

Overview of the SMART 1 study

What is SMART 1?

The Syracuse Metropolitan Area Regional Transit Study Phase 1 (SMART 1) began in June 2015 to pursue higher-intensity transit services along the Destiny USA/Regional Transportation Center (RTC) to Syracuse University and Eastwood to Onondaga Community College corridors.

This planning study will evaluate the following along these two corridors:

- modes
- alignments
- station locations
- ridership
- service plans
- costs
- land use
- zoning
- economic development
- engineering feasibility
- environmental factors

Who is involved in the SMART 1 study?

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) is conducting the study, with a consultant team, on behalf of Centro.

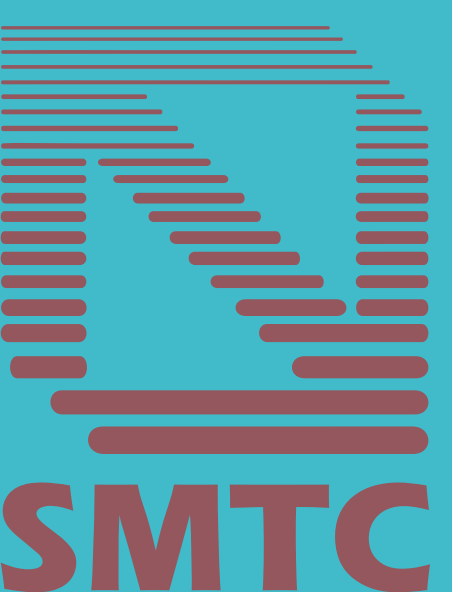
A Study Advisory Committee (SAC) will advise the SMTC on the technical content of deliverables and provide needed input and guidance throughout the study. The SAC is comprised of representatives from the following agencies:

- Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro)
- City of Syracuse - Planning Division
- Downtown Committee of Syracuse
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)
- New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)
- Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA)
- University Hill Corporation



What is the SMTC?

The SMTC is the State-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Onondaga County and portions of Oswego and Madison Counties. The SMTC is the region's forum for cooperative decision making when it comes to developing transportation plans, programs and recommendations. The SMTC is made up of officials representing local, state and federal governments or agencies with an interest in comprehensive transportation policies and services. The SMTC does not own or operate any transportation infrastructure.



Why conduct the SMART 1 study?

Enhanced transit is a community priority

An "enhanced transit system" is identified as a regionally significant, priority project in the SMTC's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. The community has expressed a strong desire for expanded transit options.

A previous transit study, called the Syracuse Transit System Analysis (STSA), recommended "higher-intensity transit services along the Destiny USA/Regional Transportation Center (RTC) to Syracuse University and James Street/South Avenue Corridors."

The STSA included surveys of transit riders and non-riders/former riders in 2012. A total of 326 rider surveys were returned, and 174 non-rider/former rider surveys were returned.

