

# CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background / Purpose / Goals and Objectives

### Background

Over the past several years, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) has seen a significant increase in the number of bicycle and pedestrian related projects being submitted for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding. Through the TIP development process many of the projects have been funded and considerable efforts have been made towards implementation. Many of these projects are an important aspect of the entire multimodal transportation system within Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area.

The MPO area's last major bicycle and pedestrian plans were completed in the 1970's and 1980's. In 1976, the SMTC developed the *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County* and in 1980, the *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan*. The last major pedestrian studies were completed in 1981 by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, *Pedestrian Circulation System Study Syracuse, NY* and in 1986 by the SMTC, *Downtown Syracuse Pedestrian Study*.

As the SMTC is responsible for promoting a coordinated, continuous and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process and is also charged with ensuring that the Greater Syracuse Area complies with Air Quality Standards, the SMTC proposed this project to develop a comprehensive policy-level Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The project was also strongly encouraged and supported by Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse as the results are expected to assist them with their bicycle and pedestrian endeavors. The project commenced in September 2001 and was completed with the release of this document in early 2005.

### Purpose

The 2005 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan has been designed as a policy level plan that seeks to preserve and enhance the area's bicycling and pedestrian network and to improve the safety, attractiveness, and overall viability of cycling and walking as legitimate transportation alternatives and adjuncts to the transportation system in the SMTC MPO area. The SMTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is focused primarily on bicycling and walking as legitimate transportation alternatives.

As a policy-level plan, this document puts forth policies and guidelines to guide future bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities within the MPO area. The report is non-location specific so that it can be applied in the various municipalities represented within the MPO region. The document is to be construed as a planning tool, as opposed to an engineer's design report. In the end, each municipality (i.e., the facility and/or road owner) will determine if and what they want to implement, as final report recommendations are not mandated. The SMTC's overall expectation is that municipalities within the MPO will utilize this policy-level plan and the noted

recommendations as a starting point or as a guideline to follow when addressing bicycle and pedestrian planning options within their respective communities.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The Goals and Objectives for the project were developed cooperatively by the SMTC staff, the Study Advisory Committee (SAC) and the public (see Section 1.3 for a discussion of the SAC).

To give this project direction, the following Goals were identified:

1. To encourage the use of bicycling and walking as legitimate modes of transportation.
2. To improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.
3. To educate bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, law enforcement officers, and others regarding traffic laws and safety measures.
4. To promote the improvement of travel and tourism and business opportunities along bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
5. To encourage planners and municipalities to develop bicycle and pedestrian resources.
6. To develop a methodology for tracking bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

The following Objectives were identified to assist in attaining the study goals:

- A. Create a plan that will encourage the development of a bicycle and pedestrian transportation network that facilitates quick and easy transportation to various destinations.
- B. Identify major existing and planned bicycle/pedestrian facilities and develop a method to eliminate gaps in the existing bicycle and pedestrian system.
- C. Work towards increasing the overall public awareness of existing and proposed bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
- D. Develop an approach to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into highway improvement projects through the monitoring of such improvements to ensure that projects have been scoped to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities where appropriate.
- E. Encourage the creation of appropriate amenities, such as bicycle parking and bus stop shelters, to increase the convenience of bicycling or walking.

