

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the SMTC?

A: The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Syracuse region. The SMTC's role is to foster continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning in the region. For more information, see our website: <https://smtcmpo.org/>

Q: How are you funded and where does that money come from?

A: The SMTC's annual planning budget is approximately \$1.2 million. Funds are provided by both the Federal Highway (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administrations (FTA). This funding is used strictly for metropolitan transportation planning activities and is not used for capital expenses.

Q: What area do you cover?

A: The area that the SMTC covers is called its Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The MPA includes all of Onondaga County, the Town of Sullivan in Madison County and the Towns of Hastings, Schroepfel and West Monroe, plus a small area of the Town of Granby, in Oswego County.

Q: What is the Village of Skaneateles Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Study?

A: The SMTC initiated this study in 2020 at the request of the Village of Skaneateles. The project's purpose is to identify opportunities to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles on the section of US Route 20 in the Village of Skaneateles. The New York State Department of Transportation is planning a paving project for this section of roadway within the next five years, which may create an opportunity to alter pavement markings or other features.

Q: How is this study being funded?

A: This study is being funded through the SMTC's annual planning budget. Funding is used strictly for metropolitan and/or statewide transportation planning activities and is not used for capital expenses.

Q: Who is involved in this study?

A: SMTC staff have been working with a Study Advisory Committee that includes representatives from: Village of Skaneateles (Board, Fire Department, Police Department, Chamber of Commerce); Town of Skaneateles; Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency; and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

Q: What are you proposing?

A: Based on a review of existing conditions and input from our Study Advisory Committee, the study has focused on six locations in the village. Five of these locations are on US 20: Orchard Road/Kane Avenue intersection, West Lake Street/Hannum Street intersection, the segment adjacent to Cliff Park, the segment between Jordan and State Streets, and the intersection with East Lake Road. The study also looked at the Jordan Street/Fennel Street intersection. Design concepts have been created for each location, in consultation with the Study Advisory Committee. At this point, these are all just ideas, and we are looking for community feedback before finalizing any study recommendations.

Since US 20 is owned and maintained by the NYSDOT, any changes would need to be implemented by NYSDOT. The Village could use the information presented in this study as the basis for discussion with NYSDOT about the possibility of including some of these ideas in a future project on US 20.

Q: How many cars use US 20 in the Village of Skaneateles daily?

A: According to data from the NYSDOT, about 9,200 to 10,600 vehicles use this segment of US 20 on an average day.

Q: Will any private properties be impacted?

A: This study focused on changes that could be made within the existing pavement width, without impacting individual private properties, and many of the ideas presented in the study could be accomplished only with changes to the way the pavement striping is painted in the future. Even changes that would require more design and resources – such as raised crosswalks – could be implemented within the existing road width.

Q: Are raised crosswalks and intersections a problem for snowplows?

A: Raised features like this are frequently used in snowy areas with no problems for snowplows. Unlike speed bumps, raised crosswalks and intersections have a gradual slope that is similar to crossing the crown (center) of a major highway.

Q: Who will pay for improvements?

A: As noted above, US 20 is owned and maintained by the NYSDOT and any modifications within the right-of-way would need to be implemented by NYSDOT. It might be possible to include some of the ideas presented for pavement striping – if they were desired by the Village and approved by NYSDOT – within the cost of a future paving project since restriping would be part of a paving project anyways. In some cases, streetscape enhancements in communities have been implemented through the State's "Betterment Process," whereby a municipality contributes funds to a NYSDOT project to defray the additional cost of the desired enhancements. SMTC staff are developing some rough estimates for the concepts, which will be included in the final study report.