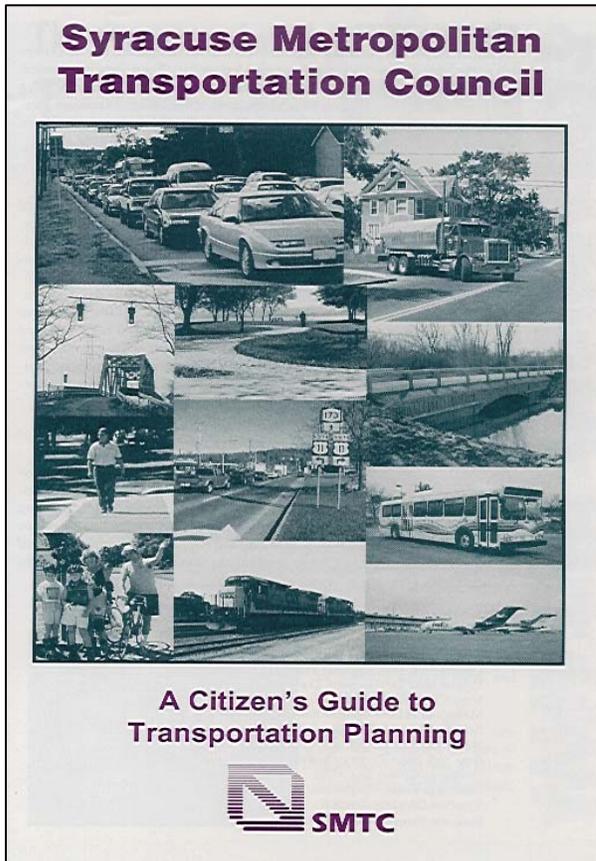


Chapter I: Introduction

A. What is the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council?

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the Governor of the State of New York, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) was created in 1966 to carry out the continuous, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process for the Syracuse Metropolitan Area, which includes all of

Onondaga County and small parts of Oswego and Madison Counties. The SMTC area is centered in the City of Syracuse, the transportation hub and economic center for Central New York (see Map 1).