- F. Facilitate the publication of maps, such as a bicycle suitability map, that outline and promote the bicycle and pedestrian system, safety, and the appropriate use of available bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- G. Encourage proper maintenance of the existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including the use of volunteers for this task.
- H. Encourage and enhance public support for alternative transportation-related public projects.
- I. Support the efforts of local municipalities in including bicycle and pedestrian facilities as components of their capital programs and site review approval processes.
- J. Develop a plan that encourages the improvement of infrastructure where bicycling or walking is considered unsafe.
- K. Identify safe and appropriate connections between various modes of transportation.
- L. Continue to support, and assist where possible, the efforts of various local agencies that provides safety equipment, such as bicycle helmets, to the public, especially those with limited financial resources.
- M. Encourage the creation of specific education programs, tailored to children, adults, and motorists outlining the rules for safe travel.
- N. Develop a method to educate law enforcement officers to recognize bicycle and pedestrian rules and regulations for proper enforcement of laws to bicycle and pedestrian law offenders, and to motor vehicle offenders that negatively impact bicyclists and pedestrians.
- O. Identify necessary bicycle and pedestrian accommodations at tourist and business locations.
- P. Propose ways to use the existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian network as a tourist and recreational magnet.
- Q. Support the education of planners, civil engineers, and designers, and other officials on bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs.
- R. Develop a permanent methodology for the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) to coordinate planning of bicycle and pedestrian activities between all levels of government in the county.
- S. Develop a method to provide resources to planners and municipalities that facilitate proactive improvements to bicycle and pedestrian resources.

- T. Develop an approach and methodology for the creation of a SMTC citizen advisory group in such a manner as to allow the SMTC to ensure that actions and activities are consistent with the SMTC's needs as well as its member agencies' needs.
- U. Develop a method of collecting and updating data on bicycle and pedestrian activity.
- V. Develop a methodology to centralize bicycle and pedestrian data to provide easy access for officials at different levels of government.

The balance of this project's purpose is the achievement of these stated goals and objectives within the approved Scope of Work adopted by the SMTC.

## **1.2 Study Process**

In order to complete the project, the following tasks were developed and accomplished:

Task 1	Problem Statement, Study Goal(s) and Objectives
Task 2	Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
Task 3	Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans – Evaluation and Summary
Task 4	Data Compilation and Summary
Task 5	Bicycle and Pedestrian Existing Conditions/Suitability Map
Task 6	Identification of Known and Perceived Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues
Task 7	Recommendations and Implementation
Task 8	Study Documentation

## **1.3 Public Involvement Plan (PIP)**

Engaging the public early and often in the planning process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program, and is required by numerous state and federal laws that apply to Metropolitan Planning Organizations such as the SMTC. The goals of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan PIP are to:

- Create public awareness relative to the study's goals, objectives, and process, as well as publicize the public participation opportunities and activities available throughout the study; and
- Involve the public throughout the planning process.

As detailed below, the PIP included the formation of two groups to assist the SMTC in completing the project as well as identify various public outreach activities to be undertaken. A copy of the complete PIP for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is included in Appendix A.

### **Study Advisory Committee (SAC)**

A Study Advisory Committee (SAC) consisting of representatives from affected organizations, local governments and community representatives met numerous times throughout the project.

The SAC provided input and guidance to the SMTC Project Manager, the study process, study documentation and public meetings. See Appendix A for a listing of the SAC members and the agencies and/or organizations they are affiliated with, along with a copy of the minutes taken at SAC meetings.

## **Stakeholder Meetings**

In addition to the SAC, a list of interested “Stakeholders” (individuals having significant interest in the study) is maintained by the SMTC. The Stakeholders are sent pertinent study information, kept apprised of significant study developments, and are notified of all public meetings.

### *Bicycle Suitability Map Meetings*

The SMTC held a series of stakeholder meetings in July and October 2001 whereby stakeholders could take more of an active role in the study by volunteering to collect data for the Bicycle Suitability Map. The stakeholder meetings were held to inform volunteers on how to rate the roads and the safety precautions they should take while rating roads.

### *Focus Group Workshop – Issues*

The SMTC held a focus group workshop, another stakeholder meeting, in July 2003 to solicit and discuss bicycle and pedestrian issues relevant to the development of this Plan. Following a brief presentation, workshop attendees separated into groups to develop a list of issues from the perspective of being a pedestrian, bicyclist, or motorist. Each group was given approximately 20 minutes to identify a list of issues from the perspective they were working on that were broad and nature and that could apply to more than one or two areas in the County. Each group then reported their findings to all of the workshop attendees. The issues noted at this workshop can be found in the focus group workshop minutes in Appendix A.

