



## **Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council**

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### **PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**May 19, 2021**

**10:00 a.m.**

#### **Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council Virtual ZOOM Meeting**

Megan Costa, Chairperson, Presiding

#### **AGENDA**

- 1. Additions and Changes to the Agenda**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
  - December 15, 2020
- 3. Communications and Reports**
  - A. 2021-2022 UPWP Status Report
  - B. Update on the I-81 Viaduct Project from the NYSDOT
- 4. Old Business**

None
- 5. New Business**
  - A. Operations Plan
  - B. Transit Safety Targets
  - C. Public Participation Plan (Including Forum Updates)
  - D. Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System
  - E. City of Syracuse Pavement Prioritization
  - F. Town of Skaneateles Rt. 20 Assistance
  - G. City of Syracuse Safety Assessment
  - H. Joint TMC Co-Location Scope of Work
  - I. Dome Project Update
- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Adjourn**

## **The Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Office of the Mayor • Syracuse Common Council • Syracuse Planning Commission • CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity • New York State Department of Transportation • New York State Department of Environmental Conservation • New York State Department of Economic Development • New York State Thruway Authority • Office of the County Executive • Onondaga County Legislature • Onondaga County Planning Board • Central New York Regional Transportation Authority • Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board • Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration

# SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the May 19, 2021 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

### Voting Members

Megan Costa, Chair  
David Bottar  
Neil Burke  
Jerrin George  
James Rowley  
Owen Kerney  
James Fayle  
Brian Schultz  
Mark Frechette  
Jared Shepard  
Mary Robison, Vice Chair  
Odean Dyer

### Organization

Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency  
CNY Regional Planning & Development Board  
City of Syracuse DPW  
NYS Thruway Authority  
Onondaga County Legislature  
City of Syracuse – Planning  
Empire State Development  
CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
NYS Department of Transportation  
CenterState CEO  
City of Syracuse, Administration  
Onondaga County Department of Transportation

### Also Attending

EJ Moses  
Ed Mueller  
David Roth  
John Reichert  
Dan Kwasnowski  
Jennifer Terry

CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
NYS Department of Transportation  
NYS Department of Transportation  
Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency  
Federal Transit Administration

### SMTC Staff

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

### BUSINESS MEETING

Chairperson Costa called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. via Zoom.

Mr. D'Agostino completed a roll call by Agency.

Mr. D'Agostino indicated the meeting is being recorded and live streamed on YouTube.

#### 1. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Costa inquired if there were any changes to the December 15, 2020 minutes.