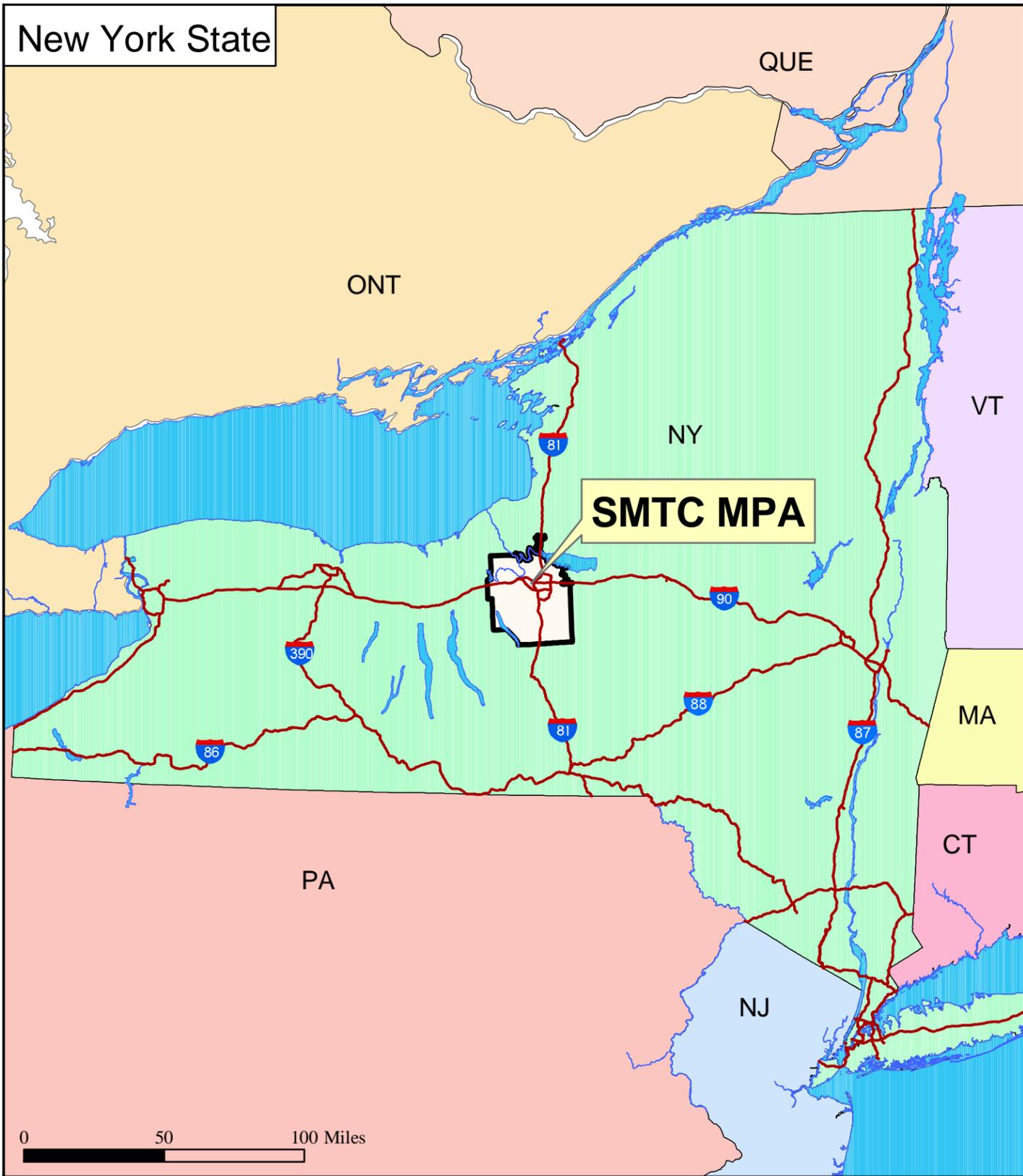


In addition to maintaining a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a 20-year vision of future transportation projects and improvements, the SMTC conducts a number of specific transportation planning activities as part of its biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), some of which include: traffic corridor studies; transportation data collection; safety improvement analyses; congestion management; and multimodal transportation planning (including bicycle and pedestrian planning). The SMTC is also responsible for the maintenance of the area's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a multi-year program that funds