### *Focus Group Workshop – Recommendations*

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) held a Focus Group Workshop on Thursday, April 29, 2004 at the North Syracuse Community Center in an effort to bring out and discuss bicycle and pedestrian recommendations that are relevant to the development of the SMTC’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Similar to the July 2003 workshop, following a brief presentation, workshop attendees separated into

Similar to the July 2003 workshop, following the presentation, workshop attendees separated into five groups (two bicycle, two pedestrian and one trail/transit) to develop a list of recommendations from the designated perspective. Each group was given approximately 30 minutes to identify a list of recommendations from the perspective they were working on. Participants were asked to focus on recommendation ideas that were broad based in nature so that the recommendations could apply to more than one or two areas in the County. Each group then reported their findings to all of the workshop attendees. The recommendation ideas shared at this workshop can be found in the focus group workshop minutes in Appendix A. The

suggested recommendation ideas formulated at this meeting were utilized as a starting point for the recommendations noted in Chapter 6.

## **Public Meetings**

Throughout the course of the project, three public meetings were held. The public meetings were presented in a more formal manner than the focus group meetings.

### *Public Meeting #1*

The first public meeting was held on February 7, 2002 at LeMoyne Manor in Liverpool to introduce the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to the public. There were approximately thirty people in attendance. The SMTC presented an outline of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan study process and solicited public input. The minutes from this meeting document the input received and can be found in Appendix A.

As indicated in the minutes, many individuals expressed their concerns with bicycle and pedestrian travel. The most often stated comment was that the plan should include considerations for improved bicycle and pedestrian access to major destinations, and that the establishment of dedicated bicycle lanes with appropriate signage should be included in the plan. Many individuals felt that the scope of the plan as presented was too generic because no specific locations will be evaluated for the designation of bicycle lanes.

### *Public Meeting #2*

A second public meeting was held on May 28, 2003 at the Skydeck at Carousel Mall. Approximately twenty-eight people attended. The SMTC staff presented the existing conditions data, including the sidewalk inventory, bicycle and pedestrian collision data, the Bicycle Awareness Survey and the Bicycle Suitability Map. The minutes from this meeting document the input received from the public and can be found in Appendix A.

As indicated in the meeting minutes, the most often stated comment was that there is a need for connectivity between the major destinations in the MPO such as parks, shopping centers and colleges/universities. And, as also noted by the public at the first public meeting, the public continued to feel that the establishment of dedicated bicycle lanes with appropriate signage should be included in the plan.

### *Public Meeting #3*

A third public meeting will be held once this document has been approved by the SMTC Planning and Policy Committees, so that the Final Report can be shared with the public.

## **Additional Outreach Efforts**

In addition to SAC, stakeholder, and public meetings and workshops, the SMTC informed the public of its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan efforts as well as upcoming meetings via numerous

