Chapter 1 | Introduction

1 INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a blueprint for the Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area’s (MPA) transportation development over a 20-year period. The MPA includes all of Onondaga County and small parts of Oswego and Madison Counties (See Map 1-1).

Updated every four years to reflect changing conditions and new planning principles, the LRTP is based on projections of growth and travel demand coupled with financial assumptions and public input. In addition, the LRTP establishes a vision and goals that guide projects associated with the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The LRTP planning process engages the public and considers major urban transportation planning concerns such as environmental quality, access to transportation, alternative transportation modes (especially bicycle and pedestrian), the impact of land development on the transportation system, highway congestion, and maintenance of the existing infrastructure.

1.1 SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (SMTC)

1.1.1 WHAT IS THE SMTC?

In 1966, the Governor of the State of New York established the SMTC to serve as the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Syracuse MPA. The purpose of the MPO is to carry out the continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process for the MPA.

In addition to maintaining a LRTP, the SMTC conducts a number of specific transportation planning activities as part of its biennial UPWP. The SMTC is also responsible for the maintenance of the area’s TIP, a multi-year program that funds capital projects related to transit, local roadways and interstates, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and more. The UPWP and the TIP are described in greater detail in section 1.3.

As Syracuse’s MPO, the SMTC also acts as a forum where long term and immediate transportation planning decisions are made for the region. These decisions are made through committees comprised of officials representing local, State, and Federal governments or agencies who utilize consensus building models to make transportation planning decisions. Many of these committees are run by SMTC staff; however, the governing committees are staffed solely by member agency representatives.
Additionally, the SMTC provides an opportunity for citizens to participate in the discussion of specific transportation issues and encourages public participation via public meetings, surveys, questionnaires, workshops, and open houses, to name a few. The SMTC also conducts studies to gauge citizen desires, completes technical corridor reviews, utilizes multimedia educational tools, and maintains a public participation guide, “A Citizens Guide to Transportation Planning.” A copy of this guide can be viewed on the Agency’s website: www.smtcmpo.org.

The SMTC planning process leads to the allocation of millions of dollars in federal transportation funding each year. The MPO process helps facilitate programming of federal transportation dollars. This funding goes toward projects involving the study of infrastructure improvements for public transportation, bicycling, pedestrians, freight shipping, highways, and more. In short, SMTC’s funding is available for almost any transportation project on air, land, or water.

It is important to note that the SMTC cannot implement particular transportation improvements, but serves as a collaborative forum where transportation issues are studied. The SMTC makes recommendations to other local, state, or federal agencies regarding which improvements to undertake.

### 1.1.2 SMTC Committee Structure

The SMTC is comprised of officials representing local, state, and federal governments or agencies having interest or responsibility in transportation planning and programming. To facilitate and encourage maximum interaction among these groups and the local community, the SMTC has adopted a committee structure that consists of a Policy Committee, a Planning Committee, and an Executive Committee. These committees are served by the SMTC central staff, and oversee SMTC transportation planning activities.

The Policy Committee consists of representatives that have an interest or responsibility in transportation planning and/or programming in the MPA. The primary responsibility of the Policy Committee is to establish policies for the overall conduct of the SMTC.

SMTC Policy Committee members include representatives from:

- the CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity,
- the City of Syracuse Office of the Mayor,
- the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB),
- the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA),
- the Empire State Development Corporation,
- the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC),
- the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT),
- the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA),
- the Onondaga County Office of the Executive,
- the Onondaga County Legislature,
the Onondaga County Planning Board,
the Syracuse Common Council, and
the Syracuse Planning Commission.

Oswego and Madison Counties are represented on the Policy Committees as non-voting, advisory agencies, as is the Onondaga Nation. As depicted in Figure 1-1, the Policy Committee oversees both the Executive Committee and the Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee, which is established by the Policy Committee, is composed of professional representatives of Policy Committee member agencies having direct or indirect responsibility for transportation planning and implementation. Their primary responsibility is to monitor all technical activities, including the development of a draft UPWP and TIP for recommendation to the Policy Committee. They also direct and consider all major studies and planning activities for recommendation to the Policy Committee.

The Executive Committee is comprised of Planning Committee members. It provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the agency, including financial management, personnel, and other administrative requirements.