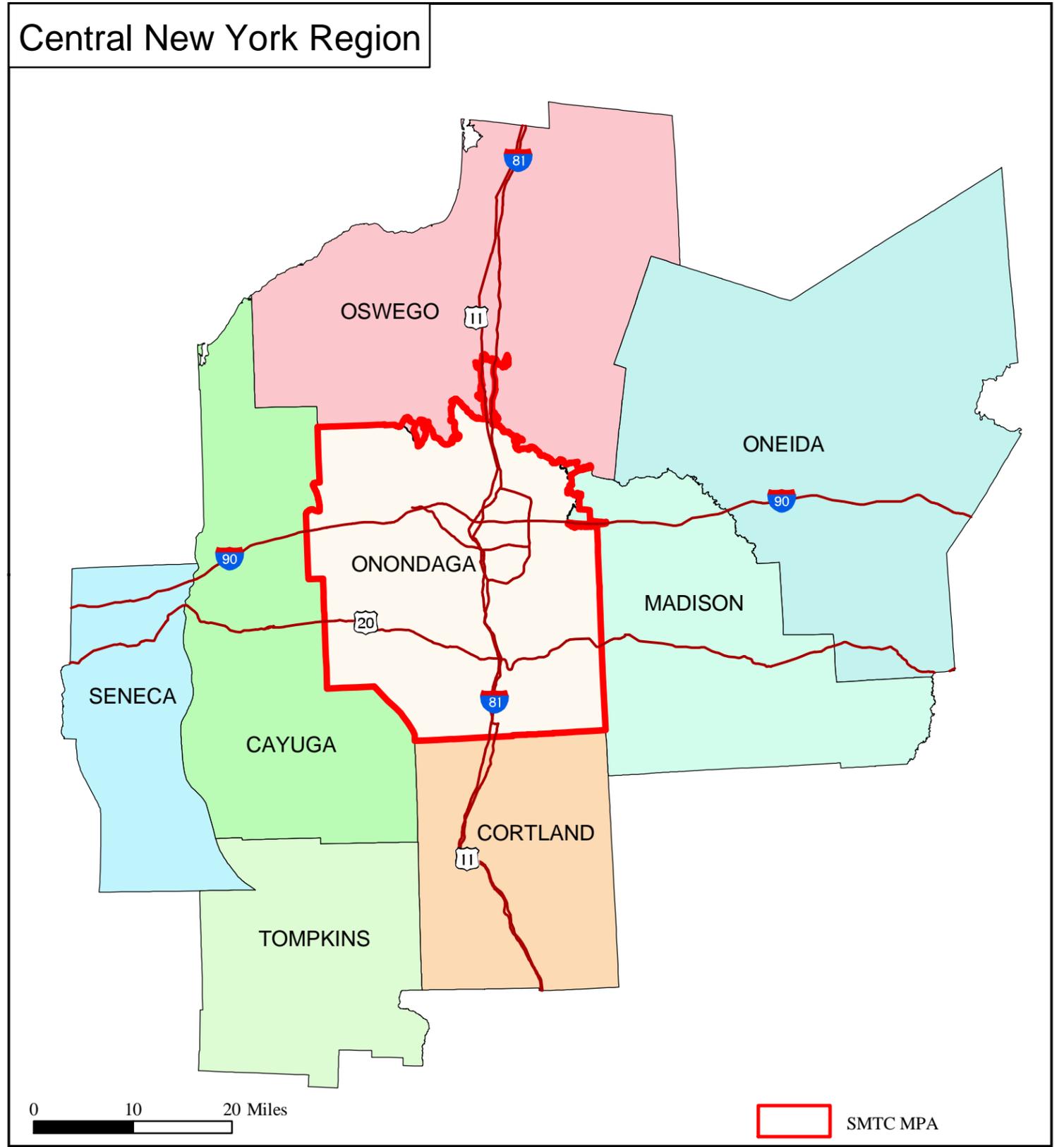
capital projects related to transit, local roadways and interstates, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and more. It is important to note, however, that the SMTC is not an agency that can implement particular transportation improvements, but serves as a collaborative forum where transportation issues are studied, and recommendations made.

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, Planning and Executive Committee. Served by the SMTC central staff, these committees serve as the hierarchy to the transportation planning activities of the SMTC.

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SMTC Metropolitan Planning Area Long-Range Transportation Plan 2007 Update

Map 1

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



Basemap Copyrighted by NYSDOT
 Data Sources: SMTC, NYSDOT, 2001
 Prepared by SMTC, 03/2006

The Policy Committee consists of the elected and appointed officials representing local, State and Federal governments and other organizations/agencies having an interest or responsibility in transportation planning and/or programming in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. The primary responsibility of the Policy Committee is to establish policies for the overall conduct of the SMTC.

The Planning Committee, which is established by the Policy Committee, is composed of the professional/technical representatives of both Policy Committee members and public agencies having direct or indirect responsibility for transportation planning and/or 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 for recommendation to the Policy Committee all major studies and planning activities.

The Executive Committee is made up of Planning Committee members and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Central Staff for financial management, personnel and other administrative requirements.

SMTC Policy Committee members include 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 Metropolitan Development Association (MDA), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC), 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.

B. Purpose of the Long Range Transportation Plan

Transportation Legislation

On August 10, 2005, the most recent transportation legislation bill, *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) was signed into law. SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the five-year period of 2005 to 2009.¹ Through SAFETEA-LU, a total of \$244.1 billion in funding is guaranteed for highways, highway safety and transit. This represents the largest surface transportation investment in United States history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st Century - the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) - shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, *SAFETEA-LU*, 2/22/06, <<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/>>.

investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.² It is important to note that in all of its transportation planning activities, the SMTC is required to adhere to rules and regulations put forth in the new SAFETEA-LU transportation legislation.

How is the SMTC's LRTP affected by SAFETEA-LU? The LRTP is a blueprint to guide the Syracuse Metropolitan Area's transportation development over a 20 to 25 -year period. Legislatively required every four years (prior to SAFETEA-LU, every three years)³ to reflect changing conditions and new planning principals, the LRTP is based on projections of growth and travel demand coupled with financial assumptions. The LRTP specifically looks at major urban transportation planning concerns such as environmental/air quality; comprehensive access to transportation; alternative transportation modes (especially bicycle and pedestrian); the impact of land development on the transportation system; highway traffic congestion; and maintenance of the existing infrastructure.