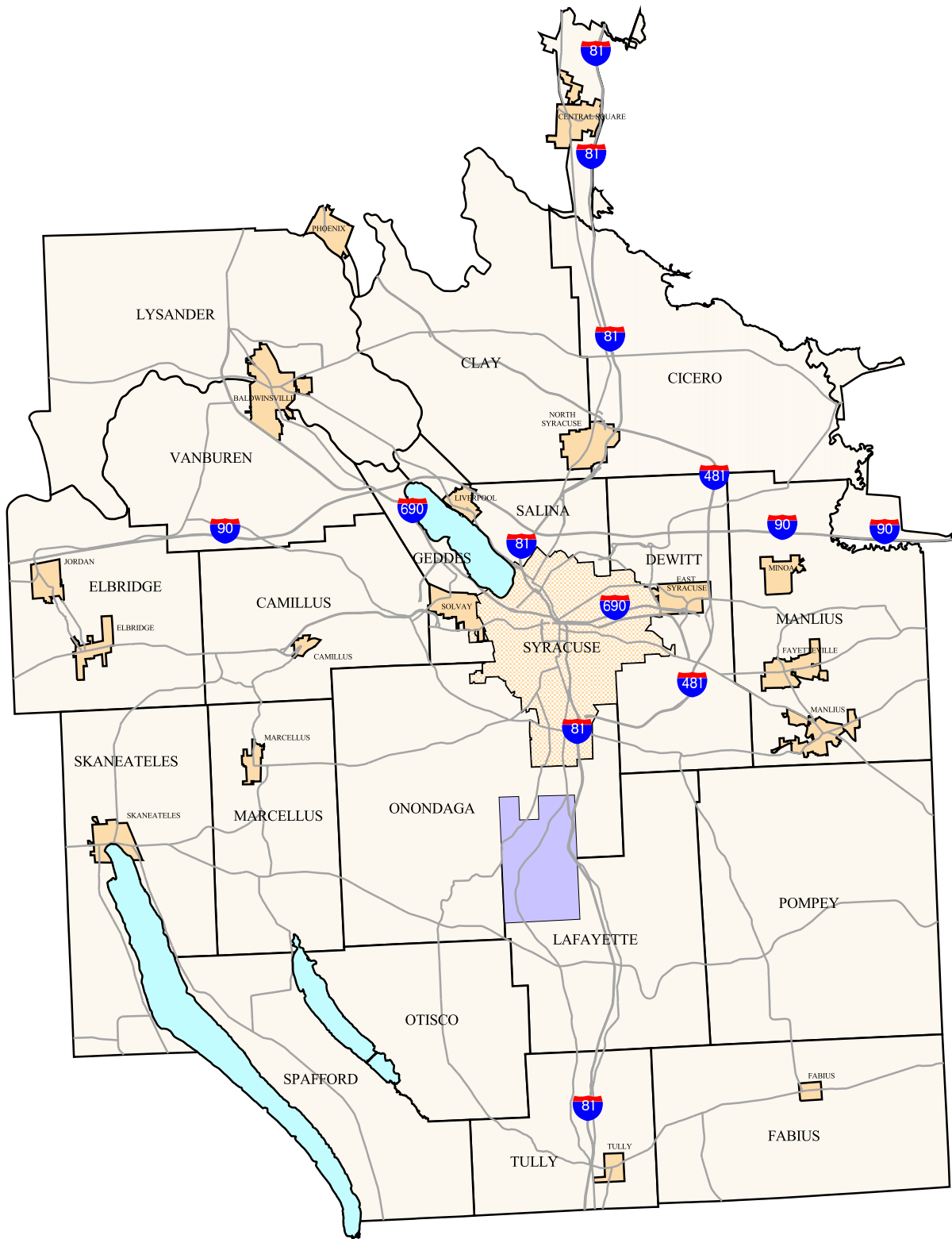
methods. *In Motion* ...is a project specific newsletter, dedicated solely to reporting the latest on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This newsletter is distributed to Stakeholders, SAC members and individuals receiving *Directions*, the newsletter of the SMTC, as well as being available via the SMTC website. *Directions* has also included news relative to the SMTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan at pertinent points throughout the study. A project specific Web Site, [www.smtcmpo.org/bike-ped](http://www.smtcmpo.org/bike-ped), was also developed. The Web Site describes the overall Plan, the goals and activities associated with the Plan, provides monthly updates, the latest headline news, and links to various bicycle and pedestrian resources. Finally, press releases and flyers were utilized to announce upcoming stakeholder meetings, and public meetings and workshops. See Appendix A for copies of the various newsletters and press releases.

#### **1.4 Study Area Boundaries**

The study area for this project includes the entire SMTC MPO area. In Spring 2003, the MPO area boundary was revised based on the 2000 Census. The former boundary included all of Onondaga County (including the City of Syracuse) and a small portion of Oswego (the Town of Schroepfel, including the entire Village of Phoenix). The revised boundary includes the entire former portion as well as some additional areas of Oswego County and Madison County. The new areas of Oswego County extend north along Interstate 81 and United States Route 11. The Madison County portion includes the Bridgeport area along Oneida Lake as well as a portion along I-90.<sup>1</sup> See Figure 1-1 for a map of the updated MPO study area.