1.1.3 SMTC JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES: THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

The SMTC is responsible for transportation planning activities within its designated MPA – defined by the most current U.S. Census (2000) as the urbanized area, plus the area anticipated to be urbanized within a 20-year period. The most recent Census data available during the development of this 2011 Update is from 2000. The U.S. Census has been conducted for 2010; however, results and detailed data from this effort will not be available until after the completion of this LRTP.

The MPA boundary was last updated in spring 2003 to reflect the 2000 U.S. Census. As shown in Map 1-1, the SMTC’s MPA includes all of Onondaga County and small portions of Oswego County (the Town of Schroeppel including the entire Village of Phoenix, and areas that extend north along Interstate 81 and New York State Route 11, and the entire Village of Central Square) and Madison County (including the Bridgeport area along Oneida Lake as well as a portion along I-90).
Within the MPA, the SMTC houses a specified Urban Area – the official “urban/rural” demarcation for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) purposes. It is important for the purposes of highway functional classification, roadway design standards, funding, and outdoor advertising control.1

Based on the 2000 U.S. Census, the SMTC’s Urban Area consists of the City of Syracuse, additional metropolitan areas within Onondaga County, and also urbanized portions of Oswego and Madison Counties that are contiguous to Onondaga County. It is anticipated that the Urban Area will be modified to reflect the 2010 U.S. Census counts. The portions of the Urban Area and the MPA that are outside of Onondaga County coincide. Thus, the only portions of the MPO that are outside of Onondaga County are the expanded urban areas, which are likely to change following the 2010 U.S. Census. See Map 1-2 for the Urban Area Boundary based on the current 2000 U.S. Census.

1.2 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) PROCESS

1.2.1 HISTORY OF THE LRTP AND SUBSEQUENT UPDATES

The SMTC developed its first LRTP in 1995. The 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan included descriptions of existing land use patterns, economic conditions, demographics, and an extensive inventory of transportation conditions. The plan identified goals, objectives, and actions designed to achieve concepts fundamental to a “desired plan.” That plan focused on enhancing mobility, safety, environmental sustainability, economic development, land use, and facility investments.

The SMTC produced updates to the 1995 plan in 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, and now in 2011. These updates were not designed as independent documents, but as supplements to be used in conjunction with the 1995 plan. These updates generally reviewed:

- The goals, objectives, and actions outlined in the 1995 plan;
- Emerging transportation and demographic trends, planning concepts, and resulting transportation needs;
- Bridge, pavement, and safety conditions and resulting needs; and
- The energy and air quality impacts of resulting projects (as identified in the TIP).

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The SMTC launched public involvement efforts related to each update. An advisory committee oversaw the development of each update. The original LRTP and all updates have remained policy-level plans.

During the last two decades, several changes in federal legislation have had a substantial impact on how MPOs conduct transportation planning. These include the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the TEA-21 of 1998, and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) legislation of 2005.

Collectively, these acts address such major urban transportation planning concerns as environmental quality (especially air quality), access to transportation (especially for those with mobility difficulties), alternative transportation modes (especially bicycle and pedestrian), the transportation-land use linkage (especially the impact of land development on the transportation system), highway traffic congestion and maintenance of the existing transportation infrastructure. The legislation directs the planning focus of agencies such as the SMTC to these new areas of concern.

The 1995 LRTP’s goals were created during brainstorming sessions with the 2020 Visioning Committee. This Committee established a vision and six goals, 23 objectives, and 46 recommended action plans to achieve that vision. The original goals, objectives, and actions are reflected annually in the development of the UPWP.

Since the 1995 LRTP publication, the SMTC has placed more emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian facilities planning. This multimodal orientation is not reflected in great detail within the original LRTP. Other issues that are currently receiving more attention, but are not noted in the original plan, include enhancements that make transportation facilities accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

General quality-of-life issues are also becoming increasingly important in the MPA. The SMTC anticipates that a growing amount of public attention will be given to the maintenance of the bridge and pavement infrastructure. For example, many of the interstate bridges were built during the 1950s and are showing signs of aging. Therefore, the need is for infrastructure renewal more so than the construction of new roads.

