



## **Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council**

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### **POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**February 10, 2022  
10:00 a.m.**

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

Brian Schultz, Chairperson, Presiding

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Additions and Changes to the Agenda**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
  - October 21, 2021
- 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. 2022-2023 UPWP
  - B. LRTP Amendment
  - C. Safe Routes to School White Paper
  - D. Tuscarora Road Corridor Study
- 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 February 10, 2022 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

### Voting Members

Brian Schultz, Chair  
David Smith  
Dave Mankiewicz  
Corey Dunham, Vice Chair  
Aaron McKeon  
Jennifer Schultz  
Heather Lamendola  
Trendon Choe  
James Rowley  
Dan Kwasnowski  
Odean Dyer

### Organization

CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
NYS Department of Transportation  
CenterState CEO  
City of Syracuse, Administration  
CNY Regional Planning & Development Board  
City of Syracuse Common Council President  
City of Syracuse Planning Commission  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Onondaga County Legislature - Chair  
Onondaga County Planning Board  
Onondaga County – Office of the County Executive

### Also Attending

Mark Frechette  
Maria Hayford  
Jared Gross  
Jennifer Terry  
Neil Burke

NYS Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
Federal Highway Administration  
Federal Transit Administration  
City of Syracuse Dept. of Public Works

### SMTC Staff

James D’Agostino, Mario Colone, Jason Deshaies, Andrew Frasier, Mike Alexander, and Meghan Vitale

### BUSINESS MEETING

Chairperson Schultz called the meeting to order at 10:00 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 Schultz inquired if there were any changes to the October 21, 2021, minutes.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Ms. Dunham 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 moves to skip this report as a detailed UPWP overview will follow.

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

Mr. Frechette provided an update to the committee on the latest efforts regarding the I-81 Viaduct Project. Mr. Frechette indicated that the NYSDOT received over 7,500 comments on the DEIS. For comparison, NYSDOT only received about 1,200 comments on the PDEIS in April 2019. A lot of comments pertaining to jobs and about the construction process. That is a good thing, because the public is transitioning to discussing mitigation measures during construction rather than just commenting on the alternatives. Heard a lot about the proposed roundabout at MLK, realized it was a "non-starter" to put that so close to Dr. King elementary school. In process of completing response to comments, working with Federal partners. A lot of good recommendations that steer changes to the project. Any additions require more analysis. Comments have to be categorized into like comments, and NYSDOT is working with Federal partners to secure approval to release FEIS with comments and responses to the public. Once complete and State and Federal approvals secured, DOT will release FEIS/FDR for 30-day public review – probably March or April – then that leads to the Record of Decision (ROD). Some parallel processes with NEPA, for example, LRTP Amendment on today's agenda. LRTP Amendment will move I-81 project from illustrative project towards a real construction project. NYSDOT does not have funding on the capital program for anything after the ROD. Policy Committee will need to vote on those additions to the Transportation Improvement Program. Governor Hochul spoke to Syracuse.com Editorial Board recently; \$800M was included in State budget for I-81 last year and the Governor has included \$1.1B in her budget proposal.

Mr. Frechette noted NYSDOT is working with the community on local hiring preference. City initiated Syracuse Build program last year, working with Urban Jobs Task Force and other local job advocates. These discussions led to NYSDOT creating a working group related to I-81 and the SEP-14 pilot program (FHWA program that allows for a local hiring initiative). Team put together application to FHWA to allow for local hiring preference – incentivize contractors to use local hiring. Did peer exchange with Colorado DOT – they have already used a local hiring preference on I-70 project in Denver – this was very informative with a focus on how training programs were instituted and how the goals were achieved.

Chairperson Schultz mentioned that as part of the State's budget prep, Centro has been meeting with State Assembly and Senate members. Question keeps coming up about how I-81 will impact Centro. The understanding is that contractors will control park and rides and that funding may not be used properly to set them up. Mr. Frechette noted that NYSDOT and Centro will need to discuss. Where the park and rides may be sited are going to occur in phase 2, which is a few years out still. Work in first phase is mostly on expansions to I-481. Chairperson Schultz would rather the Park and Rides be left up to NYSDOT rather than a contractor. Mr. Frechette noted that contractors work for NYSDOT, and NYSDOT will set it up in a way that makes sense.

Mr. Smith indicated that Phase 1 and Phase 2 will see both Design-Build and Design-Bid-Build. NYSDOT will specify in RFP what is needed for Park and Ride, and this can be evaluated in the proposal review process. Chairperson Schultz mentioned Centro would need advance notice. If they must order additional buses, that takes 18-24 months.

This was an information item only and no action is required by the Committee.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

None

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **2022-2023 UPWP**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated that a call letter was sent to member agencies in the fall of 2021. As part of this meeting, the summary table was provided to members. Mr. D'Agostino reviewed the current UPWP including the projects that were completed in the past year. The SMTC has continued to expand public participation, releasing at least one printed newsletter and six digitally. The Forum on Active Transportation (FOAT) began this year. The 2020 Census is currently being analyzed and data incorporated into the SMTC database. Mr. D'Agostino mentioned that SMTC has taken on a new consultant for traffic counts to help keep counts up to date.

The SMTC has a number of ongoing efforts including providing GIS assistance to member agencies and updating internal files; The Bridge and Pavement CMS was completed as it is annually; Citywide pavement ratings for the City of Syracuse has continued, helping guide investments in road reconstruction; City sidewalk rating has also continued with the assistance of summer interns with 350 miles completed so far; SCOPA's Empire State Trail Local Economic Opportunities Plan; Travel demand modeling has been conducted for multiple studies within the UPWP, including on the Route 11 study in Mattydale; the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) has been maintained. 100% of the funds have been obligated this year, which equates to \$76.162 million Federal. Development of a new 5-year TIP is underway.