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<sup>1</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, *L RTP 2004 Update* (Chapter III: MPA Updated Data and Trends), SMTC, Syracuse, New York, June 2004, p.36.



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## MPO Area

### SMTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Figure 1-1



Basemap Copyrighted by NYSDOT, 2001  
 Datasources: SMTC, NYSDOT, 1999  
 Prepared by SMTC, 12/2004

- Towns
- Villages
- City of Syracuse
- Onondaga Nation
- Water
- Roads

## **CHAPTER 2 - HISTORY**

### **(Bicycle and Pedestrian Related Plans/Studies)**

As an on-going activity of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) performed a literature review of previously completed relevant plans, studies and analyses in respect to the bicycle and pedestrian transportation needs of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area.

#### **2.1 Summary of Previously Completed Plans and Studies**

Where appropriate, the SMTC utilized and built upon the information included in previously completed studies that were formulated within the MPO area. These reports are mentioned below (for further information on the plans below, contact the SMTC).

##### **Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County, SMTS (1976)**

In March 1976 the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Study (SMTS), currently known as the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC), organized and led the creation of the *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County* in response to a federal requirement that bicycle and pedestrian projects be included in a comprehensive plan in order to obtain federal funding. The *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County* looked at the feasibility of developing a countywide plan to implement facility improvements, promote the use of safer bikeway facilities and to meet federal needs to identify the maximization of alternative forms of transportation.

The study resulted in both a conceptual plan and a short-term bikeway improvement plan. The conceptual plan is illustrated in a map of general route suggestions throughout the SMTC area and is intended as a guideline for future bikeway development projects in which no funding sources or specific project proposals were identified. The short-term bikeway improvement plan represents a route system that could realistically be implemented during the five years following the Plan (1977-1982). This system consisted of proposed bikeway projects to be phased over the five-year period to coordinate with planned highway improvements in order to maximize effectiveness. The plan proposed the installation of 144 miles of bikeway at a cost of over \$1.5 million dollars, although it was noted that all routes might not be realized due to various budgetary constraints.<sup>2</sup> The Bikeway Plan stated that modifications to the Plan itself should be made periodically through reevaluation of project progress and an annual assessment of bicycle usage. The 1976 Plan also called for the development of a Bicycle Registration Program in an effort to facilitate improved law enforcement and closer monitoring of existing bicycle activity.<sup>3</sup>

The following section notes the recommendations that have been implemented from this plan. The recommendations are noted by the generalized planning areas put forth in the 1976 Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Study, *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*, Syracuse, New York, March 1976, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## **Manlius/DeWitt**

The 1976 Plan noted that although the Erie Canal passes by the Green Lakes State Park entrance, there was not a bridge provided to allow cyclists to cross the canal and enter Green Lakes State Park. The SMTS recommended the building of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge from the Erie Canal towpath to the Green Lakes State Park entrance (the SMTS study noted that this was already planned by the New York State Parks and Recreation Commission).<sup>4</sup> Within the last five to ten years, this bridge has been built, and there is now a connection between the Erie Canal State Park towpath and Green Lakes State Park.

The 1976 Plan also recommended the building of a trail along a spur of the Erie Canal that parallels Limestone Creek. This trail would link the Erie Canal trail to the center of the Village of Fayetteville. The 1976 Plan notes that the New York State Parks and Recreation Commission had already programmed this connection.<sup>5</sup> This connection has also been built with the trail traveling into Fayetteville. The Village of Fayetteville Clerk's office indicated that this trail has existed in one form or another since the creation of the Old Feeder Canal (a spur that travels south from the Erie Canal) in the 1820's.