Other issues needing future attention are the roads originally designed for home to market use. Some of these roads have been strip-developed and simultaneously serve as local streets, collectors and arterials, in the absence of a more fully developed hierarchical road network. There may be instances of improving regional links on the interstate system to support area economic development.
This 2011 Update represents modifications to previous SMTC long range plans, reflecting only changing conditions and new legislation. Therefore, the 2011 Update should not be viewed as a stand-alone document, but instead should be used in conjunction with the previously published LRTPs. In looking forward, the SMTC will begin planning for a new long term vision for the comprehensive rewrite of the LRTP soon after this 2011 LRTP Update is forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). A large public participation effort will be designed to identify the new vision and goals for the 2015 long range transportation plan.

1.2.2 Public Involvement Process

Engaging the public early and often in the planning process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program, and it is required by numerous state and federal laws. This legislation calls on MPOs such as the SMTC to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on transportation plans and programs.

With the final passage of the SAFETEA-LU transportation bill in 2005, MPOs were mandated to follow additional public participation requirements for their LRTPs. Currently, SAFETEA-LU has expired; however, the federal government has not passed any new legislation to date and the 2005 version of the transportation bill remains in effect through subsequent rolling extensions. Please see Appendix A for a summary of the SAFETEA-LU requirements, and SMTC’s Plan for meeting these requirements for the 2007 Update. The 2007 LRTP also serves as a useful reference as it discusses SAFETEA-LU requirements in greater detail.

With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, Congress introduced a new requirement for development and use of a documented participation plan for the MPO which defines and outlines a process for providing various interested parties within the MPO reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. To that end the SMTC developed a broad umbrella Public Participation Plan (PPP) that identifies such opportunities (see Appendix A).

For many of the SMTC’s activities, a project-specific Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is created that sets the framework for the public participation opportunities that will be available throughout the course of the project. Please refer to Appendix A to review the project-specific PIP for the LRTP 2011 Update. A proactive and dynamic PIP development process ensures the continual review of public involvement objectives and concepts.

Input from stakeholder groups is important to the success of SMTC planning projects in meeting identified needs. Stakeholder groups may vary depending on the nature of the project, but could include such groups as freight shippers, business developers, property owners, community leaders, social service agencies, fire and police representatives, and/or representatives of public transit. PIPs also pinpoint when in the project the public involvement meetings will be held that allow for the exchange of information and input.
The SMTC is continually strengthening its public involvement process. In addition to holding public meetings, the SMTC recruits the necessary technical personnel and community representatives, as appropriate, to serve on a project-specific Study Advisory Committees (SAC). SACs consist of representatives from affected organizations, local and state governments and agencies, and selected community representatives. SACs meet regularly with the SMTC to assist in managing projects and provide needed input and direction.

In addition to the SAC, a project-specific list of interested stakeholders (a broader group of interested individuals with significant relation to or interest in a particular planning study or activity) is maintained by the SMTC. Stakeholders are sent pertinent study information, kept apprised of significant study developments, notified of all public meetings, and encouraged to provide feedback regarding the project. Separate stakeholder meetings may also be held at various points during some projects to allow the SMTC to report on the progress of a study effort and solicit input.

The SMTC continually researches visualization techniques to improve communication with the public. In addition, SMTC continues to engage in statewide shared cost initiative projects that include training in visualization techniques (including the use of Synchro and SimTraffic) for MPO staff. These visualization techniques, including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping and photo simulations, allow the SMTC to improve and expand upon its already extensive public involvement efforts. Following are some of the noteworthy methods the SMTC has used to inform and invite the public to participate:

- SMTC web site: www.smtcmpo.org,
- Press releases,
- Social networking websites (blogs, Facebook),
- SMTC newsletter, Directions,
- Final Reports on CD-ROM and sent via e-mail (PDF file),
- Distribution of fact sheets and meeting announcements flyers,
- Project-specific newsletters,
- SMTC brochure: A Citizens Guide to Transportation Planning,
- Media relationships and press releases and advertisements,
- Representation on the F.O.C.U.S. (Forging Our Communities’ United Strengths),
- Coordination with the City of Syracuse’s Tomorrow’s Neighborhoods Today (TNT),
- Orientation Packet for Planning and Policy Committee members,
- Native American Tribal Consultation – Onondaga Nation,
- New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NYSAMPO) brochure,
- Comment cards, surveys (including the use of Survey Monkey) and questionnaires (paper and on-line), and
- Open houses & workshops.
The I-81 Challenge

In 2009, on behalf of the NYSDOT, the SMTC began working on the I-81 Public Participation Project. The goal of this project is to facilitate the public participation effort in conjunction with NYSDOT’s study of the I-81 Corridor. Together, the Public Participation Project, the NYSDOT’s I-81 Corridor Study and the I-81 Travel Demand Modeling Project (another project undertaken by the SMTC to assist NYSDOT in evaluating existing and future traffic conditions along I-81 in the MPA), form The I-81 Challenge, one of the largest planning projects undertaken in the Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area in decades (see Chapter 3 – Facilities for more information on The I-81 Challenge).