It is important to note that 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.

² U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, *SAFETEA-LU*, 2/22/06, <<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary.htm>> (August 25, 2005).

³ Frequency of Long Range Plan Updates: Congress has attempted to bring into sync TIP development (which had been on a maximum two-year cycle), long range plan development (which had been on a three-year non-attainment, five-year attainment cycle) and air quality conformity (which is triggered either by TIP, long range plan or air quality plan adoption). As part of this the law now states that the transportation plan shall prepare and update the plan every four years (or more frequently if the MPO elects to). *SMTC doesn't begin this new cycle until we have adopted a new LRTP Update under SAFETEA-LU. After the LRTP 2007 Update is adopted, the SMTC will not be required to complete the next update for four years.*

In an effort to bring the LRTP in compliance with SAFETEA-LU legislation, the LRTP 2007 Update must be adopted and adhere to the new and additional planning factors and guidelines noted within the SAFETEA-LU legislation. If the MPO could not meet the July 2007 deadline, a one- year extension may have been granted assuming a good faith effort was put in place prior to July 2007 to bring the LRTP in line with SAFETEA-LU requirements. Anticipating the occurrence of the LRTP 2007 Update approval schedule to go beyond July 2007, the SMTC in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and the New York State Department of Transportation prepared an Action Plan for addressing the SAFETEA-LU requirements in the LRTP 2007 Update. The Action Plan specifies particular approaches that the SMTC would utilize to proceed towards SAFETEA-LU compliancy in the LRTP 2007 Update, thereby providing a good faith effort on behalf on the MPO. On February 15, 2007 the Planning Committee recommended that the Policy Committee adopt the Action Plan. The Policy Committee then adopted this Action Plan on March 12, 2007. The *Action Plan for Addressing SAFETEA-LU Requirements in the LRTP 2007 Update* along with its associated adopted resolution (SMTC Policy Resolution 2007-4) can be found in Appendix I. Every element listed in the *Action Plan*, which was also reviewed by FHWA, has been incorporated into this 2007 LRTP Update Report.

In January 1995, the SMTC published the 2020 LRTP. This was followed three years later with the 1998 Update, again with a 2001 Update, and once more with the 2004 Update. All documents were prepared in compliance with 23 CFR 450.322 and 49 CFR 613.100, which is also the basis for this document - the 2007 Update, to fulfill review and update requirements. Since this document is an update, some information and data may not be balanced due to modifying/adding data to the original 1995 information. The original 1995 LRTP is the base document and this 2007 Update represents modifications to that plan.

The 2007 Update has been prepared on the basis of an evaluation of the initial LRTP completed in 1995 and the 1998, 2001, and 2004 Updates, as well as changing circumstances of a significant nature that have occurred and affected these four documents. The 2007 Update should not be viewed as a stand-alone document, but instead should be used in conjunction with the LRTP published in 1995, and the 1998, 2001, and 2004 Updates. **This 2007 Update is fashioned after the 2004 Update in form and content with updates reflecting only changing conditions and new legislation, the balance of the document remains the same.**

During the last decade, several changes in federal legislation have had a substantial impact on how MPOs, such as the SMTC, 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 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, now that the interstate highway system has been completed.

The LRTP presents a vision of the transportation system and the projects that will bring that vision to reality over time. Central to that vision is the protection of the value of investments already made in developing the transportation system while providing resources to pursue innovative solutions to mobility constraints and enhancing travel choices available. Also central to the LRTP is the need to adjust the land development patterns and transportation system investments, where practical, to conform to existing development guidelines (i.e., Onondaga County's 2010 Development Guide, the Onondaga County Settlement Plan, and the City of Syracuse's Comprehensive Plan).

1. Public Involvement

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. Such legislation underscores the need for public involvement, calling 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.