## **Onondaga Lake Park Area**

The 1976 Plan noted that the completion of a trail around Onondaga Lake would provide many recreational opportunities as well as commuting potential for County residents that would prefer to bicycle and/or walk to work.<sup>6</sup> Although not yet complete, various portions of the entire Loop the Lake Trail have been included in the SMTC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the past several years. To date, the trail has been built primarily around the northern end of the lake. The trail currently runs between the Nine Mile Creek on the West side of the lake to just south of the Salt Museum in Liverpool on the East side of the lake. The most recent trail project has been the paving of the West Shore Recreation Trail.

The 1976 Plan also recognized that "the full potential of the trail around the lake (recreation or commuter/transportation based) would not be realized until interconnecting linkages are provided to allow direct access to the trail from the adjacent population concentrations."<sup>7</sup> One of the connecting links noted within the Plan has been partially built: a trail from the Mattydale area to 7<sup>th</sup> North Street, which is a paved trail that parallels I-81 and Beartrap Creek. To fully connect the trail to Onondaga Lake, the partially completed bike trail between 7<sup>th</sup> North Street and Onondaga Lake that runs along Ley Creek will need to be completed (at this time, only small portions of this trail exist).

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<sup>4</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Study, *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*, Syracuse, New York, March 1976, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

## **Baldwinsville/Radisson**

The 1976 Plan mentions a few options for connecting the Baldwinsville area to the area near Farrell Road.<sup>8</sup> Although the recommendation for providing connecting trail links noted within the 1976 Plan have not been implemented, a similar project is underway. In November 2002, the Town of Lysander was selected to receive federal funding through the TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) to build a trail along the Seneca River. The Town of Lysander applied for TEP monies to construct a connecting trail link between the Village of Baldwinsville, connecting town neighborhoods, along the Seneca River and tying to the Onondaga Lake Park trail network at Long Branch Park.

## **City of Syracuse**

The 1976 *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County* does not provide great detail in its discussions regarding bikeways within the City of Syracuse (The City is primarily addressed through the 1980 *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan*). However, within the 1976 Plan, recommendations were noted for the Syracuse University area and the bikepath that existed along Onondaga Creek. The 1976 Plan recommended that a Class I trail (a separated path or trail exclusively for bicyclists and pedestrians) “be constructed from Skytop to Euclid Ave. along Colvin St. and Comstock Ave.”<sup>9</sup> Although it is not a Class I trail, the City of Syracuse has recently striped a bike lane along Comstock Ave. between Euclid and Colvin, with plans to add a connection to the Skytop campus in the future. The 1976 Plan also notes the existence of a 2.5-mile bikepath along Onondaga Creek from Kirk Park to Atlantic Avenue.<sup>10</sup> This bikepath has been virtually abandoned, and many of the bike signs that once existed along it were found in Onondaga Creek during a Creek clean up in 2002. Recommendations for this portion of what is now referred to as the Creekwalk, included repaving the path (as it was noted in the 1976 Plan that major portions of the path were in poor condition) and blocking it off from vehicular traffic. Another recommendation was to extend the bikepath from Atlantic Avenue to the southern City line. Although this section of the Creekwalk is not currently programmed for TIP money, the Kirk Park to Armory Square portion of the Creekwalk is slated to receive money for a design study within the 2001-2006 TIP.

## **Camillus**

At the time of the development of the 1976 *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*, the Town of Camillus had recently “purchased the Erie Canal from the western town line to Warners Road and had plans to develop the Canal and towpath as a linear park (much like the Erie Canal Park in DeWitt).”<sup>11</sup> In the 1976 Plan, the SMTS recommended that the towpath be developed into a paved trail along the entire length of the park. To date,

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<sup>8</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Study, *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*, Syracuse, New York, March 1976, p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

the Erie Canal Park within the Town of Camillus has been developed between the western County line and Warners Road.

### **City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan, SMTC (1980)**

The 1980 *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan* was developed and designed to update the 1976 *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County* with the inclusion of City of Syracuse bikeway routes, as the previously completed plan did not outline an involved approach for bikeway development within the City of Syracuse. Between 1976 and 1980, there was a resurgence of interest to update the plan and include preliminary discussions for bicycle routes in an urbanized setting.