Briefly, the goal of the overall process is to get to a preferred option for the I-81 viaduct, which is nearing the end of its lifespan. The preferred option will need to meet various federal requirements (engineering standards, environmental standards, etc.), be supported by the community, and be fundable. The project is a partnership between the SMTC and NYSDOT, with other federal regulating agencies and the public being involved throughout the process.

The SMTC’s role is to provide the community with ongoing information about the process, about the condition of I-81, about the potential options and impacts; and to gather information from the public about their values – what do people want a solution to achieve? What’s important to people about I-81 now and in the future? What option best achieves these public goals? A technical component in our travel demand modeling will be used as one tool in evaluating options.

To date, the SMTC has held over 20 focus group meetings with 175 participants. Large public meetings were held in early May 2011 to engage the community in this process. Questionnaires, a series of self-running presentations on history, case studies, and regional planning issues, and interactive stations were part of the large public meetings, attended by nearly 700 people.

In addition, the SMTC has recently worked with the NYSDOT to learn more about Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in the MPA, their needs, and how best to provide access as part of The I-81 Challenge. The SMTC and NYSDOT jointly drafted a LEP Plan for The I-81 Challenge utilizing methodology suggestions from the NYSDOT’s Office of Civil Rights Draft LEP Toolkit (based on the FTA’s guidance). The data gathered for The I-81 Challenge project clearly show that there are many people in the study area/MPA speaking languages other than English. As with all projects, the SMTC will strive to make The I-81 Challenge accessible to all people, including LEP populations. Given this, the SMTC developed the LEP Plan as a short-term approach to include LEP populations with plans to evaluate and update the Plan periodically, to ensure its effectiveness.
Specific LRTP 2011 Update Outreach
As noted within the project-specific PIP for the LRTP 2011 Update, the SMTC completed significant outreach for this LRTP Update through the development and use of a survey completed in conjunction with the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) during late 2009. The intent of the Community Planning & Transportation Resident Survey was to provide information for the LRTP, along with SOCPA’s Sustainable Development Plan for Onondaga County (currently being developed).

LRTP Survey
The statistically valid survey, developed with and administered by the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC), examined the opinions of a representative sample of Onondaga County residents. The survey included questions intended to assess opinions about land development and design, transportation habits and preferences, and basic demographic information.

A set of 3,900 households was randomly selected from within the boundaries of Onondaga County to receive the Community Planning & Transportation Resident Survey by mail. These households were selected so that they represented each of four areas within the County equally: city (City of Syracuse), villages, suburban areas (town areas inside the Onondaga County Sanitary District boundary), and non-urban areas (all remaining areas). This allowed examination of survey results by area of residence with the greatest precision possible.

A total of 922 completed surveys were received, for a response rate of 25%. Survey results were weighted so that respondent age, gender, race/ethnicity, type of housing and place of residence were represented in the proportions reflective of all Onondaga County adults. The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus 3.5 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample.

Additional questionnaires were offered to the general public at meetings and through access from SMTC and SOCPA web sites (using Survey Monkey to form the web survey). These questionnaires asked the same questions as the survey however they were not part of the statically significant calculation because they were not randomly distributed to county residents.
Survey Highlights

Survey results generally reflected strong support for the principles of “smart growth” and regional planning and a desire to explore more and different transportation options. Several survey questions explored respondents’ attitudes toward new development and the degree to which public funding should be spent to encourage growth in new areas.

- The types of development most desired by respondents over the next 30 years were small shops and businesses, farms, and manufacturing/warehouses. Fewer respondents favored new housing and large stores and office buildings.

- More than three-quarters of respondents thought new development should take place in already developed communities with available buildings or unused land.

- Similarly, a sizable percentage of respondents (37%) believed that infrastructure should not be expanded at all until the region experiences population growth, and very few (9%) thought local governments should expand infrastructure anytime as a way to support growth.

- A strong majority of respondents (77%) also felt that housing and buildings should be closely spaced, with sidewalks leading to nearby shop and parks, even if it means having smaller homes and less space for parking.

