revenue miles divided by number of breakdowns)

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the SMTC has agreed to support CNYRTA's 2021 targets.

Additionally, the TIP Anticipated Effects Narrative was updated to account for the new

transit safety performance measure targets. The revised narrative must be in place for transit projects to advance on the TIP/STIP after July 21, 2021.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. Colone, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Driscoll moved and Mr. Smith seconded a motion that the Policy Committee adopt the Transit Safety Performance Measure Targets and TIP Anticipated Effects Narrative.

The motion passed unanimously.

**C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (INCLUDING FORUM UPDATES)**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the FAST Act requires that the SMTC have in place a Public Participation Plan (PPP) that details the approaches to public participation throughout the metropolitan transportation planning process. The 2021 version describes additional emphasis on the use of virtual public involvement and replaces the document adopted by the Policy Committee in 2016. The SMTC continues to create separate Public Involvement Plans for individual studies under the framework of the PPP. The required 45-day public comment period ran from April 29 through June 12.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. Colone, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Knapp moved and Mr. Driscoll seconded a motion that the Policy Committee adopt the Public Participation Plan.

The motion passed unanimously.

**D. BRIDGE AND PAVEMENT CONDITION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the goal of this reoccurring work item was to report, map, and analyze roadway bridge and federal-aid eligible pavement condition in our Metropolitan Planning area. Mr. D'Agostino would like to acknowledge completion of the report.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. Frasier, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Voss moved and Vice Chairperson Driscoll-Dunham seconded a motion that the Policy Committee acknowledges the completion of the BPCMS report.

The motion passed unanimously.

**E. CITY OF SYRACUSE PAVEMENT PRIORITIZATION**

Mr. D'Agostino mentioned that in 2020, on behalf of the City of Syracuse, SMTC conducted an analysis of the City's road network to provide insight into prioritizing certain roads for pavement maintenance. The City asked the SMTC to repeat this process this year with new data collected as they're interested in determining roads where the investment of resources would be justified. The memo outlines the methods considered in this analysis and an explanation of the final products.

Mr. Frasier gave a brief Power Point presentation.

This was an informational item therefore no action is required by the Committee.

**F. TOWN OF SKANEATELES RT.20 ASSISTANCE**

Mr. D'Agostino informed the Policy Committee that the SMTC staff completed a Technical Memorandum on the Eastern Gateway Area on US 20 for the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency. This memorandum considers ways to implement the Town's vision for the portion of US 20 east of the Village of Skaneateles, including a rough cost estimate and design ideas. A key aspect of this effort was evaluation of possible points of overlap between the Town's vision and the work items to be included in a paving project currently being developed by the NYSDOT that will include this area. SMTC staff discussed both projects with the Town, SOCPA, and NYSDOT representatives. The SMTC encouraged the Town to continue to coordinate with the State and to seek alternative design ideas, such as green infrastructure.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. McKeon, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Knapp moved and Vice Chairperson Driscoll-Dunham seconded a motion that the Policy Committee acknowledges the completion of the report.

The motion passed unanimously.

**G. CITY OF SYRACUSE SAFETY ASSESSMENT**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the City wishes to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes and improve its ability to secure safety funds. SMTC developed a hybrid study that incorporates a 'hot spot' (site selection) assessment as well as a systemic assessment of 6 Emphasis Area categories consistent with the NYS Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The Safety Assessment identified:

- 83 Focus Areas and sorted them into Priority "Hot Spots" and 3 tiers of Special Mention categories (Tier I-III);
- Hot spots include: 5 segments and 7 intersections, additional assessment is provided for each hot spot and is summarized into one-page summary sheets with detailed figures and tables;
- The systemic assessment identifies five priority levels for up to 40 miles of roads and up to 100 intersections (with high-risk features) for each Emphasis Area category. Priority locations are based on features correlated with particular crash types, rather than crash frequency. Identified roads and intersections suggest locations that have the greatest potential for an Emphasis Area – related crash and therefore can be targeted for systemic safety improvements to address the high-risk features.

Findings from the site selection and systemic assessments will help guide the City's selection of safety solutions with proven counter-measures and help place the City at a competitive advantage when seeking safety funds.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. Alexander, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Smith moved and Mr. Knapp seconded a motion that the Policy Committee acknowledged completion of the 2021 City of Syracuse Safety Assessment.

The motion passed unanimously.

**H. JOINT TMC CO-LOCATION UPDATE**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that as part of the 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program, the SMTC agreed to assist the NYSDOT with an examination into the feasibility of establishing a new single, co-located Transportation Management Center (TMC) for NYSDOT and other agencies to potentially manage traffic operations more efficiently throughout the SMTC's planning area. A scope of work was created to guide the technical analysis effort and identify new management partnerships and synergies between the State, County and City to potentially provide expanded coverage to the traveling public throughout Onondaga County.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Mr. Colone, Mr. Bottar asked if the SMTC knew how large the building would be and if there are any potential sites at this time. Mr. Colone indicated that the size of the actual space has not been determined at this point.

Mr. Smith asked if any sector of law enforcement would be included at the center. Mr. Colone indicated at this point it has not been determined.

This is an informational item, and no action is required by the Committee.

**I. DOME PROJECT UPDATE**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the SMTC has contracted with a team of consultants led by Stantec to complete the Dome Traffic Management and Events Strategic Plan. The purpose of this project is to provide detailed, site-specific traffic management and operations plans in a format that can be used by personnel during an event, with consideration for the anticipated changes to I-81. This project is expected to take about 3 years to complete.

Following a brief Power Point presentation by Ms. Vitale, Chairperson Schultz indicated that this is an informational item only and no action is required by the Committee.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was a 30 second delay due to live-stream. Mr. Frasier confirmed that no questions or comments came in.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Schultz adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.