

# **Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council**

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

##### **Background**

As the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (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 was 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.

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 SMTC's overall expectation is that municipalities within the MPO will utilize this 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. To give the 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; and (6) To develop a methodology for tracking

bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Several objectives were identified to provide support to the above noted goals. The objectives are noted in Chapter 1.

### **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 MPOs 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 in Chapter 1, the PIP included the formation of the SAC and the stakeholder group to assist the SMTC in completing the project as well as to identify the various public outreach activities to be undertaken as part of the project. In addition to SAC, stakeholder and general public meetings and workshops, the SMTC also informed the public of its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan efforts as well as upcoming meetings via numerous other methods, including the *In Motion* newsletter, dedicated solely to reporting the latest on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan; the *Directions* newsletter; the project specific Web Site, [www.smtcmpo.org/bike-ped](http://www.smtcmpo.org/bike-ped); and various press releases and flyers.

### **Study Area Boundaries**

The study area for this project includes the entire SMTC MPO area. The boundary includes all of Onondaga County, portions of Oswego County (the Village of Phoenix, portions of the Town of Schroppel, and an area that extends north along Interstate 81 and United States Route 11), and a portion of Madison County (the Bridgeport area along Oneida Lake as well as a portion along I-90).

## **Chapter 2 – History**

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

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

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 listed below (Chapter 2 provides additional details on each report):

- Bikeway System Plan for Onondaga County, SMTS (1976)
- City of Syracuse Element of the Onondaga County Bikeway System Plan, SMTC (1980)
- Pedestrian Circulation System Study Syracuse, NY, SOCPA (1981)
- Downtown Syracuse Pedestrian Study, SMTC (1986)
- Onondaga County BikeNet, Daniel Edelstein (1994)
- Onondaga County Settlement Plan (2001)

## Chapter 3 – Existing Conditions

### Identification of Pedestrian Facilities

#### *Sidewalk Inventory*

As part of the project, staff worked closely with the MPO’s various municipalities to complete a generalized sidewalk inventory in the spring of 2002. The primary purpose of the inventory was to determine the location of existing and proposed sidewalks throughout the study area; therefore, a sidewalk conditions analysis was not completed as part of this study.

As of December 2002, the City of Syracuse Sidewalk Bureau reports that approximately 95-97% of the parcels within the City of Syracuse have a sidewalk on at least one side of the roadway. All sixteen of the MPO’s villages, along with the Radisson Community, reported sidewalks within their municipality. In addition, all villages reported sidewalks on at least one side of their ‘main streets,’ with a majority of the village streets being adequately covered with sidewalks. Although eleven of the MPO’s towns reported having some sidewalks, almost all towns noted minimal existing and proposed sidewalks (see sidewalk maps in Appendix B). As a result of the sidewalk data collection efforts and review of the resulting sidewalk maps, the SMTC has noted that there is a general lack of sidewalks in the suburbs in the MPO area. Specific sidewalk findings can be found in Chapter 3.

#### *ADA Compliance*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 “guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, State and local government services, and telecommunications.”<sup>1</sup> This Act requires that new and altered public sidewalks and street crossings be accessible so that people with disabilities can use the pedestrian routes that connect buildings, facilities, and transportation modes. Title II of the ADA covers new sidewalks and streets constructed by or on behalf of a State or local government. Enforced by the Department of Justice (DOJ), Title II regulation specifically requires that curb ramps be provided when sidewalks or streets are newly constructed or altered. ADA compliance is discussed in Chapter 3, and ADA compliant-design and associated resources are discussed in Chapter 7, *Bicycling, Walking, and Trails: Design Guidelines*.

#### *New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law*

Article 27 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law (NYS V&T Law) identifies the rights and duties of pedestrians in New York State. A significant change to note to NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law in recent years involves Article 27, Section 1151, that notes that vehicular operators

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<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Justice, *Americans with Disabilities Act – Questions and Answers*, August 23, 2002, <<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/q&aeng02.htm>> (February 2003).

must slow down or stop to yield to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk.<sup>2</sup> As of January 19, 2003, the law requires a motorist to yield the right of way to a pedestrian who is walking in any part of a crosswalk that is in the same roadway as the motorist, when a traffic signal is not present or operating. Prior to January 19, 2003, the law required that motorists yield the right of way only when the pedestrian is on the same half of the roadway as the motorist, or is so close on the opposite half as to be in danger.

