

Executive Summary

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) staff, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA), and other SMTC member agencies, develops a new multi-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) typically every three to four years. The 2023-2027 TIP for the SMTC area is a multi-year program of transportation capital projects together with a five-year estimate of transit capital and operations requirements. According to federal transportation policy, a TIP may be submitted at least every four years and include a minimum of four fiscal years for all States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The SMTC's TIP contains an additional fifth year of federal transportation funding anticipated to be available for programming in our area. Federal transportation policy mandate that a TIP:

1. Reflect the investment priorities established in the current metropolitan transportation plan.
2. Provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.
3. Be designed such that once implemented, makes progress toward achieving the performance targets established under Section 450.306 (d).
4. Include a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets identified in the metropolitan transportation plan.
5. Include capital and non-capital surface transportation projects (or phases of projects) within the boundaries of the metropolitan planning area proposed for funding under 23 U.S.C. and 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
6. Contain all regionally significant projects requiring an action by the FHWA or the FTA whether or not the projects are to be funded under title 23 U.S.C. Chapters 1 and 2 or title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
7. Include for each project or phase sufficient descriptive material to identify the project or phase; estimated total cost; amount of federal funds to be obligated and responsible agency.

8. Group improvements by function, work type, and/or geographic area.
9. Each project or project phase included in the TIP shall be consistent with the approved metropolitan transportation plan.
10. Include a financial plan that demonstrates how the approved TIP can be implemented.
11. Include a project, or a phase of a project, only if full funding can reasonably be anticipated to be available for the project within the time period contemplated for completion of the project.

Public engagement

At the start of the 2023-2027 TIP update, SMTC staff requested that existing project sponsors with projects that would carryover onto the new program assess the accuracy of costs and schedules. Cost and schedule updates provided baseline information for what funds may be available for entirely new capital projects. Following the review and updates for existing projects, a "call for projects" letter was sent to all member agencies, municipalities, and the Onondaga Nation on February 16, 2022, indicating the solicitation for new projects was underway. To assist potential sponsors that may have had questions regarding the solicitation, a virtual Question and Answer session via Zoom was held on March 8, 2022. Staff gave a presentation on the TIP update process and procedures. All relevant solicitation materials, such as electronic project applications were posted to the SMTC's website. Also, to assist project applicants in completing the TIP applications, a TIP Guidebook was updated. The Guidebook provides general information on the TIP and provides step-by-step information on the TIP Development Process (i.e., soliciting project proposals, preparing and submitting project proposals, project evaluation, committee review and recommendations, and public involvement).

SMTC staff worked with the technical member agency personnel on SMTC's standing Capital Projects Committee (CPC). Assisting in managing the program, as well as providing input and direction, the CPC met several times throughout the development process before recommending a Draft 2023-2027 TIP to the public and SMTC Planning/Policy Committees. The entire draft TIP was released for a 30-day public comment July 1 through July 30.

The draft document was posted on the SMTC’s website, and a hardcopy was available at the Central Library of the Onondaga County Public Library System in downtown Syracuse. “Interested parties,” the Onondaga Nation, and “environmental agencies” were informed of the draft release via postal mail. Additionally, SMTC sent multiple e-blasts to our e-news recipients and made use of our social media channels. A narrated video walking through the 2023-2027 TIP development process was created and posted to the agency’s website and YouTube channel. Lastly, staff held a virtual “office hour” for community members to ask questions and provide comments.

Programmed funding

Essentially all projects in the TIP are aimed at increasing efficiency, improving or maintaining the condition of, and/or safety of the existing transportation system rather than construction of entirely new facilities. Regarding the State’s I-81 Viaduct Project, which constitutes the vast majority of all funds on the 2023-2027 TIP, most Phase 1 project funding programmed to 6 separate projects was obligated by NYSDOT and FHWA in FFY 21/22 and is therefore not reflected in the 2023-2027 TIP timeframe. However, the remaining Phase 1 funds programmed in FFY 22/23 are (i.e., \$280.2 million Federal, \$344 million Total). Additionally, The I-81 Viaduct Project Phase 2 efforts, 3 projects, are shown in their entirety in this 2023-2027 capital program of projects. The Phase 2 projects equate to \$1.090 billion Federal; \$1.280 billion Total when “match” dollars are included.