- A question designed to assess public support for various “smart growth” principles found strong support for all of the ideas tested. Among these principles, protecting environmental assets, protecting farms and scenic resources, and reducing energy usage were of highest importance to respondents. While still very favorable, ideas focused on mixing housing types, mixing housing and commercial development, and connecting neighborhoods garnered the least support of those listed.

A series of questions was also designed to assess residents’ attitudes toward existing transportation infrastructure, test opinions regarding future transportation needs, and identify travel habits.

- Respondents reported driving alone or with children for the great majority of all trips, regardless of purpose. This mode was particularly prevalent for commuting purposes, where 85% of respondents reported driving alone or with children. Respondents were more likely to report carpooling for social/recreational purposes and shopping trips than for other trip purposes. Walking was most prevalent for social/recreational trips as well.

- Those who live in the city were more likely to walk or bike (45%) compared with those in villages (30%), suburban areas (19%), and non-urban areas (12%).
most common reasons for not walking or bicycling more often included distance, weather, and lack of facilities.

- More than half (58%) of respondents rated how well the overall transportation system in Onondaga County meets their needs as ‘excellent’ or ‘good.’ Respondents were generally satisfied with their ability to access places they usually visit and the traffic flow on major streets.

- However, residents were less satisfied with the availability and condition of alternative modes in Onondaga County. A sizable majority of respondents rated the availability and condition of pedestrian and bicycle facilities as fair or poor. Respondents were also unsatisfied with the condition of roads and bridges.

- Only 16% of respondents thought that the best long-term solution for reducing traffic congestion in Onondaga County was to build new roads; instead, they supported improving transit options and creating denser communities.

- In testing acceptance of other potential changes to the transportation system, the survey found strong support for such transportation options as regional and local train, expanded and express bus service, carpooling, walking, and bicycling. Half of respondents indicated that they would drive less if other types of travel were more convenient and accessible.

Overall, survey results indicate strong support for planning that focuses on existing infrastructure and community assets, protection of natural and scenic areas, and focused growth in existing centers. The survey also illustrates a need for improvements to existing transportation assets and the exploration of alternative modes of transportation.

The results of the statistically valid survey are included in Appendix A. Key findings are referenced throughout this LRTP document as appropriate.

Other Outreach
In addition, at various SMTC public meetings for specific SMTC studies (such as the James Street Road Diet public meeting, within various I-81 presentations, and the East Genesee Street Sidewalk Study), the SMTC noted the update of the LRTP and provided information on how to provide feedback on long range transportation planning in the MPA. This ensured a captive audience and gave the SMTC an opportunity to reach a broad segment of the population. At these meetings, the SMTC shared a few slides on the LRTP and pointed to the project web site and opportunity to complete a questionnaire similar to the survey that was mailed to random households within Onondaga County. Additionally, the public was invited to complete questionnaires at the Onondaga County Traffic Safety Advisory Board’s (OCTSAB) Share the Road Expo in September 2010.
The draft LRTP 2011 Update was also sent to interested parties for review and comment. The final draft LRTP 2011 Update was available for public comment for a 30-day period, during which time a public meeting was held. The final draft document was presented to the SMTC’s Planning and Policy Committees for final approval.

1.3 Processes and Funding

1.3.1 The LRTP, the UPWP, and the TIP

The SMTC is mandated to develop three documents that are the ingredients to transportation planning and programming in the MPA: the LRTP, the UPWP, and the TIP. Together, these three documents represent the beginning, middle, and end to an effective transportation planning process. Descriptions of each of the three key documents are included throughout this chapter. The illustration in Figure 1-2 depicts the interrelationship between the three documents. The LRTP represents the starting point in which the transportation goals and objectives for the future are set forth in a document adopted by the SMTC Policy Committee.
**1.3.2 Unified Planning Work Program Process**

The UPWP identifies transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in the SMTC study area in support of the goals, objectives, and actions established in the LRTP. The SMTC central staff, working with the Planning Committee and the NYSDOT, annually initiates the process of developing the UPWP and prepares a final draft for the consideration of both the Planning and Policy Committees. The intent in developing a comprehensive UPWP is to ensure annual planning projects relate to the region’s overarching vision and goals as expressed in the LRTP. Examples of specific UPWP transportation planning activities include:

- traffic corridor studies;
- transportation data collection;
- safety improvement analyses;
- congestion management; and
- multimodal transportation planning (including bicycle and pedestrian planning).