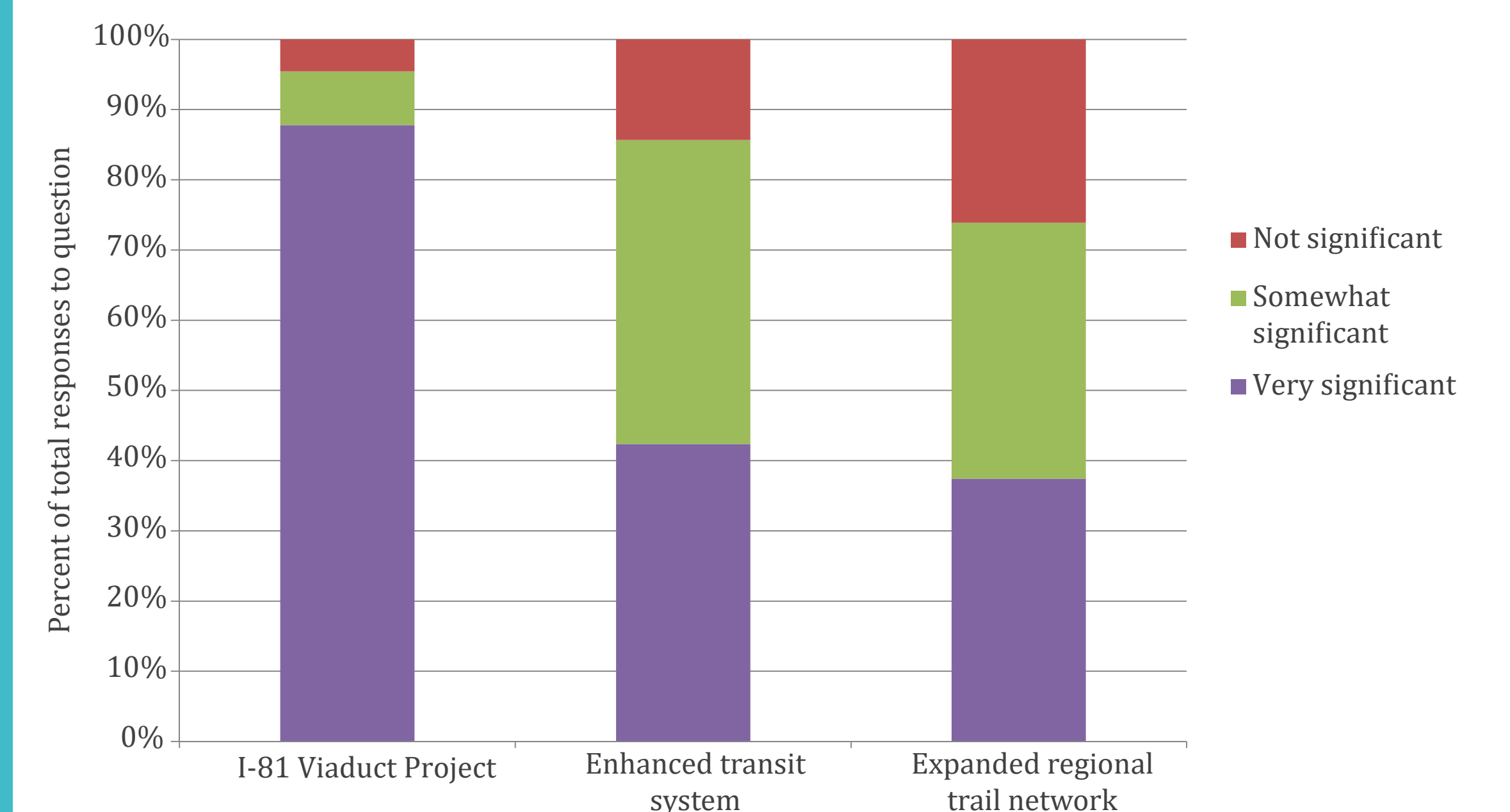
Results from both surveys were used to identify and prioritize transit system needs:

- High priority
1. Increase frequency and hours of operation.
 2. Reduce transit travel time to be more comparable with vehicles.
 3. Improve on-time performance.
 4. Provide direct connections between major regional destinations.
 5. Provide more real-time system information.
 6. Improve safety and public perception of the transit system.
 7. Provide more suburban commuter options.
- Low priority
8. Maintain an affordable fare.

The SMTC conducted a survey in December 2014/January 2015 that asked for community input on the goals and objectives for our new Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). We received 380 responses.

- 57% of respondents ranked the objective "provide essential transit service to urban areas and major activity centers" as "important."
- Over 80% of respondents indicated that an "enhanced transit system" would be a significant project for our region.
- Dozens of respondents provided additional comments in support of expanded Centro service or various other enhancements to our regional transit system.