- PIN 350195, Rebuild I-690, City of Syracuse, Onondaga County
- PIN 350196, Business Loop 81 Northern Section, Phase 2, City of Syracuse, Onondaga County
- PIN 350197, Downtown Business Loop 81, City of Syracuse, Onondaga County

Phase 1 and Phase 2 combined equate to a Total \$2.265 billion investment in the area’s transportation system. No funding programmed to any I-81 Viaduct Project is drawn from the planning targets established for the SMTC area. Rather, given the significance of the I-81 Viaduct Project effort, federal funds, required match dollars and, additional state funds, are apportioned specifically from NYSDOT Main Office.

Not accounting for funding associated with the

various I-81 Viaduct Project contracts or other funds from outside the SMTC area, of the \$243.810 million planning targets available for programming from FHWA over the five-year cycle, \$242.312 million has been programmed to 62 projects: 40 existing, 22 new. NYSDOT has been programmed approximately 61% of the federal FHWA allotment, 22% Onondaga County, 14% City of Syracuse, 1% to the Village of Solvay, and less than 1% each to Town of Cicero, and Village of Skaneateles.

Within the SMTC MPA, the CNYRTA is the primary operator for public transportation services. The 2023-2027 TIP programs approximately \$49.024M federal funds, \$1.612M from FHWA and \$47.412M from FTA funds, to the CNYRTA at time of report adoption. This 5-year TIP program of projects initiates the beginning of project development and implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit system recommended by SMTC in our 2018 SMART 1 study (i.e., Syracuse Metropolitan Area Regional Transit Study Phase 1).

Overall, 56% of the FHWA and FTA 2023-2027 capital program funding combined has been programmed to bridge and paving projects. When looking at just FHWA funds, bridge and paving projects make up 72% of the FHWA funded projects. This is consistent with previous capital programs and the objectives identified in the SMTC’s Long Range Transportation Plan whereby funding is distributed to projects to maintain the existing aging infrastructure. Due to the regional conditions for this 2023-2027 funding cycle, a significant amount of funding has been programmed to assist in improving structural deficiencies and pavement conditions primarily on the National Highway System (NHS). Again, excluding funds programmed to various NYSDOT I-81 Viaduct Project efforts, the 2023-2027 TIP programs approximately \$176.821M NHPP (one of several FHWA funding sources) or 67% of all FHWA programmed dollars. The NHPP funds are applicable to the NHS and are utilized primarily to maintain or improve bridge and pavement conditions. If funds associated with I-81 Viaduct Projects are included, the vast majority of NHPP dollars are programmed to the various Phase 1 and Phase 2 community grid preferred alternative projects.

The TIP may include transportation projects that are implemented by municipalities on the federal-aid system for which no federal transportation funding is programmed to show that the federal-

aid highway and public transportation systems are adequately operated and maintained. The NYSDOT and local SMTC municipalities annually budget funds for operations and maintenance of transportation facilities, including the federally supported system for several activities such as, but not limited to, paving, bridge rehabilitation, sidewalks, curb and crosswalk improvements, sign, traffic signal and technology maintenance, drainage, guide rail repair, snow and ice removal, transit vehicle and facility maintenance. Collectively, the aggregation of programmed federal transportation funds (\$1.680 billion), match to federal-aid projects (\$344.755 million), and the reasonably anticipated non-federal transportation funds identified in the 2023-2027 TIP (\$581.931 million) total approximately \$2.607B from 2022 to 2027.

The 2023-2027 TIP is a balanced, fiscally constrained program over the life of the multi-year program cycle that is supportive of the financial outlay of the SMTC's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan and the various bridge, paving, safety, system reliability and transit performance measures adopted to date.