Hearing none, Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Bottar moved, and Mr. Schultz seconded the Approval of the Minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**  
**A. 2021-2022 UPWP STATUS REPORT**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated the following: The SMTC new program year began on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Under General Administration, the upgraded IT infrastructure to cloud based storage for email and VPN is complete for both the CNY RPDB and the SMTC and has been very successful for allowing remote access. In regard to Public Participation, a virtual meeting for interested parties was held on April 21 to discuss the draft SMTC Public Participation Plan which will be acted on later in the meeting. For Federal Transportation Legislation, initial discussions between the Administration and members of Congress have started as the Administration's infrastructure proposal, the American Jobs Plan, was released on March 31. The \$2.5 trillion dollar proposal includes \$611 billion for various transportation infrastructure investments such as modernizing 20,00 miles of highway, roads, and main streets; repairing the worst 10,000 smaller bridges; replacing thousands of buses and rail carts; and reconnecting neighborhoods cut off by historic investments. Interstate 81 is included in a fact sheet released by the Administration. Additionally, a new transportation bill is needed and will hopefully be received within the year. In regard to the Census, the SMTC staff has been reviewing several proposed changes to federal regulations for defining urban area boundaries given the new Census, and how this may affect MPOs. Mr. D'Agostino indicated there is a good possibility that the SMTC will shrink in some areas. The SMTC has selected a new consultant for Traffic Count Assistance with hopes of having the new contract signed within 30 days. In regard to Geographic Information Systems, staff began discussions on creating several new interactive maps to be added to the SMTC's ArcGIS Online page. These maps include a possible planning projects location map with links to project documents as well as a possible ITS infrastructure map. SMTC also continues to coordinate with the RPDB in regard to the broadband service project and staff has begun preparing for the continuation of the City's sidewalk condition data collection which will begin soon for the second year in a row. Mr. D'Agostino indicated that SMTC held a very successful Forum on Active Transportation (FOAT) meeting a couple months ago with the next meeting scheduled in June 2021. There was a lot of good feedback and will continue to schedule these meetings several times a year. These meetings will also be posted on the Forum on Active Transportation website. In regard to the Bridge & Pavement Condition Management System, Mr. D'Agostino indicated that this project is now complete and the draft final report will be presented to the Planning Committee later in the meeting. Additionally, staff is gearing up for this summer's pavement rating methodology. Mr. D'Agostino indicated that there will be an update on I-81 from NYSDOT next on the agenda. Staff continues to work with SOCPA on the layout of the EST Local Economic Opportunities Plan and would like to wrap this project up soon. SMTC staff continue to monitor progress on I-81 and coordinate with NYSDOT and FHWA as necessary in anticipation of an eventual Long Range Transportation Plan amendment. In regard to Rail, Truck & Transit, with the new program year underway, staff will soon begin updating the area's required Coordinated Plan. Work started on modifying a transportation services questionnaire for distribution to human-service organizations and providers of public transportation in the community. SMTC Staff is participating on a proposal review committee, led by the Albany, NY MPO, for a shared transit service planning and analytics initiative. Mr. D'Agostino indicated that for the Local Comprehensive Plan Assistance there was work that has been completed for the Town of Skaneateles that will be discussed later in the meeting. Work has also been completed and will be presented later in the agenda for the Safety Assessment for the City of Syracuse. There is a draft scope of work that has been completed and needs to be acted on for the Joint TMC Co-Location project. There will be a brief update on the Dome Traffic Management & Events Strategic Plan later in the meeting since it a large, important project for our community. In regard to the Tuscarora Road Corridor Study, staff has completed the fieldwork and a review of obstacles in the public right-of-way that could make adding a trail or sidewalk more complicated and expensive. Staff began developing preliminary recommendations for the Tuscarora Road Corridor. SMTC continues to get the draft report ready

for the US Rt. 11 Mattydale study. The SMTC made minor adjustments to the Travel Demand Model following its review of the initial Model findings and this project is on schedule for completion this program year. In regard to the Manlius Village Center Pedestrian Safety & Mobility Study, Staff has summarized the select link analysis for the overlap of Routes 92/173 in the Village of Manlius. In addition, staff has developed a letter and survey to reach out to village businesses to obtain their feedback on how traffic affects their operations. For the Village of Skaneateles Pedestrian Safety & Access Study, staff continues to develop concepts to improve pedestrian accessibility and calm traffic at key intersections in the Village of Skaneateles. Staff has completed fieldwork and are moving onto the next stages. SMTC is about to launch year two of the Syracuse Sidewalk Planning Study with the hiring of two interns that will begin in June. The interns will be walking the streets with GPS' and I-pads collecting data for the City of Syracuse. For the Syracuse Residential Parking Permits Study Staff held the first SAC meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Staff reviewed the existing conditions data for the six study area neighborhoods including initial finding related to white paper with their recommendations underway. In regard to the Syracuse Safe Routes to School Guide, a second study advisory committee meeting occurred in April, the draft white paper has been completed and the study now moves into the creation of the guidebook piece. Lastly, for the Transportation Improvement Program, amendments and/or administrative modifications occurred to the TIP as a special Executive Committee meeting was held in April to address a few city, county and state project monetary shortfalls and scheduling issues and are now waiting on NYSDOT for the next cycle for a new call for projects which should be happening within the next year.