## **Identification of Bicycle Facilities**

### *Shared Roadways (Non-Designated On-Road Routes / Class III Facilities)*

The majority of public roads within the MPO are accessible by bicycle on a shared-used basis (bicyclists and motorists must follow the rules of the road). In New York State, bicycling on interstate highways and expressways is prohibited by law. Therefore, except for interstate highways, expressways, and other roads where bicycling is prohibited by law via posting, bicycling is permitted on every street in the MPO area.

### *Bicycle Lanes (Designated On-Road Routes / Class II Facilities)*

According to the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, the purpose of bicycle lanes “should be to improve conditions for bicyclists on the street.” As AASHTO notes, bike lanes should be “established with appropriate pavement markings and signing along streets in corridors where there is significant bicycle demand and where there are distinct needs that can be served by them.”<sup>3</sup> Within the MPO area, there is one officially designated bicycle lane that was installed in the fall of 2001 on Comstock Avenue between Colvin Street and Stratford Street in the City of Syracuse. Also, New York State Bike Route 5 is an officially designated bike route that follows Route 31 through the MPO area.

### *Bicycle Paths and Trails (Off-road routes / Class I Facilities or Trails)*

Each cyclist has a different comfort level when bicycling on a high traffic road or a calm country road. Designated off-road routes give riders a sense of safety that they may lack when bicycling on the road. The bicycle and pedestrian off-road routes that are found at Onondaga Lake Park may be utilized for recreation and transportation purposes. For children, families, and the less experienced cyclist, off-road routes are generally perceived as a safer means of transportation.

### *Bicycle Racks*

The SMTC did not complete an MPO-wide inventory of bicycle racks as part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan due to the resources that would have been required to accurately locate and inventory all bicycle racks within the MPO. However, in May 2002 the Syracuse-Onondaga Cycling Club completed an inventory of land-tied bicycle racks within the City of Syracuse Central Downtown Business District. Although not all-inclusive, SOCC noted several bicycle racks, the findings of which are noted within this report.

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<sup>2</sup> New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, *New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law*, Albany, New York, 2003-2004 Edition, p. 451.

<sup>3</sup> American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Task Force on Geometric Design, *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, AASHTO, 1999, p. 7-8.

Public transit services within the MPO area are provided by Centro, a subsidiary of the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA). Nearly all Centro buses are equipped with bicycle racks, and when regular full-size buses are replaced, they are replaced with buses that are equipped with bicycle racks.

#### *New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law*

Article 34 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law (NYS V&T Law) outlines the rules and regulations associated with operating bicycles and play devices in New York State. One of the most significant aspects of Article 34 is that it states that Bicyclists and in-line skaters must obey the same laws that apply to motorists – all traffic signals, signs and pavement markings, with some exceptions and rules. Bicyclists and in-line skaters are protected by the rules of the road and they must obey them, just as motorists must obey the rules of the road with respect to bicyclists and in-line skaters. If bicyclists and in-line skaters violate the law, they are subject to traffic tickets (parents can be held responsible for violations made by their minor children), just as motorists are.<sup>4</sup> The law also requires that bicyclists ride and skaters glide **with** traffic.

An equally significant aspect is that New York State Law requires anyone under the age of 14 to wear an approved helmet when bicycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, or riding a non-motorized scooter.<sup>5</sup> However, Onondaga County law requires that children **under the age of 18** wear an approved helmet when riding bicycles, scooters, in-line skates or skateboards. Any parent or guardian whose child violates the helmet law is subject to a \$50 fine.

Chapter 3 discusses such rules, regulations and equipment requirements that pertain to bicyclists and in-line skaters in NYS. See Appendix C for a copy of Article 34 from the 2003-2004 Edition of New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law.