Significance of major regional projects based on LRTP survey results



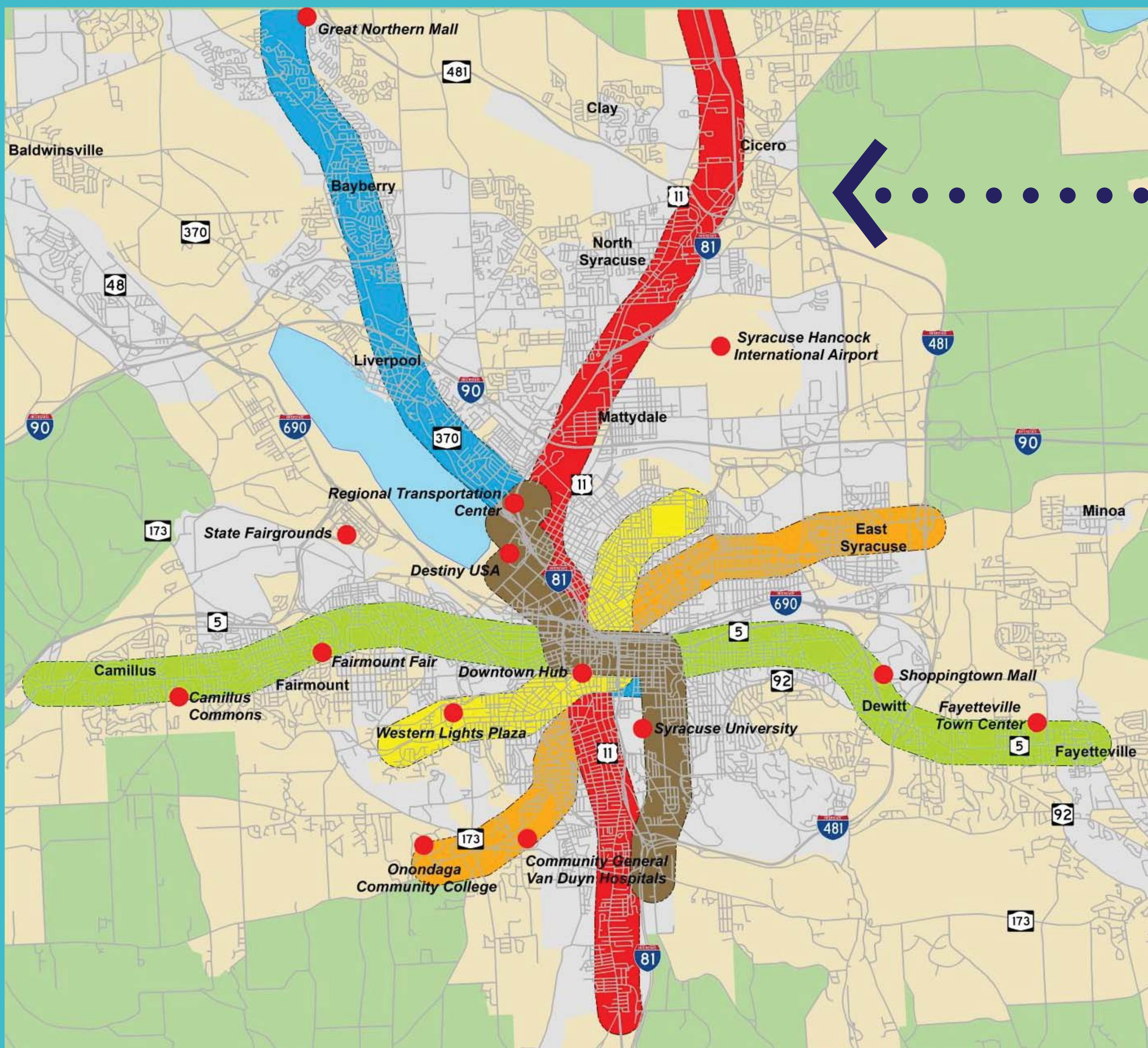
The next few display boards describe the background transit study in more detail.

Syracuse Transit System Analysis: Corridors

What was the Syracuse Transit System Analysis?

In January 2014, the NYSDOT, in coordination with the SMTC and Centro, completed the Syracuse Transit System Analysis (STSA) as part of The I-81 Corridor Study.

The purpose of the STSA was "To develop a long-range vision for the transit system in the Syracuse metropolitan area to assist in achieving a balanced transportation system that supports economic growth, improves quality of life, and supports the vision of the communities that it serves."



The STSA reviewed the entire Centro system and identified 6 TRANSIT ENHANCEMENT CORRIDORS that would be likely to support increased transit ridership, based on:

- Existing transit ridership and mode share
- Population and employment density
- Households with access to one or no vehicles
- Potential for commuter trips
- Commute times
- Household income
- Existing plans.

Legend

Corridors

- University Hill - RTC
- Northside - Western Lights
- Camillus - Fayetteville
- North Syracuse - South Valley
- East Syracuse - OCC
- Great Northern Mall - Downtown

Key Features

- Roads
- Community Destinations
- 2000 Census Urban Area
- Transit Supportive Areas*

* Transportation Analysis zones or Census tracts with the following characteristics:

- Population density > 4,500 people/sq mi
- Employee density > 4,500 employees/sq mi
- Average Household Income < \$34,560
- % of households with 0 or 1 vehicle > 50%
- % of trips taken by transit > 5%

Syracuse Transit System Analysis: Evaluation

Strategies

The STSA evaluated 3 strategies for each corridor:



Existing service improvements



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



Light Rail Transit (LRT)

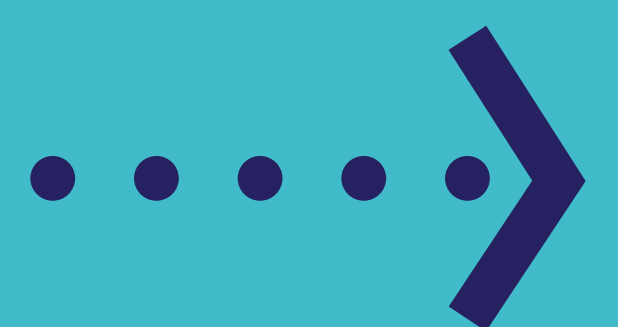
Evaluation Criteria

Each corridor/strategy combination was evaluated using criteria in five categories, based on the Federal Transit Administration's Project Justification Rating guidance for funding, as well as local stakeholder input.