I-481 Industrial Corridor Transportation Study Public Meeting

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 PIP for the LRTP 2007 Update.* SMTC's well-established PIP process, which has been followed for all LRTP updates, is now a mandated federal requirement under SAFETEA-LU. Such a proactive and dynamic PIP development process ensures the continual review of meaningful public involvement objectives and concepts, as opposed to one stagnant PIP that the SMTC must follow in all its transportation planning activities. Depending on the nature of the project, such groups as freight shippers, business developers, property owners, community leaders, social service agencies, fire and police representatives, and/or representatives of public transit, to name a few, are actively

sought as participants in the project process. Input from such groups is important to the success of the project in meeting identified needs. The varying PIPs also consider the differing characteristics and impacts of different geographical areas on the focus of the study. For example, the existing conditions, the transportation issues, and the corresponding recommendations for the University Hill Transportation Study (located in the heart of the City of Syracuse's collegiate and medical campuses) are quite different from that of the Fayetteville-Manlius Road/Route 257 Pedestrian Accommodation Feasibility Study, a transportation planning activity focusing on pedestrian connection options along a one-mile stretch of State Route 257 in the Town of Manlius. Thus, the SMTC created an individual project-specific PIP for both studies, in which differing methods allow the public to better participate in the study. The PIP also pinpoints when in the project the public involvement meetings will be held that allow for the exchange of information and input. The SMTC also has an umbrella PIP for the MPO as a stand-alone document. The SMTC is looking to update this PIP in the near future.

The SMTC has taken several steps to strengthen the public involvement process. In addition to holding public meetings, the SMTC continues to recruit the necessary technical personnel and community representatives, as appropriate, to serve on a project-specific Study Advisory Committees (SAC). The SAC, consisting of representatives from affected organizations, local and state governments and agencies, and selected community representatives, meets regularly with the SMTC to assist in managing projects and provide needed input and direction.

In addition to the SAC, a list of interested "stakeholders" (a broader group of interested individuals with significant relations and interest in a particular planning study or activity) is maintained by the SMTC. The stakeholders are sent pertinent study information, kept apprised of significant study developments, notified of all public meetings, and encouraged to provide feedback and comment regarding the particular planning study or activity.

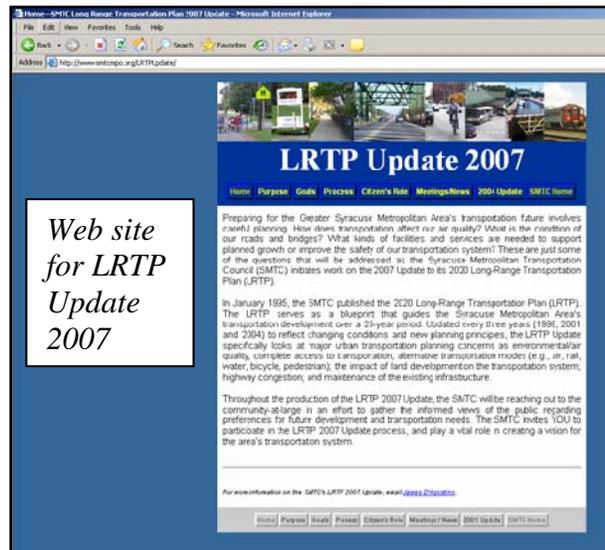


Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Stakeholder Workshop

Separate meetings are also considered for the stakeholders group at various points during some projects, so that the SMTC may report on the progress of a study effort, and solicit input.

Since the 2001 Update, the SMTC has continued to improve and expand upon its already impressive public involvement efforts. The following items are some of the noteworthy acts and methods the SMTC has implemented to inform and invite the public to participate:

- a) **SMTC Web Site [www.smtcmpto.org]:** In September 2001, the MPO launched a “new and improved” SMTC web site, which now contains general information on the SMTC, detailed “headline” information on its studies, products, public participation opportunities, and other pertinent news and developments. The site also provides a “one-stop shopping” location for various SMTC-produced reports and study documentation. The improved web site has received a significant number of hits, has been extremely useful and cost-effective in its posting of final reports, and has become a site that the public relies on for meeting notices, and UPWP project updates. Most importantly, it has become another source for the public to participate in the transportation planning process. The public involvement aspects pertaining to the web site have also been strengthened. The SMTC has taken advantage of the Internet and its web site by creating a sub web site specific to individual UPWP projects. For example, a sub web site for the SMTC’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was created [www.smtcmpto.org/bike-ped] and is still being utilized. In addition, sub web sites for the University Hill Transportation Study [http://www.universityhillstudy.com/] and the LRTP 2007 Update [http://www.smtcmpto.org/LRTPUpdate/] have been established as well. The SMTC will continue to use its web site for project-specific sub web sites in the future, publicizing project news, updates, and opportunities for public participation. The SMTC has received accolades from the FHWA on the content of the website. This website comprehensively presents the body of work of the SMTC and is freely accessible to all. Final plans and reports, such as the LRTP, TIP and UPWP, are electronically available on the SMTC website for public review.



- b) The use of **press releases** to announce various meetings, project updates, and available reports has been upgraded in its distribution. The SMTC is now e-mailing its press releases to local media and agencies/individuals/citizens of interest.
- c) **SMTC newsletter, DIRECTIONS:** The SMTC continues to promote its activities through its newsletter, which has grown in its total distribution count from approximately 1,500 in 1999 to about 2,500 in 2006. The SMTC also began promotion of its online version of *DIRECTIONS*, and the newsletter is distributed via e-mail to hundreds of recipients.

- d) **Final Reports:** The SMTC has attempted to make better use of technology in making transportation planning reports, memorandums, and documents available for public review and possession. Central staff has implemented procedures that allow for final reports to be accessed via CD-ROM, e-mail (PDF file), or accessed on the SMTC web site. The SMTC continues to make its reports available at its offices, and at local libraries throughout Onondaga County.
- e) Continued and improved distribution of various project-specific **fact sheets and meeting announcement flyers**. The SMTC has received considerable feedback and inquiries following the distribution of such material. SAC members are assisting in the distribution of these flyers in an attempt to get the “grass-roots” community involved.
- f) **Project specific newsletters** have been developed to provide focused information and project updates on particular UPWP projects.
- g) **SMTC brochure:** *A Citizen’s Guide to Transportation Planning* was produced in the Fall 2001. It has been well received in its attempt to explain the role and purpose of the SMTC. In fact, it has been recognized by the public in its effective explanation of the MPO process (e.g. the progression and relationship of the LRTP, UPWP, and the TIP). The SMTC will be revisiting this guide within the next year to update it as appropriate.
- h) **Media Relationships:** Continued and heightened relationships with the local media have led to increased media exposure over the past three years for the SMTC and many of its transportation planning activities. The SMTC has been working with all mediums, television, radio, and print, to promote the activities and public participation opportunities to the public. In addition, the SMTC has established a good working relationship with students from Syracuse University who conduct interviews for their public communications class, and the Syracuse University newspaper. This is helping to spread the SMTC news to the college setting/environment.
- i) **Advertisements:** When necessary, the SMTC has arranged for advertisements in local newspapers to expand its outreach to all populations. The SMTC has also posted various legal notices and announcements in the print media.
- j) **Representation on the FOCUS (Forging Our Communities United Strengths)**, a community-wide visioning program. This volunteer activity has allowed the SMTC to discuss its role in the community and promote the activities and studies of the SMTC in tandem with the community’s goals and visions.



Route 31 Study Educational Session

- k) **Integration and coordination with the City of Syracuse's Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT)**, a citywide community development forum. The SMTC has partnered with this group in the distribution of information, and holding of public meetings in an attempt to reach more citizens in all sections of the City of Syracuse.
- l) **Orientation Packet:** Part of the SMTC's public involvement activities has been to educate our Planning and Policy Committee members, in addition to the general public who request information about the SMTC. Thus, the SMTC created and established an orientation packet for new committee members.
- m) **Onondaga Indian Nation:** The SMTC continues its outreach to the Onondaga Indian Nation in all of its mailings (e.g., press releases, newsletters, flyers, and public meeting announcements).
- n) **Assisting other MPOs:** The SMTC has expanded its outreach to assist in promoting MPOs throughout New York State. In 2002, the SMTC assisted with the design and layout of the New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NYSAMPO) brochure. The SMTC's Communications Specialist designed the graphical layout, and coordinated printing efforts for a brochure that aims to promote the role and purpose of MPOs, and the significance of transportation planning in New York State.
- o) **Comment Cards and Surveys:** The SMTC has implemented various questionnaires, surveys, and comment cards in an effort to obtain additional public participation and opinion.