### **Identification of Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

*Onondaga Creekwalk:* Once expanded, the entire Creekwalk trail will be integrated with the Onondaga Lake Trail and the New York State Canalway Trail.

*New York State Canalway Trail:* The entire Erie Canalway Trail will eventually connect communities between Albany and Buffalo along the 524-mile Erie Canalway system.<sup>6</sup> The Canalway Trail Planning Group meets approximately every two months at the Erie Canal Museum to discuss possible routes through the City of Syracuse.

*Onondaga Lake Trail (“Loop the Lake Trail”):* Over five miles of loop trail currently exist between the Salt Museum in Liverpool, and Nine Mile Creek in the Town of Geddes. Once complete, the circumferential trail will be approximately 13 miles in length. This trail will then serve as a central trail that other trails in the county can connect to (such as the Creekwalk and the Erie Canalway Trail).

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<sup>4</sup> New York State Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee – NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, *Bikes and In-line Skates Frequently Asked Questions*, December 30, 2002, <<http://www.nysgtsc.state.ny.us/bike-faq.htm#laws>> (September 17, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> “Get Going,” Leisure Trails of Onondaga County 2002, *Syracuse New Times*, Summer 2002, p. 4, col. 1.

*Bear Trap Creek Trail:* The Bear Trap Creek Trail runs along the east side of Interstate 81 from near the New York State Thruway Exit 36 interchange at Seventh North Street to the Kmart Plaza in Mattydale. Constructed during Route 81 improvements in the 1980s, Bear Trap Creek Trail is a 1.5-mile long, 8-foot-wide paved trail, which ultimately, via the proposed Ley Creek Trail section, will connect the northern suburbs to the hub-trail activity in the Carousel Center/Regional Market/P&C Stadium district.<sup>7</sup>

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Related TIP Projects**

The bicycle and pedestrian facilities noted in Table 3.4-1 are bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects, and trails and park projects that have been funded and/or are scheduled to be funded through the 2001-2006 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The locations of the TIP projects are shown in Figure 3.4-1 along with the existing and proposed trail network in Onondaga County.

**Transit**

Centro operates the public transportation system in Onondaga, Oswego and Cortland Counties. Centro transports approximately 25,000 people per day in Onondaga County on over 100 transit routes with roughly 18,000 to 20,000 riders per day. Centro operates connecting routes between the Cities of Syracuse, Oswego, Fulton and Auburn, as well as city transit services within each of these cities. Within Onondaga County, service frequencies in the rush hours are such that all Common Center bus stops are in continuous and heavy use. Centro has reported increases in ridership in the last two years as new services have been implemented.

**General Demographics: Onondaga County (Census 1990 and 2000)**

The following chart was created from demographic data obtained from the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) for Onondaga County:

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Population</b>	468,973	458,336	-2%
<b>Number of Households (HH)</b>	177,950	181,369	2%
<b>HH with No Vehicle</b>	23,741	22,882	-3.6%
<b>Mean Vehicles per HH</b>	1.54	1.52	-----

Between 1990 and 2000, the population in Onondaga County decreased by approximately 2%, while the number of households increased by almost 2%. The number of Onondaga County residents that do not have access to a vehicle has decreased by approximately 3.6 % since 1990. This may indicate that more people have been able to obtain a vehicle (or access to a vehicle) since 1990, or that those that have not had access to a vehicle have moved out of the County.

In addition, there has been a 5% decrease in the number of workers age 16 and older within Onondaga County. This could be attributed, in part, to the loss of 2.3% of the population between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 Census noted a slight increase (1%) in the number of people 16 years and older that drove to work alone. Although this may seem like a small increase, 75% of the working residents of Onondaga County drove to work alone in 1990 and 80% drove to

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<sup>7</sup> “Get Going,” Leisure Trails of Onondaga County 2002, *Syracuse New Times*, Summer 2002, p. 5, col. 2.

work alone in 2000. The number of people who utilized public transportation, including taxi service, and carpooling as ways to get to work decreased by 45% and 23% respectively, between 1990 and 2000. As more individuals obtain cars and migrate to the suburbs, the reliance and dependability on the personal automobile and driving alone has grown. Since 1990, the number of people who rode a bicycle or walked to work decreased from 5.3% to 4.1%.