This study aimed to expand the route system throughout the City in order for it to benefit all residents and to alter the original suburban/rural bikeway evaluation process to account for the distinguishing factors affecting an urban bikeway system.<sup>12</sup> In general, the intense level of development, narrowness of residential streets, and steep grades were constraints to designating many routes as bikeways.<sup>13</sup>

The *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan* used many of the parameters determined by the county *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*, thus the bikeway system was routed primarily based on recreation. However, commuter bikeways, bikeways to schools, and links to long distance bikeway networks were also identified.<sup>14</sup> In order to properly serve the entire City with the new bikeway system, five bikeway planning areas (North-, South-, East-, West-Side and Downtown) and 18 sub-areas were established. Each sub-area contained at least one major attractor around that the bikeway would serve. A five-level functional classification system was then developed to determine the function of the bikeway in terms of arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, feeders, and local routes, which would then be used to determine phasing priorities of construction and general funding. The Plan recommended that the highest functional classes starting with arterials should be built first such that arterial routes would become the backbone of the bikeway system with local routes eventually reaching out from the arterials into the neighborhoods.<sup>15</sup>

The Plan's recommendations are detailed by planning area with information on the cost of each segment, scheduled year for implementation, and recommended funding agency included within the report. The following paragraph notes the recommendations that have been implemented from this plan.

One of the recommendations noted within this plan is the extension of the Onondaga Creek Trail from Atlantic Avenue to the southern City line.<sup>16</sup> This recommendation called for the addition of bicycle/pedestrian pathways to the existing Creekwalk. This recommendation was also put forth

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<sup>12</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan*, Syracuse, New York, July 1980, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 8-10.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 18.

in the 1976 *Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County*. Although this recommendation has not been implemented, there are two projects currently on the TIP relating to the development of the Creekwalk along Onondaga Creek from Kirk Park to Onondaga Lake. The 1980 Plan also recommended the establishment of bicycle parking facilities in the downtown area, including existing parking lots or garages.<sup>17</sup> Bicycle racks now exist in a few downtown locations as noted by the Syracuse Onondaga Cycling Coalition (SOCC) in Section 3.2.

### **Pedestrian Circulation System Study Syracuse, NY, SOCPA (1981)**

The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) prepared this study in February 1981 “as the first step in receiving approval from the Federal Highway Administration” to “expend funds totaling \$1.1 million dollars allocated by the SMTC’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the design and construction of a pedestrian bridge.”<sup>18</sup> This study represented part of an overall project initiation package put forth by SOCPA to justify the desirability and feasibility of a grade-separated, weather protected Pedestrian Circulation System and to examine the location options for the placement of a pedestrian bridge in downtown Syracuse.

SOCPA’s report was prepared in two parts: “Part I, Impacts of the Pedestrian Circulation System, describes existing conditions (including existing pedestrian bridges and current planning) and analyzes the various impacts resulting from the completion of a Pedestrian Circulation System (PCS). Part II, East-West Linkage, presents several alternatives for the proposed east-west linkage of the PCS. It is this linkage that will be the subject of the design and engineering report.”<sup>19</sup>

The pedestrian bridge noted within SOCPA’s study was included within the 1980-1985 TIP as well as the 1981-1986 TIP. Upon reviewing these documents staff discovered that the project was eventually removed from the 1984-1989 TIP. The 1984-1989 TIP document states the pedestrian bridge linkage has been “deleted until such time as a comprehensive assessment of the overall system is completed.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Downtown Syracuse Pedestrian Study, SMTC (1986)**

The SMTC completed the *Downtown Syracuse Pedestrian Study* in March 1986 as a comprehensive review of pedestrian behavior in downtown Syracuse. At this time, many downtown office developments and other projects were in the final/preliminary development stage that would notably impact the downtown pedestrian environment. During this time, City of Syracuse officials recognized that pedestrians are significant elements in the urban environment and should be considered in new developments throughout the central business district (CBD).