The SMTC recognizes that the active involvement of the entire community, in addition to the SMTC Policy and Planning Committee members, is paramount to good transportation planning. Public comments are valued because they can shape the direction of a particular transportation study or planning activity, and may help to identify new transportation projects that are important to citizens of the area.

2. Additional Public Involvement Requirements under SAFETEA-LU

With the passage of the new SAFETEA-LU transportation bill, additional requirements have been placed on MPOs for the public participation components of their LRTPs. The new requirements are summarized below.

- **Consultation Requirement:** SAFETEA-LU includes an additional consultation section requiring the MPO to consult "with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the transportation plan. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate: (1) Comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps, if available; or (2) Comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or

historic resources, if available.” This effectively requires involvement of these agencies in the long range planning process for the same reasons they are involved in project development (EIS) work. The SMTC intends to complete outreach to the following agencies to appropriately fulfill the consultation requirement (Appendix B provides contact information for these agencies). Some of these agencies are SMTC Member Agencies.

- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board*
- Onondaga Nation
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*
- NYS Department of State – Quality Communities Task Force
- Army Corps of Engineers
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA Section)
- Cornell Cooperative Extension – Onondaga County
- Cornell Cooperative Extension – Madison County
- Cornell Cooperative Extension – Oswego County
- Onondaga County Office of the Environment
- Onondaga County Health Department
- Onondaga County Council on Environmental Health
- Madison County Health Department
- Oswego County Health Department
- Onondaga County Department of Water and Environment Protection (WEP)
- NYS Canal Corporation
- NYSDOT Environmental Unit
- NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee (SWCC)
- Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Save the County Land Trust Onondaga County
- New York Water Environmental Association (NYWEA)
- NYS Emergency Management Office, Region 4
- Onondaga County Emergency Management Office
- US Fish and Wildlife
- Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA)
- NYS Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Syracuse Department of Water
- Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA)*
- NY Forest Owners Association (NYFOA)
- North East Foresters Association (NEFA)

*SMTC Member Agency

- Participation by Interested Parties: “Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities” and “representatives of the disabled” have been added to the categories of stakeholders that the MPO shall provide a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.
 - The SMTC continually incorporates Environmental Justice within its planning process, and as part of the recently completed Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the SMTC completed considerable outreach to the bicycle/pedestrian community and various community organizations.
 - In coordination with the CNYRTA, the SMTC is in the process of preparing a coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan that will address the transportation needs of the disabled.
- Requirement for a Participation Plan: Congress has introduced a new required item. MPOs must develop a formal plan in consultation with interested parties. The SMTC’s PIP for the LRTP 2007 Update satisfies this requirement. In addition, the SMTC is in the process of creating a Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the agency for the new SAFETEA-LU regulations.
- Public Participation Methods: Both for the statewide transportation plan and the MPO long range plan, three methods shall be used “to the maximum extent practicable”:
 - “hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
 - “employ visualization techniques to describe plans; and
 - “make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate...”

The SMTC already engages in the new SAFETEA-LU requirements noted above. For the LRTP 2007 Update in particular, the SMTC completed significant outreach from Summer 2005 through Summer 2006 that include wide-range outreach to diverse community organizations including:

- DeWitt Rotary Club Meeting (Drumlins)
- Fayetteville Senior Center (Fayetteville)
- County Planning Federation Conference (The Marx)
- Town Highway Superintendents Association (Wacky Wyatt's in Baldwinsville)
- FOCUS- CNY LINK Booth at OnCenter. Ran continuous presentation of LRTP on laptop and also had comment sheets available.
- Downtown TNT Meeting (Ida Benderson Center)

The SMTC has found it most useful to “piggyback” onto previously-planned community meetings, essentially becoming an agenda item at these meetings. This ensures a captive audience, giving SMTC an opportunity to reach a broader segment of the population. At each of these meetings, the SMTC shared a presentation (which was also included on the SMTC LRTP project-specific website), held a question/answer period, and asked meeting participants to complete a survey that allowed them to comment on their transportation concerns. This survey was also available on the SMTC’s LRTP project specific website. The surveys can be found in Appendix B.