Although some of the population has migrated out of Onondaga County during the past ten years, it is interesting to note the population shift that has occurred between the city and the suburbs. The City of Syracuse saw a decrease in population of 10.6%, while the entire County lost only 2.3%. The suburban population within Onondaga County actually grew by 2.2% between 1990 and 2000. This trend is also supported by the increase in the number of households within Onondaga County that occurred between 1990 and 2000. See Chapter 3 for further demographic analyses.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Awareness Survey**

As part of the Scope of Work for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the SMTC member agencies and staff determined that a Bicycle and Pedestrian awareness survey would be beneficial to the project. The awareness survey was developed as a tool to assist in determining the public's awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety, the public's knowledge and opinion of the existing conditions for bicycle and pedestrian travel in Onondaga County, and how often the public is currently utilizing these systems. The results of this survey were utilized to assist the SMTC in developing recommendations for the overall Plan.

The survey was conducted from the Zogby International headquarters in Utica, NY on Saturday, September 14 and Sunday, September 15, 2002. Zogby staff interviewed 404 adults chosen at random in Onondaga County via telephone. A broad summary of the survey questions is noted below. Additional detailed analyses are presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.8.

#### *Current Utility of Bike/Pedestrian Systems*

Current access to bicycles and pedestrian facilities appears high in Onondaga County. Nearly 70% of Onondaga County residents walk or jog regularly, and over half (64%) of Onondaga County residents have access to a bicycle.

#### *Perception of Current Systems*

Sixty-one percent (61%) of Onondaga County residents generally felt that conditions in Onondaga County were pedestrian-friendly. Of the 34% of County residents that felt that conditions in the County are not friendly for pedestrian travel, respondents most often cited a lack of sidewalks or lack of sidewalks leading to desired locations (48%).

Alternately, more survey respondents felt that conditions in Onondaga County were unsuitable for bicycle travel (48%) than felt that conditions were bicycle-friendly (41%). Reasons most often noted include a lack of bike lanes or routes leading to desired locations (47%) or aggressive/inconsiderate motorists (17%). Perceived rider safety appears to have a significant impact on respondent comfort levels with the bicycle system.

Concerning multimodal opportunities, the Zogby survey asked respondents whether Centro buses in Onondaga County are equipped with bicycle racks. Only 27% of those surveyed answered this question correctly, acknowledging that the majority of buses are in fact equipped with bicycle racks.

In general, Onondaga County residents believe that the presence and condition of sidewalks and bicycle facilities in the County is lacking. There is a preference for designated pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, and bicycle facilities such as bicycle lanes, protected from vehicular travel. Respondents also suggest a lack of awareness of some bicycle and/or pedestrian opportunities, such as the Centro bus bicycle rack program.

#### *Traffic Laws and Safety Awareness*

In Onondaga County, individuals under the age of 18 are required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, skateboard, scooter, or skating. Approximately 54% of County residents were aware of this law, while 46% of the population was misinformed about the helmet law or were not sure what the law stated. The results of this question and a series of safety-related questions indicate that Onondaga County residents should be better informed as to the pedestrian and bicycle rules, regulations and laws in Onondaga County. Educational outreach would most likely benefit the awareness of such laws.

#### *Future Usage / Facilities*

Asked where respondents would desire to travel by bike or on foot, Onondaga County residents would primarily like to be able to reach parks and recreational trails (28%). Others would like to be able to reach malls, shopping areas or supermarkets (15%), school or college (13%), or downtown (10%) by walking or cycling. Only 9% of respondents replied that they would like to commute to work by walking or cycling.