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<sup>17</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, *City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan*, Syracuse, New York, July 1980, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, *Pedestrian Circulation System Study Syracuse, New York*, February 1981, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid* p. 7.

The intent of this study was to obtain information about pedestrian behavior and their movements throughout the CBD provided by sampling eleven major employers in the area. Questions ranged from arrival/departure times, number of lunch trips per week, number of trips to downtown for leisure purposes, problems to the area, and improvements to make the CBD a better place for pedestrian activities.

Major findings from the 1986 survey include:

- The three most perceived problems with the downtown area included the lack of protection from weather, the dirty appearance of the streets/sidewalks and the fear of crime.
- The most important needs identified are for more shops, restaurants and stores; and for better protection from crime and a cleaner environment.

One of the major goals/objectives of this study was to “collect data for potential improvements to the pedestrian circulation system, particularly the pedestrian bridge system.”<sup>21</sup> Based on survey responses dealing with pedestrian bridges, “the concept of a fully integrated circulation system among shops, offices, restaurants, etc. was not perceived.”<sup>22</sup>

#### **Onondaga County BikeNet, Daniel Edelstein (1994)**

The *Onondaga County BikeNet* was completed in 1994 by Daniel Edelstein, a college student at Syracuse University. The report discusses general problems that are found between bicyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicles, how different transportation methods can positively impact the worlds changing natural and social environment, and the intent of a proposed BikeNet, which is to tie existing recreational and civic facilities together. Basically, the BikeNet would act as an alternative corridor for non-auto travel.<sup>23</sup>

The report describes the BikeNet as a comprehensive system. “The approach used in developing the BikeNet is to create loops through major population centers for commuter access, as well as to provide access to recreational areas.”<sup>24</sup> Keeping the loops separated from vehicular traffic is given strong preference for maximizing the bike network.

The BikeNet report discusses prioritizing routes that connect existing isolated bike paths together and routes that allow the region to be traversed north-south and east-west.<sup>25</sup> By connecting these existing isolated routes, bicycle and pedestrian activity would increase. Another priority of the BikeNet is the “acquisition and protection of right-of-ways, which could be used by the system for future routes.”<sup>26</sup> Other elements discussed within BikeNet are parking, route signage and bicycle-safe sewer grates.

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<sup>21</sup> Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, *Downtown Syracuse Pedestrian Study*, March 1986, p. 66.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup> Daniel N. Edelstein, *Onondaga County Bike Net*, Syracuse, New York, May 1994, pp. 1-4.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

The report also includes a discussion of various funding opportunities to assist in making the BikeNet a reality. Development of alliances with businesses, as well as federal, state and local funding opportunities are reviewed.<sup>27</sup> The report closes with descriptions and maps of a series of proposed and potential bikeways and bike routes in Onondaga, Madison, and Cortland counties. Although this report is not a planning or policy level publication of the SMTC itself, or one of its member agencies, it has been documented as a useful bicycle and pedestrian resource to the MPO area.

### **Onondaga County Settlement Plan (2001)**

Created to assist in implementing the goals of Onondaga County's *2010 Development Guide* - to reinforce urban centers and neighborhoods and promote efficient expansion of infrastructure - the *Settlement Plan* both illustrates the possible utilization of New Urbanism development principles at several existing Onondaga County locations, and also provides the regulatory framework and planning tools (including transportation policies) for municipalities to foster desired development patterns. Critical to the Settlement Plan and New Urbanism is the creation and reinforcement of walkable, mixed-use, and transit-supportive neighborhoods and urban centers.

Although the Onondaga County Settlement Plan has not been officially adopted (as of January 2005), the policies and practices noted within the three documents of the Settlement Plan serve as a tool kit to assist Onondaga County in "returning to the traditional neighborhood pattern of growth."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Daniel N. Edelstein, *Onondaga County Bike Net*, Syracuse, New York, May 1994, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, *Onondaga County Settlement Plan*, Onondaga County, New York, February 2001, Executive Summary.