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

Mr. Frechette from the 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 the Governor’s announcement on April 9<sup>th</sup>, after the state budget was passed, they established funding for the first phase of the community grid project included in the state budget in the amount of 800 million dollars. Also included was the announcement that construction will start in 2022. Mr. Frechette indicated that the project will be broken down into several separate contracts which will be beneficial for different contractors to complete. Phase 1 will include all the work proposed along the 481 corridor which will convert 481 to Interstate 81. Also, there will be a lot of work downtown, within the city. Mr. Frechette indicated that at the end of phase one, when the contracts have been completed, the I-81 viaduct can be eliminated/removed. Mr. Frechette mentioned that the DOT anticipates that phase one will take approximately two years to complete. Mr. Frechette indicated that they are not at the construction phase yet as the next public step is to release the draft environmental impact statement then hold public hearing this summer with no exact date as of yet. Due to COVID, the DOT is looking into holding both virtual and in-person hearings for public comments as this is a critical step for engaging the community. Mr. Frechette indicated that after the public hearing is held there will be a culmination preliminary design phase then the completion of record of decision. Mr. Frechette indicated there is a lot of work to be done between now and 2022 and NYSDOT continues to work closely with the State, Federal Government and the City with workforce development to help successfully provide job/training employment opportunities which will provide economic and financial benefits to CNY.

Mr. Bottar asked Mr. Frechette to provide more detail of Phase One of the project. Discussion occurred.

Chairperson Costa asked Mr. Frechette if there will be more design details upon release of the EIS. Mr. Frechette indicated there will be and a discussion occurred.

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:

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

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Schultz moved and Mr. Rowley seconded a motion to recommend that the Policy Committee adopt the modifications to the SMTC's Operations Plan.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. **TRANSIT SAFETY TARGETS**

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.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Rowley moved, and Mr. Schultz seconded a motion to recommend that the Policy Committee adopt the Transit Safety Performance Measure Targets.

The motion passed unanimously.

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

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that the FAST Act federal transportation legislation 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 is currently underway and this recommendation takes into consideration that there may be minor adjustments to the PPP due to potential public comment.

Mr. Colone gave a brief Power Point presentation.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Dyer moved, and Ms. Robison seconded a motion to recommend that the Policy Committee adopt the PPP at their June,2021 meeting.

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.

Mr. Frasier provided a brief Power Point presentation.

Mr. D'Agostino would like to go on record by indicating to the committee that NYSDOT is not sharing pavement information as they used to with the MPO's and indicates it is very much needed information.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Shepard moved, and Mr. Schultz seconded a motion to recommend that the Policy Committee acknowledge the completion of the BPCMS report at their meeting.

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. The City was 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. Using available data, the SMTC developed a Priority Score on each applicable road segment. This score considered several variables, including pavement rating (collected by the SMTC in 2020), traffic volumes, and functional classification, among others. The approach considered in this analysis is just one of several possible data-driven approaches. The approach utilized data accessible by the agency and seeks to create a repeatable process that stands on solid analytical ground. The output suggests roads which could be considered reasonable candidates for reconstruction.

Mr. Frasier gave a brief Power Point presentation.

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

Mr. Burke indicated this information is very helpful.

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

Mr. D’Agostino informed the Planning 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.

Mr. McKeon gave a brief Power Point presentation.

Chairperson Costa and Mr. Frechette both thanked the SMTC for their efforts on this project. This was followed by a brief summary by Mr. Frechette.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Frechette moved, and Mr. Burke seconded a motion that the Planning Committee recommend that the Policy Committee acknowledge 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. As part of the 2018-2019 UPWP, the SMTC agreed to conduct a road network screening of fatal and serious injury crash patterns during a 5-year period. 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.

Mr. Alexander gave a brief Power Point presentation.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Burke moved, and Mr. Dyer seconded a motion that the Policy Committee acknowledge the completion of the 2021 City of Syracuse Safety Assessment.

The motion passed unanimously.

**H. JOINT TMC CO-LOCATION SCOPE OF WORK**

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 draft 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.

Chairperson Costa called for a motion.

Mr. Frechette moved, and Vice Chairperson Robison seconded a motion that the Planning Committee approve this scope of work.

The motion passed unanimously.

**I. DOMESTIC 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.

Ms. Vitale gave a brief Power Point presentation.

Mr. Frechette and Mr. D'Agostino had a brief discussion regarding Streetlight Data and agree this new platform will be beneficial to predict traffic patterns.

This was an informational update only.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Frasier indicated there was one comment/suggestion that came in on the YouTube live stream during the meeting from Phil Green regarding the use of native wildflowers where grass is usually planted at the Skaneateles project as they use less water and help the bees.

Also, Mr. Frechette wanted to note that there was a state budget inclusion for 100 million dollars for a touring route program which will be a financial benefit for the City of Syracuse.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m. by Chairperson Costa.