The SMTC’s Operations Plan outlines a framework for the UPWP, which the central staff is expected to accomplish, and provides guidance with respect to a financial plan to support the UPWP. The UPWP is intended to be consistent with the Operations Plan, as well as the metropolitan planning requirements for SAFETEA-LU and its implementing regulation (23 CFR Part 450, Subpart C and 49 CFR Part 613, Subpart A). Compliance with these regulations frames much of this program. Further, the UPWP strives to address the NYSDOT planning emphasis areas that are intended to implement the state’s policies for urban area transportation planning. This is to ensure that projects conceived by the SMTC comply with the federal and state policies and that local issues progress in a timely manner.

The status of the current UPWP is reviewed monthly by the SMTC’s Executive Committee to ensure that it is being carried out in a manner consistent with the MPO’s goals. While it is the mission of the central staff and the Executive Committee to complete work efforts within a program year, task elements may be designed to span multiple fiscal years and therefore are carried through multiple UPWPs. Each year an estimate of transportation planning funds available for new programs is made. Policy direction and scope of the UPWP are developed with member agency participation based on their needs.

The staff, working with member agencies, establishes a list of candidate projects for inclusion in the next year’s UPWP. Estimates of amounts and sources of funding to accomplish the planning program are developed. The Planning Committee then prioritizes the continuing program and the new projects. A draft UPWP is developed for Planning Committee review and recommendation of acceptance to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee has the final responsibility to adopt the UPWP.

Since the first LRTP Update (1998), the SMTC has achieved measurable progress on several major transportation planning projects. These projects address a variety of transportation and land-use
issues in specific geographic locations. The projects were initially selected for inclusion in the SMTC annual UPWP. Examples of projects completed since the 2007 LRTP Update include the following:

- Downtown Parking Analysis and Mapping Study (2007);
- Fayetteville-Manlius Road/Route 257 Pedestrian Accommodation Feasibility Study (2007);
- University Hill Comprehensive Transportation Study (2007);
- Transportation/Land Use Educational Outreach CD (2008);
- Seymour-Shonnard Corridor Study (2008);
- University Hill Bike Network Project (2008);
- Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (2008);
- Downer Street Corridor Study (2009);
- Clay/Cicero Route 31 Transportation Study (2009);
- University Hill Park & Ride Feasibility Study (2009);
- Liverpool Modeling Technical Memo (2009);
- Carrier Site Access Transportation Study (2009);
- University Hill Phase II Feasibility Study (2009);
- Onondaga County Signal Optimization Project - Phase 1 (2010);
- Almond Street Pedestrian Corridor Study (2010);
- Near Northside Parking & Wayfinding Study (2011);
- the periodic Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Environmental Justice (EJ) Report; and
- annual projects such as the Safety Improvement Analysis and Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System (BPCMS).

These projects, together with the implementation actions identified in the goals/objectives section of this document, provide an overview of the wide-range of activities being carried out by the SMTC and its member agencies. Map 1-3 shows the locations of the major transportation planning projects carried out under the UPWP since the 2007 Update.
UPWP Projects Completed Since 2007

1. Downer St Corridor Study (2009)
2. Clay/Cicero Route 31 Transportation Study (2009)
4. Carrier Site Access Transportation Study (2009)
5. Near Northside Parking & Wayfinding Study (2011)
7. Seymour-Shonnard Corridor Study (2008)
8. Almond St Pedestrian Corridor Study (2010)
10. University Hill Studies
11. University Hill Comprehensive Transportation Study (2007)

MPA-Wide Studies (not numbered)
- Transportation/Land Use Education/Outreach CD (2008)
- Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (2008)
- Onondaga County Signal Optimization Project - Phase 1 (2010)

Periodic
- Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Environmental Justice (EJ) Report

Annual
- Safety Improvement Analysis
- Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System (BPCMS)

Locations of UPWP Projects Completed Since the 2007 LRTP Update

Long-Range Transportation Plan 2011 Update
Map 1-3

Legend
- Interstates
- Roads
- Village
- City of Syracuse
- Town
- Onondaga Nation

This map is for presentation purposes only. The SMTC does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this map.
1.3.3 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Process

The SMTC is responsible for the maintenance of the area’s TIP, a five-year program that funds capital projects related to public transportation, local roadways and interstates, and bicycle and pedestrian amenities. Several pieces of federal legislation significantly affect the TIP and the planning and programming of transportation projects.

