

# SMTC 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Appendix

E.

August 2015 public meeting summary

**2050 Long Range Transportation Plan  
Summary of Final (August 5, 2015) Public Meeting**

*Overview*

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) held the final public meeting for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) on Wednesday, August 5, 2015 in the Lower Level Conference Room at the SMTC offices from 4:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. SMTC staff presented an overview of the plan and its components at 5:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m., each followed by a question and answer period.

*Meeting Attendance*

A total of 18 people attended the meeting, based on review of the sign-in sheets.

The most common ZIP codes provided at sign-in were 13202 (downtown area) with 4 people and 13210 (University Hill area) with 3 people. The 13104 ZIP code was represented by 2 meeting attendees. The remaining attendees that provided ZIP codes were scattered across the region.

*Meeting Notice*

Notice of the final public meeting was provided through various avenues starting in mid-July 2015. A flier (attached) announcing the final public meeting for the Draft 2050 LRTP was created and distributed to local, state, and federal elected officials; county libraries; Study Advisory Committee members; and the Centro Hub. An e-blast announcing the public meeting was sent to the SMTC e-mail list (approximately 350 recipients), the SMTC Bicycle/Pedestrian Community Interest Group, 40 Below, and other local listservs. The e-blast was then forwarded to additional individuals by various members of these groups. A press release and flier was also sent to the SMTC’s typical media outlets (television, newspapers, radio). The SMTC also posted word of the upcoming meeting on the SMTC Facebook page and the SMTC LRTP website. The public meeting was announced on the SMTC LRTP website beginning in mid-July 2015. In addition, the public meeting information was included in the Legal Notice that the SMTC issued on August 4, 2015, announcing the 30-day public comment period for the draft plan.

*LRTP Website Traffic*

Between April and August 2015, visitor traffic to the SMTC LRTP website totaled 1,918 “hits.” April 2015 saw 682 visitors to the website, likely due to the series of LRTP public meetings held during that month. July and August 2015 showed an increase in website traffic as well, likely related to the August 5 public meeting and announcement of the availability of the draft LRTP document.

***SMTC LRTP Website Traffic***

<b>Month</b>	<b># of “Hits”</b>
Apr	682
May	114
Jun	190
Jul	513
Aug	419
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,918</b>

*Public Meeting Content and Feedback*

The final public meeting was set up to include information previously shared at the four April public meetings, as well as additional information about the draft LRTP. A series of boards were set up to engage the public in the lobby located just outside of the meeting room. Most of the display boards were the same as those used in the April 2015 meetings, with a few additions. The new boards for the August meeting are attached to this summary. Similar to the April meetings, the first section of the display included an area to sign-in, the SMTC display board, and copies of various SMTC publications, including the SMTC brochure which explains who and what the SMTC is, as well as a list of LRTP Frequently Asked Questions.

In addition to the display boards previously used for the April public meetings (LRTP purpose, goals and objectives, existing conditions, etc. – see April 2015 public meetings summary), the final public meeting also included boards that addressed: the current transportation system performance, future conditions assessment, and an updated financial analysis.

A Comment Station was provided at the public meeting, which included a form for receiving general comments about transportation in the SMTC planning area, as well as a take-away card with information on how to provide comments on the draft LRTP to the SMTC by September 3, 2015. Several copies of the draft 2050 LRTP were available at the meeting for attendees to review. Staff also noted that a copy of the draft was available for review at the Main Branch of the Onondaga County Public Library as well as on line via the SMTC LRTP website (www. <http://www.smtcmpo.org/LRTP2050/DraftLRTP2050.asp>).

A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the draft LRTP document was given at 5:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m., each followed by a question/answer period. The following questions and comments were discussed during the question/answer periods:

<b>Comments and discussion following LRTP presentations at August 5 public meeting</b>	
<b><i>Comment/Question</i></b>	<b><i>Response/discussion</i></b>
With VMT trending down nationally, why is our regional per capita VMT expected to continue rising?	Based on our discussions with local officials, the SMTC travel demand for the year 2050 includes a continuation of development into suburban areas of our region, which results in additional VMT. We will monitor the actual development trends over time and can reevaluate this scenario if necessary in future plan updates.
How does the plan account for autonomous vehicles?	It does not – there is not a way to account for this in our travel demand model.
How will capital projects be chosen in the future?	Capital improvement projects are determined through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process. TIP selection criteria will be modified to align with the LRTP goals and objectives. Projects still have to go through the full solicitation/evaluation process even if mentioned in the LRTP. Staff completes evaluations, and then the Capital Projects Committee (CPC) reviews and develops the TIP. There is also a public comment period specifically for the TIP.
Can you clarify the definition of “maintenance” as a capital expense?	In this case, maintenance means upkeep of the current system – for example, it would include a new layer of pavement as opposed to filling potholes.