CATEGORY	WEIGHT	EXAMPLE CRITERIA
Mobility improvements	25%	Annual trips, one-seat rides to major destinations
Economic development	25%	Transit-supportive plans and policies, strategic development areas served
Cost effectiveness	25%	Cost-benefit ratio
Land use	12.5%	Employment served, population density, parking costs/availability
Environmental benefits	12.5%	Air quality, safety, energy use

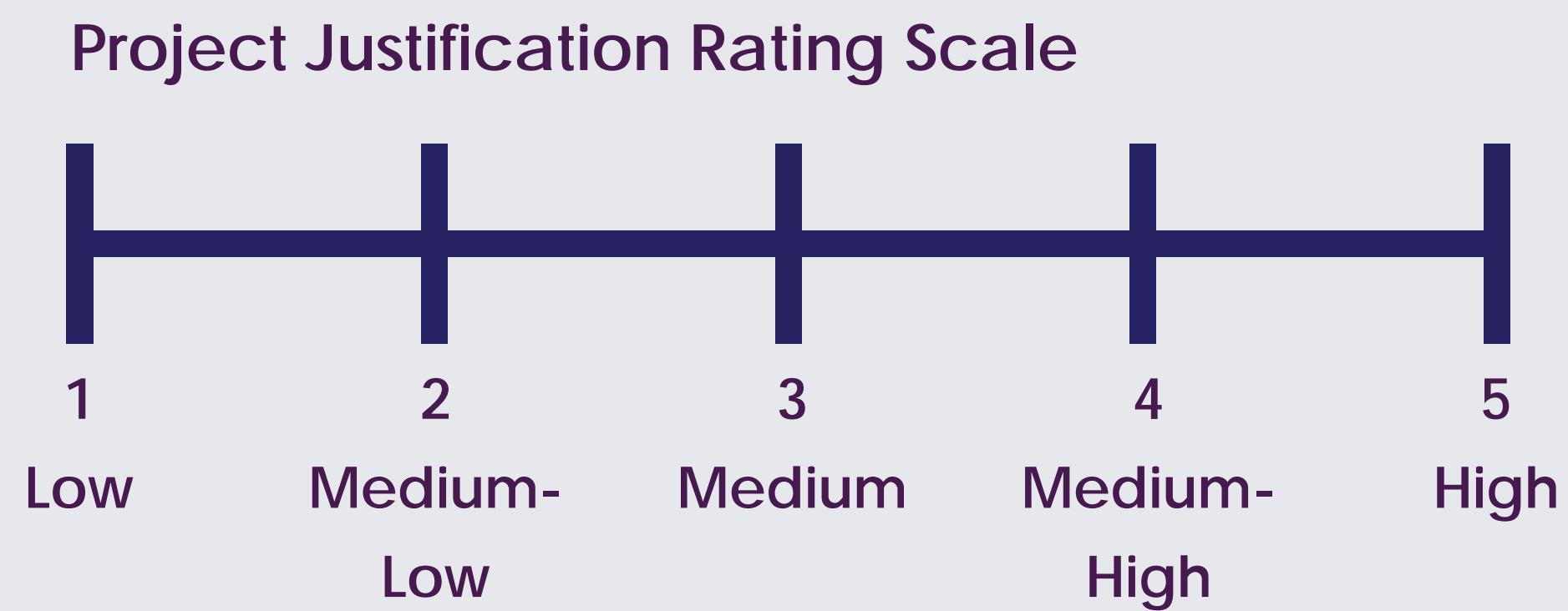


Final scores and ratings for each of the 18 corridor/strategy combinations are shown on the next board.



Syracuse Transit System Analysis: Results

A weighted average score was determined for each corridor/strategy combination, and the score was used to determine the Project Justification Rating.