Previous federal transportation bills required that a TIP be approved/submitted every two years with a minimum of three fiscal years incorporated. According to the February 14, 2007 Final Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Rules and Regulations, a TIP may now be submitted at least every four years and include a minimum of four fiscal years for all states and MPOs. While the TIP is usually approved biennially, the document may be amended as needed. SAFETEA-LU regulations state that the TIP must contain no less than four years worth of projects. ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU, as well as the Metropolitan Planning Regulations, mandate that a TIP:

1. Identify transportation improvement projects recommended for advancement during the program years. The projects required are those located within the study area and receiving any Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds;
2. Identify the criteria and process for prioritization for inclusion of projects in the TIP and any changes from past TIPs;
3. Group improvements of similar urgency and anticipated staging into appropriate staging periods;
4. Include realistic estimates of total costs and revenue for the program period;
5. Include a discussion of how improvements recommended from the Long Range Transportation Plan’s Transportation Systems Management Plan were merged into the program;
6. List major projects from previous TIPs that were implemented and identify any major delays in planned implementation;
7. Describe progress in implementing any required Transportation Control Measures as identified in the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality Redesignation Request (SIP);
8. Include an air quality conformity analysis of the TIP to the SIP with a list of all projects found to conform in previous TIPs that should be considered as a base case for conformity analysis; and
9. Include a Financial Plan that demonstrates how the approved TIP can be implemented.

The TIP should also include regional highway and transit projects of regional significance that are being implemented by the state, city, county, and CNYRTA for which no federal funding is requested. In addition, under Title 23 USC, Part 93 (Conformity), Subpart A, under Section 93.105, the MPO is required to submit projects considered for inclusion in the TIP to the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) for review and concurrence as to exemption status for air quality conformity. The ICG consists of the MPO, New York State Department of Transportation.
Environmental Science Bureau (NYSDOT ESB), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The MPO has established a process for timely submission and review not only of projects at the time of TIP development, but also when projects are added or deleted via amendment during the program year.

According to SMTC policy, funding should be prioritized for use in maintaining the current infrastructure with minimal focus on expansion. An examination of the recent transportation expenditures shows the majority of funding going towards maintenance of existing infrastructure. Map 1-4a and 1-4b shows the locations of capital projects on the most current TIP.

### 1.4 LRTP Goals

The original 1995 LRTP provided the policy framework for fulfilling transportation needs within the MPO. The member agencies of the SMTC, representing state, regional, county, city, and other organizations, cooperate in carrying out the action plans.

#### 1.4.1 Relationship to Planning Factors

In all of its transportation planning activities, the SMTC is required to consider and integrate the following planning factors as outlined in SAFETEA-LU:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation and improve the quality of life; and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

These planning factors are directly reflected in the LRTP’s goals and objectives, developed as part of the original 1995 long range plan.
1.4.2 Goals

Community Safety
- Goal: To enhance the safety of the people using the transportation system.

Community Mobility
- Goal: To improve the mobility options for people within the Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA).

Community Environment
- Goal: To provide a clean and environmentally sound transportation system for current and future residents.

Community Economy
- Goal: To enhance the area’s economic competitiveness, thereby increasing opportunities for employment.

Community Land Use
- Goal: To promote the development of an efficient urban area and a sense of community through transportation planning.

Community Facilities
- Goal: To provide safe, clean, well maintained and efficient transportation infrastructure.

This 2011 Update will emulate previous LRTP updates (2001, 2004, and 2007) by addressing and updating the implementation actions associated with the plan’s specific goals. The identification of implemented action plans involved discussions with the member agencies responsible for their respective TIP projects. In the chapters that follow, the implemented action plans are presented following a discussion of existing conditions and trends tied to each of the goals. The implemented action plans are summaries rather than complete descriptions. In many cases, an overlap exists because a particular action plan may apply to multiple goals. For example, a highway project can fulfill both a safety and a mobility goal.
### Locations of Capital Projects on the Most Current TIP (MPA)

#### Long-Range Transportation Plan 2011 Update

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- Data Sources: SMTC, NYSDOT, 2010
- Prepared by SMTC, 03/2011

#### See City Map

**This map is for presentation purposes only**.
- The SMTC does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this map.

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