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Can this plan be used to demonstrate the need for additional transportation funds for the region?	Yes.
Does the plan account for the anticipated zoning changes in the city (i.e. TOD zones)? Was the City's Land Use Plan consulted?	The SMTC reviewed the City Land Use Plan, but we do not call out specific locations for TOD in the LRTP. This could be incorporated into updates once the city finalizes its new zoning.
More funds are needed to provide rides to work during off-peak hours for low-income workers. The amount needed to provide this service is minimal compared to the other project costs in this plan. How can some funds be diverted to providing additional transit service to address this gap?	The SMTC suggests that an appropriate entity submit a UPWP application to study this particular issue. There needs to be an entity willing to receive those funds and run the service.
Does this plan propose any measures to reduce the urban heat island effect?	Yes, in the sense of incorporating green infrastructure where feasible.
Is the cost of maintenance related to our region's per capita highway mileage? Do we have more miles of highway to maintain relative to our tax base?	It's got more to do with the increasing costs of materials and the fact that much of our infrastructure was built roughly 50 years ago and will need major rehabilitation in the near future.
How does the LRTP encourage complete streets?	The LRTP spells out a set of criteria for project selection and complete streets elements are part of the criteria. Also, the NYS's Complete Streets law requires that bike, pedestrian and transit infrastructure be included or, at a minimum, considered.

Staff also had discussions with individuals before and after the presentations, including the following topics:

- A question of whether the LRTP had taken into account the proposal to allow “twin 33s” on New York roads. (See this article: <http://bit.ly/1IKhHGK>). Staff discussed the pros and potential cons of this change and what the implications are for roadway maintenance.
- Some attendees asked how the 2050 LRTP's goals, objectives, performance measures, etc. could help with the I-81 alternative selection process. One attendee was very interested in the planning principles SMTC identified and also wanted to know how those would be applied to help select future capital projects (including I-81). This attendee pointed out that the principles really speak to quality of life issues as reflected in the many plans reviewed by SMTC, and hopes that equal weight will somehow be afforded to the principles as well.

*Summary*

The majority of the comments received during the final public meeting focused on maintaining existing transportation infrastructure, with several questions related to how future projects will be determined and/or paid for. Transit and I-81 were other significant topics discussed during the final public meeting.

# What will our transportation system look like in 10 years? In 35 years?

## Come share your thoughts at the final **LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING**

**Wednesday, August 5, 2015**

**4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (Presentations at 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.)**

Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

Lower level conference room

126 North Salina Street, Syracuse

SMTC staff will present an overview of the plan at 5:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m. The draft plan and other materials will be available for review between 4:30 and 7:00 p.m., and staff will be available to answer questions.

### **What is a Long Range Transportation Plan?**

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) has created an entirely new draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. The final plan will serve as a blueprint that guides the Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area's transportation development over a 35-year period. Preparing for the Greater Syracuse Metropolitan Area's transportation future involves careful planning. How does transportation affect our air quality? What is the condition of our roads and bridges? What kinds of facilities and services are needed to support planned growth or improve the safety of our transportation system? These are just some of the questions addressed by the draft 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

At this final LRTP public meeting, we will review the draft 2050 LRTP document and share the long-term transportation vision developed for the area based on public feedback. Come learn about the plan and share your thoughts with us!

### **For more information or to request accommodations:**

The meeting site is accessible to people with disabilities. For more information about the LRTP process or to request special accommodations for a meeting, please contact Meghan Vitale, SMTC Principal Planner, at (315) 422-5716 or [mvitale@smtcmpo.org](mailto:mvitale@smtcmpo.org).

### **Can't make the meeting in person?**

Meeting materials will be available online at [www.smtcmpo.org/LRTP2050](http://www.smtcmpo.org/LRTP2050) from August 4 until September 3. Public comments may be submitted through September 3 (online, via e-mail to [contactus@smtcmpo.org](mailto:contactus@smtcmpo.org), or mailed to the address below).



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