

Appendix A
Public Involvement Plan

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2004 Update

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

1. **Goals**

- A. 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;
- B. Involve the public in the transportation planning process so that transportation plans, policies and investments embrace the concerns of the traveling public, rural and urban neighborhoods, economic development interests, and other societal concerns. All public involvement processes shall provide opportunities for greater public participation in decisions relating to human health and the environment. Outreach and involvement will be extended to all affected and interested groups and individuals – minority, elderly, low-income, tribal governments, and others (Environmental Justice).

2. **Formation of Study Advisory Committee and Interested Stakeholder Group**

The PIP includes the formation of two groups to assist the SMTC in this effort.

- A. **Study Advisory Committee (SAC)** – The SMTC Planning Committee will be acting as members on the SAC. The project's process will require active and consistent involvement from the Planning Committee voting members, who have significant interest and responsibility in transportation planning and programming.

The SAC's role will be to advise the SMTC on the technical content of deliverables, and to provide needed input and decision-making throughout the project.

- B. **Stakeholders** – A broader group of interested individuals with significant relations and interest in the LRTP Update process will be maintained by the SMTC. Because of the impact the LRTP Update has on the community, the entire SMTC database will be treated as the LRTP Update stakeholders group. The stakeholders will be sent pertinent study information, kept apprised of significant study developments, notified of all public meetings, and encouraged to provide feedback and comment regarding the **LRTP 2004 Update**.

3. **Meetings, Public Presentations, and Public Comment**

In contrast to its typical approach of holding three formal public information meetings during specific stages during the planning process, the SMTC intends to broaden the exposure and increase the outreach of the LRTP 2004 Update by participating in an indeterminate number of meetings, workshops and focus groups, at which the LRTP 2004 Update will be presented.

The SMTC will reach out to a wide variety of individuals and organizations in an effort to be added to a meeting agenda where the LRTP 2004 Update can be presented, and comments and feedback can be solicited. The SMTC anticipates working with various neighborhood associations, community groups, business associations, chambers of commerce, planning federations, the City of Syracuse's Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT), FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Leadership Greater Syracuse, towns and villages throughout the MPO area, and more to effectively promote the LRTP 2004 Update.

Public Meeting (Winter 2003-2004)

The SMTC will hold one public information meeting, at which it will present the draft final **LRTP 2004 Update** to the public. This meeting will also mark the commencement of a 30-day public comment period. All comments received at the public meeting, and during this subsequent comment period will be considered for inclusion in the final **LRTP 2004 Update** that will be presented to the SMTC Planning and Policy Committees in the first quarter of 2004.

All substantive public comments will be included in report appendices. All SAC and public meetings will be held in a handicapped accessible facility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The SMTC will make every effort to respond to those who need a sign language interpreter, assistive learning system, or any other accommodations to facilitate the public's participation in the transportation planning process.

4. **Miscellaneous Public Involvement Efforts**

To further increase its outreach to the public, the SMTC will be initiating and conducting a variety of public involvement activities:

- A. **LRTP 2004 Update "UPDATE"**: The SMTC will consider producing and publishing a 4-page newsletter, solely dedicated to promoting the **LRTP 2004 Update** project in place of its regularly produced newsletter DIRECTIONS, or as a two-page insert that accompanies the DIRECTIONS newsletter.

In addition to providing informational updates on the issues, efforts and ongoing tasks of the project, the newsletter will include information on how to contact the SMTC to arrange for and schedule public presentations and workshops, as well as how the public can participate and submit comments.

- B. LRTP 2004 Update Project Web Site:** The SMTC will establish a project web site (a sub-web site, structured within the SMTC web site at www.smtcmpo.org) that will provide general information about the **LRTP 2004 Update** planning process, announce upcoming meeting dates, provide updates on the activities and progression of the project, and allow the public to participate, comment or ask questions (via the web site).
- C. Material Distribution at Locations/Events Within Study Area:** If deemed necessary (at the discretion of the SAC and/or other appropriate SMTC committees), the SMTC may distribute miscellaneous project specific information at various sites throughout Onondaga County or events (e.g., Onondaga Lake Parkway Sunday's, Corporate Challenge, Clinton Square events, Syracuse Lakefront/Inner Harbor). This information may include one or more of the following: newsletter, meeting notice, comment card, and/or public opinion surveys.
- D. Assistance from SAC, and Overall Community:** The SMTC will be asking the SAC members to assist them in better notifying citizens and the community about the LRTP Update. Such a request is imperative in order to get the "grassroots community" involved. By helping to distribute flyers/announcements, and speaking to the members of the community about the **LRTP 2004 Update**, the SAC will serve to further promote public involvement in areas (and to individuals) that were not reached through the standard outreach. As part of this effort, the SMTC will attempt to get articles published in newsletters and publications across Onondaga County, including the City of Syracuse.
- E. Outreach to Municipalities:** A direct outreach effort will be made to municipalities throughout Onondaga County. Newsletters, flyers, press releases, meeting announcements, etc. will be sent to all town supervisors, and village/city mayors, in an effort to keep the entire community informed and involved.

The SMTC may determine that it needs to schedule individual meetings with towns, villages, etc., and their respective planning representatives to discuss conditions and issues of interest, relating to the **LRTP 2004 Update**.

- F. **Posting Information at Public Libraries:** Meeting notices and study-specific material previously mentioned will also be posted at all libraries in the Onondaga County Public Library system.
- G. **Encouragement of Public Comment/Participation:** All citizens (especially those who are not able to attend public presentations or participate in direct contact with the SMTC staff) are encouraged to submit comments to the SMTC at any time (written correspondence or e-mail/web site communication). This message will be publicized and made clear throughout the study's project schedule, verbally, and on all study material and publications. The public is also welcome to attend any of the publicized SMTC Executive, Planning and Policy Committee meetings in which the **LRTP 2004 Update** may be on the agenda as a discussion item.
- H. **Public Presentations:** The SMTC will pursue a variety of speaking engagements to share, promote, and publicize the efforts of the **LRTP 2004 Update** (e.g., TNT meetings; FOCUS core group meetings; Town and Village Board meetings, etc.). Such speaking engagements will be considered for full workshop presentations, as mentioned in Item 3 on page 2.

5. **Press Releases/Media Coverage**

The SMTC will issue news releases (announcing the details of all public meetings) to all major and minor newspapers, television stations, and radio well in advance. If necessary, the SMTC will also send additional news releases, or take the initiative to prompt media coverage on pertinent developments pertaining to the **LRTP 2004 Update**.

The SMTC will also explore new venues such as the Pennysaver in "helping get the word out." Press releases and articles prepared for the SMTC newsletter DIRECTIONS (pertaining to the LRTP 2004 Update) will also be submitted to widely distributed publications including, but not limited to, the Pennysaver.

6. **Conclusion**

It is important for the SMTC and its member agencies to understand public attitudes and values in the early stages of the **LRTP 2004 Update**, as well as solicit input from affected citizens and community representatives. It is the SMTC's belief that the public involvement plan set forth, one that solicits input frequently, will bring people inside and provide the opportunity for the public to develop greater awareness and active involvement. This public involvement plan is an all-encompassing guide that is intended to serve two purposes:

- ❖ To provide a documented process to guide the SMTC in involving the public;
- ❖ To guarantee to the citizens an open, fair, and equitable process; and
- ❖ To harmonize transportation plans, policies and investments with environmental concerns, reflecting an appropriate consideration of economic and social interests.

June 24, 2002