The proposed 2022-2023 UPWP costs \$2.087 million with \$1.637 million for new FHWA and FTA planning funds. 8 major projects carrying over and 9 new projects. Member agencies were contacted to submit planning projects. The projects carrying over into the new UPWP include: the Joint TMC Co-Location study; the Dome Traffic Management and Events Strategic Plan which is currently paused until the final decisions on I-81 are released; the Mattydale Rt 11 Corridor Study which will be completed in early 2022; the Manlius Village Center Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Study; the Village of Skaneateles Pedestrian Safety and Access; Syracuse School Loading Zone Study and the Syracuse Safe Routes to School Manual; and the Syracuse Residential Parking Permits Study which will be completed in the first half of 2022.

New projects for 2022-2023 include: a Centro rider on-board socio-economic survey; CNYRTA public outreach assistance; Downtown intersection safety; Westvale Plaza revitalization; Coldbrook Creek Trail study in the Valley neighborhood of the City; Westside Trail along Fayette Street in Syracuse; Community Streets Program building off Community Streets Guide from 2020; Nedrow Rt 11 Corridor Study; Martisco Rail-to-Trail Evaluation; and assistance for a variety of SOCPA's projects.

Mr. D'Agostino stated that given the size of the program, most projects will not be completed within the 2022-2023 program year and will carry over to 2023-2024.

Mr. D'Agostino inquired if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Ms. Driscoll-Dunham moved and Mr. Smith seconded the motion to adopt the 2022-2023

UPWP. The program was approved.

**B. LRTP AMENDMENTS**

Mr. D’Agostino indicated that the LRTP is being amended at this time in response to the release of the NYSDOT I-81 Viaduct Project DEIS.

Ms. Vitale gave a short presentation on the topic. Ms. Vitale mentioned that I-81 is currently identified as a “Regionally Significant” project and an “Illustrative Project.” The individual projects for the I-81 construction will need to eventually be included as part of the SMTC’s TIP, but first it must be included in the fiscally constrained portion of the LRTP. This means it cannot be considered an “Illustrative Project” any longer.

Addendum to Chapter 4:

- New safety targets adopted in June 2021 and current highway safety targets adopted in October 2021.

Revised Chapter 6:

- I-81 Community Grid Phase 1 (5 projects, \$800 million) added to short-term project list and Phase 2 (5 projects, \$1.1 billion) added to mid-term project lists
- Additional anticipated revenue
- I-81 Community Grid projects costs and revenues in the fiscal constraint analysis
- Revised text to remove I-81 from “Illustrative Projects”

The proposed changes were available for public comment October 25, 2021 through November 30, 2021. Two comments were received and responded to, including one from the Port of Oswego. The Planning Committee recommended that the Policy Committee adopt the proposed amendment.

Ms. Vitale noted that FHWA recently provided feedback on the citation used for the additional \$800 million included for the I-81 project. SMTC has now added an additional citation including the New York State budget’s Capital Program and Financing Plan that highlights \$6.2 billion in FY 2022 provided for improvements to roads, bridges, airports, and other transit systems within the State.

Ms. Hayford inquired whether the NYS budget included any specific language for the I-81 project. Mr. D’Agostino noted that there are no specific budget lines and there are no additional details provided by the State at this time.

Chairperson Schultz inquired if there were any other questions.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Mankiewicz moved and Ms. Driscoll-Dunham seconded the motion to adopt the LRTP Amendment. The amendment was approved.

**C. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL WHITE PAPER**

Mr. D’Agostino indicated the effort is being done at the request of the City of Syracuse and would like to acknowledge completion of the White Paper.

Ms. Vitale gave a brief presentation.

Chairperson Schultz inquired what issues are holding up the completion of Phase 2. Ms. Vitale noted that the family engagement aids at each school are currently fully engaged with issues related to COVID.

Ms. Schultz inquired about the lack of information in the white paper on parent pick up/ drop off zones. Ms. Vitale noted that this white paper is specifically about safe routes to walk to school. SMTC is carrying over a project on school loading zones that is also on hold due to similar issues as well as issues related to atypical traffic conditions around the schools currently. Mr. D'Agostino noted that Safe Routes to School programs have very specific scopes and funding structures and do not include school loading zones, which is one reason both studies were designed to move forward at the same time as one another.

Ms. Schultz inquired about what the signage of this program would look like and who it was meant for. Ms. Vitale noted that Phase 2 would include signage concepts as a way to make the program cohesive across the City but also make them unique to each school. Mr. Burke explained that the County had provided SRTS signage to a couple schools in the City already, which prompted the study of how to make the program more universal.

Chairperson Schultz inquired if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Mr. Smith moved and Ms. Driscoll-Dunham seconded the motion to acknowledge the completion of the Safe Routes to School white paper. The motion was approved.

**D. TUSCARORA ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY**

Mr. D'Agostino mentioned the study was done on behalf of the Village of Chittenango and would like to acknowledge its completion.

Mr. Colone played a pre-recorded presentation by Mr. Aaron McKeon discussing the completed corridor study.

Chairperson Schultz inquired if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schultz called for a motion.

Ms. Driscoll-Dunham moved and Mr. Mankiewicz seconded the motion to acknowledge the completion of the Tuscarora Road Corridor Study. The motion was approved.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. D'Agostino noted that the Policy Committee will meet in the early summer to adopt the new TIP. This may or may not involve actions related to I-81. SMTC will work with NYSDOT on the timing for their needed approvals.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m. by Chairperson Schultz.