Parks and recreational trails were most favored by Onondaga County residents as the types of places to be reached by walking or bicycling. This reinforces the notion that walking is primarily utilized as a means of recreation and exercise, rather than as a mode of transportation. However, as shown in the variety of responses, there are several destinations that could benefit from bicycle and pedestrian access.

Additional information and analysis is available in Appendix D, which includes portions of the actual Zogby survey results. Results based on demographic profiles such as city versus suburban residents and analysis by age groups can be found in this appendix.

#### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions**

As part of this project staff also examined bicycle/motor vehicle and pedestrian/motor vehicle collisions, and their associated injuries and fatalities in Onondaga County for the years 1987-2000 using collision data gathered from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (NYSDMV). Upon examination and analysis of the data, generally speaking, the number of bicycle/motor vehicle collisions and pedestrian/motor vehicle collisions over the fourteen-year period analyzed has decreased (with some annual fluctuation). Collision locations were mapped utilizing the NYSDOT Centralized Local Accident Surveillance System (CLASS) along with the SMTC's GIS system. The SMTC found that the majority of high bicycle/motor vehicle and

pedestrian motor vehicle collision incidences occurred in the City of Syracuse at heavily traveled intersections.

## **Chapter 4 – Bicycle Suitability Map**

A major component of the 2005 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was the development of a map that portrays the suitability of the existing transportation network for bicycle utility in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse. Utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the SMTC prepared a countywide, city-inclusive suitability map of the bicycle transportation system, including streets, bikeways, designated paths, multi-use trails, recreational trails and any other bicycle and pedestrian related paths and/or trails.

### **Selection of Roads for Rating**

The SMTC determined which roads to rate and include in the bicycle suitability map by starting with the Federal-Aid eligible road system in the City and County. Inappropriate and prohibited roads for bicycling were removed (i.e. Interstate Highways, Expressways, and other roads where bicycling is prohibited by law). Roads and routes identified from previously completed bicycle studies were reviewed and included as appropriate. Other logical and/or relevant roads were added, such as connector roads, and primary through streets that provided access to major points in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area and Onondaga County. Local and residential roads and streets were not marked for rating. Every road identified through this process was then rated. As mentioned above, except for Interstate Highways, Expressways and other roads where bicycling is prohibited by law, bicycling is allowed on every street.

### **Resulting Map**

The final bicycle suitability map rates chosen streets on the existing road network as being ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘average’, ‘fair’, and/or ‘poor’ for bicycling (and primarily for bicycle commuters). The map does not designate particular bike routes but enables the general public to determine which roads are currently the most suitable for bicycle travel. Multi-use trails are also shown on the map. In addition to the road ratings and trails, the map includes various safety panels that highlight the various rules and regulations associated with bicycle travel.

The SMTC and volunteer cyclists rated 37% percent of the roads in the SMTC MPO area for inclusion in the Bicycle Suitability Map. Nearly 80% of these rated roads are considered suitable for bicycling (this percentage includes roads that were rated as excellent, good and average). It should be noted that seventy-five percent (75%) of the roads in the federal aid eligible system are bikeable, and that 98% of them were rated. Interstate highways, expressways, and other roads where bicycling is prohibited by law (i.e., I-81, I-690, I-481, etc.) were removed from this exercise. The sections below describe the overall bicycle suitability scores for the MPO area, including a breakdown by jurisdiction of road owners, as well as for the roads located within the City and the remainder of the County.

Roads that were rated in the MPO area were rated as being Excellent, Good, Average, Fair or Poor. High traffic, vehicle dominated corridors with little to no shoulder or separation from vehicles for bicyclists, and rough riding conditions for bicycle commuters (i.e. steep slopes, poor pavement condition, etc.) received the lower suitability ratings of Fair or Poor. Roads with low

vehicular traffic, slow moving traffic and some separation from vehicles typically received Excellent and Good ratings.

## **Chapter 5 – Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues**

Through the course of completing the existing conditions inventory documented in Chapters 1-4, the public involvement process, and comments received throughout the course of this study, a number of bicycle and pedestrian transportation issues were identified.