Final Corridor Rankings

RANK	CORRIDOR	STRATEGY	WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE
* 1	Destiny USA/RTC to Syracuse University	Service improvements	3.71
* 2	James St/South Ave	Service improvements	3.21
* 3	James St/South Ave	BRT	3.15
* 4	James Street	LRT	3.05
5	I-81 Express, Central Square to Downtown/University Hill	Service improvements	3.01
* 6	North Salina Street	LRT	2.91
* 7	Solar Street	LRT	2.91
8	Genesee St/Erie Blvd (Camillus to Fayetteville)	Service improvements	2.85
9	Butternut St/Onondaga St	Service improvements	2.83
10	South Salina St/Route 11 to North Syracuse	Service improvements	2.82
11	Genesee St/Erie Blvd (Camillus to Fayetteville)	BRT	2.79
12	US 11 Local	BRT	2.78
13	Liverpool/Route 57, Great Northern Mall to Downtown/University Hill	Service improvements	2.77
14	Syracuse University/Liverpool	BRT	2.72
15	Downtown/University Hill Loop	LRT	2.71
16	OnTrack Extension	LRT	2.58
17	Western Lights-Carrier Circle	BRT	2.54
18	I-81 Express	BRT	2.08

* 6 of the top 10 ranked corridor/strategy combinations from the STSA relate to either the James Street/South Avenue or DestinyUSA-SU corridors.

Syracuse Transit System Analysis: Recommendations

STSA made 4 major recommendations:

Construct a new transit hub on University Hill with supporting infrastructure.

Provide lower-intensity service enhancements in remaining corridors.

Begin a commuter-based service along I-81 from Central Square to Downtown/University Hill.

Pursue higher-intensity transit services along the Destiny USA/RTC to Syracuse University and James Street/South Avenue Corridors.

This type of express bus service is supported by the SMTC's new Long Range Transportation Plan, if funding can be identified. Park-and-ride locations at interchanges would also need to be identified.

The STSA concluded that these corridors

- provide the best opportunity to implement and sustain higher-intensity transit services, such as BRT or LRT; and
- have the best chance of obtaining New Starts or Small Starts funding through the Federal Transit Administration.

SMART 1 study is the next step along the path to obtaining funding for BRT or LRT in these corridors.

SMART 1 and the I-81 Viaduct Project

Why are these separate studies?

The SMART 1 study is advancing a specific recommendation from the Syracuse Transit System Analysis for enhanced transit on two corridors that have the conditions necessary to sustain high ridership.

Centro and the NYSDOT could still pursue an I-81 express commuter bus service with park-and-rides as a separate initiative. The SMART 1 study does not preclude that option.

- Transit mode share in our community would need to increase dramatically to have an impact on the options being considered for the I-81 Viaduct.

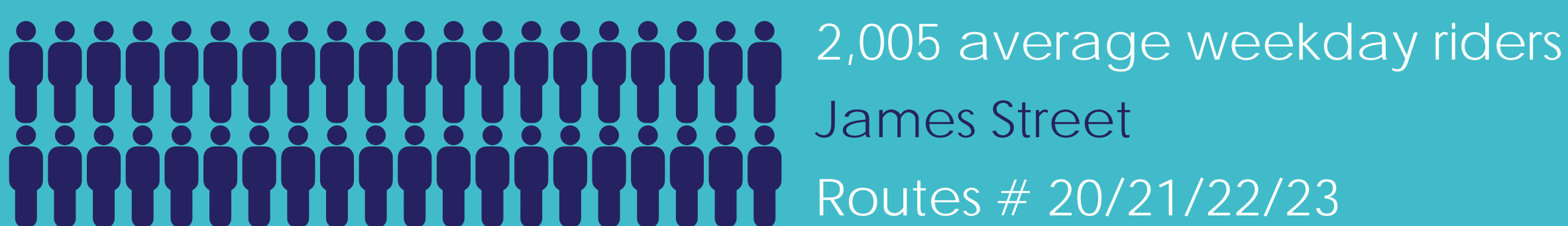
How are the project teams coordinating?

As plans for both I-81 and an enhanced transit system progress, SMTC, NYSDOT, and Centro will continue to communicate frequently.

- NYSDOT and Centro are members of the Study Advisory Committee for the SMART 1 study.
- SMTC and Centro are members of the Stakeholder Advisory Working Groups for The I-81 Viaduct Project.

Commuting in the Syracuse area:

Centro routes with highest ridership



= 50 Riders

Commuters who both live AND work in the City of Syracuse: **35,000**

Commuters who live in Salina, Clay, and Cicero combined, and work in the City of Syracuse: **19,000**

Percent of City of Syracuse residents that currently take transit to work: **8%**

Percent of suburban residents that currently take transit to work: **1%**