Chapter Five focuses on the primary bicycle and pedestrian issues identified within the study area. The first section of the chapter discusses broad regional issues that relate to walking and bicycling. Then, specific Pedestrian Issues, Bicycle Issues, Greenway/Trail, and Transit issues are noted and examined via 5 major categories: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Encouragement, and Economic Development. Issues relating to motorists are discussed within the Pedestrian and Bicycle Issues sections. It is important to note that all of the issues outlined in this chapter are primarily broad-based concerns that affect more than one or two areas within the SMTC MPO study area. Specific issues noted by the public are documented in Appendix A.

### **Regional Issues**

This section outlines regional issues that affect pedestrian and bicycle travel within the SMTC MPO area. The regional issues of Safety, Health, Mobility, Environment, Economy and Quality of Life are examined. Then, the regional issues are tied to specific Pedestrian, Bicycle, Greenway/Trail and Transit issues in matrix format to illustrate their relationship with the regional issues.

## **Chapter 6 – Regional Priorities and Policy Recommendations**

### **Regional Priorities**

The issues section of the plan identifies Safety, Health, Environment, Mobility and Economy as key issues in the SMTC region. Each of these issues is critical to the region's quality of life, and as a result they form the basis of the community priorities for this plan as detailed below. As they are equally valuable in the SMTC region, the priorities of Safety, Health, Mobility, Environment, Economy, and Quality of Life are not listed in order of importance.

The SMTC and its member agencies support the adoption of a policy integrating walking and bicycling into highway, transit and related projects in order to achieve and maintain the above stated regional values. In 1999, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) established a national guideline calling for all transportation projects to include facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists as 'routine accommodations' unless there were documented reasons not to provide them. The core of this text is reproduced as a model for the SMTC region in Chapter 6.

### **Regional Recommendations**

The purpose of this portion of the document is to provide regional guidelines and policies for the future, based on regional values in the SMTC area. The public input process for the plan has resulted in numerous ideas, potential projects and programs. In order to give form to these

concepts, Chapter 6 notes a series of recommended action items in the following categories: Engineering (facilities for bicyclists, pedestrian improvements, trails and greenways, and connections with transit), Education, Enforcement, Encouragement, and Economic Development.

These categories are based on the planning guidance issued in the National Bicycling and Walking Study (USDOT, 1993) and other accepted models of bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning. Within each category, targets and benchmarks have been established, followed by recommended projects and programs developed by the SMTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Study Advisory Committee. The targets provide a broad statement about the overall purpose and relevance of the planning topic within the SMTC area. The benchmark provides a broad-based way in which to measure the success of the particular target. Recommended action items are listed for each section, along with the potential responsible lead agencies, respective performance measures, and the overall SMTC regional priorities that the item addresses.

## **Chapter 7 - Bicycling, Walking, & Trails: Design Guidelines**

The purpose of Chapter Seven is to note and summarize preferred design guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and facilities in the SMTC area. Included in this chapter are generally accepted and representative implementation techniques for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in both New York State in particular, and the United States in general. This chapter is intended as a starting point for municipalities when trying to determine which bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities should be considered within their jurisdiction.

The first section of this chapter provides information on the most commonly utilized design guideline resources in New York State. Section 7.2 examines general design guidelines for pedestrian facilities (including broad information on the Americans with Disabilities Act), bicyclist facilities, greenways and trails, innovative treatments, traffic calming, and school zones. Section 7.3 describes additional resources that are useful in providing innovative solutions for a variety of bicycle and pedestrian related situations that may affect some local communities.

## **Conclusion**

This multi-year, multimodal SMTC project has culminated in the development of a policy-level Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. It is the SMTC's hope that this Plan will be utilized to guide future decision-making relative to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities within the MPO area. The Plan identifies policies and general guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian planning; it is non-location specific so that it can be applied to the MPO region's varied communities. The SMTC's overall expectation is to educate local communities on the diverse options that are available for integrating bicycle and pedestrian planning into their municipalities' plans and projects.