In addition, the draft LRTP 2007 Update will be sent to interested parties for review and comment, including those agencies noted previously in this section. The final draft LRTP 2007 Update will be available for public comment for a 30 day period, during which time a public meeting will be held. The final draft document will also be presented to the SMTC's Planning and Policy Committees for final approval.

As far as "visualization techniques" are concerned, the SMTC utilizes GIS and mapping, as well as numerous charts and graphs, to aid with visualization. Since the SMTC LRTP is not project specific, visualization techniques will be focused on a system-wide scale. In the coming year, the SMTC will be researching and attempting to expand its visualization techniques to include those which will offer the public the best capacity to understand the Plan's objectives. In addition, the SMTC will engage in a proposed statewide Shared Cost Initiative program that will include training in visualization techniques for MPO staff.

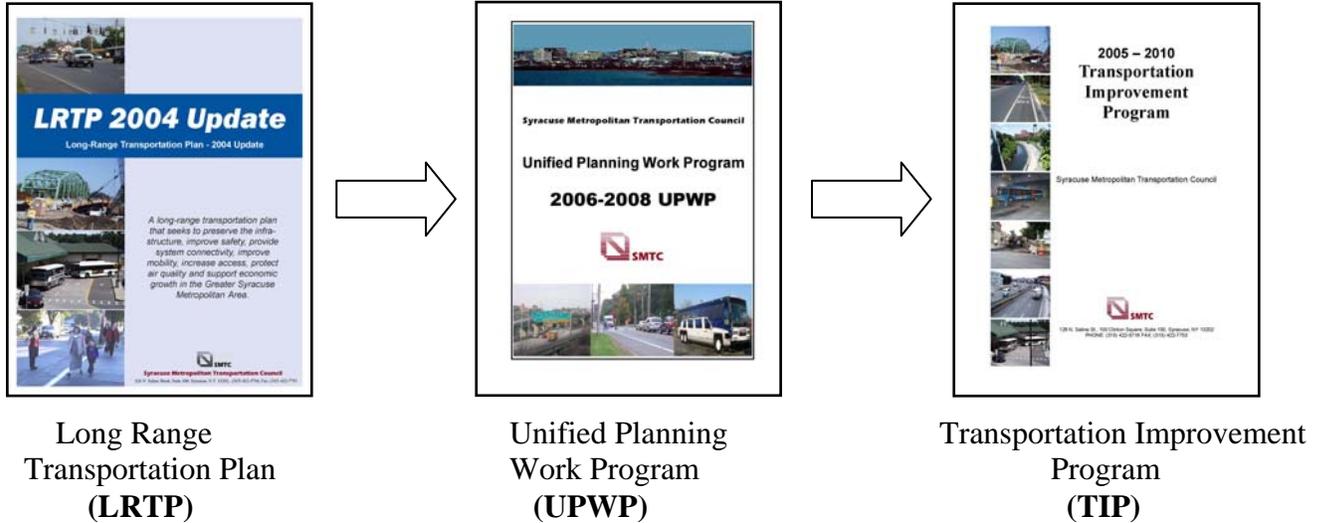
C. Transportation Planning Context

The SMTC develops three key documents that are the ingredients to transportation planning and programming in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area: 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 on the following page (Table 1-1) 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. Each year, the Policy Committee adopts the *UPWP*, which incorporates all the transportation planning activities (and directly supportive comprehensive planning activities) for the coming year. The activities are generally major transportation studies that identify short- and long range needs and reflect the efforts to be undertaken that will lead toward the attainment of the *LRTP* goals and objectives over a number of years. Finally, the SMTC adopts the *TIP*, the SMTC instrument for programming capital improvement projects to complete the planning and implementation process.

Table 1-1

The Planning and Programming Process



D. Process and Funding

1. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Process

The SMTC is responsible for the maintenance of the area's TIP, a three-year program that funds capital projects related to public transportation, local roadways and interstates, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and more. Five pieces of federal legislation significantly affect the TIP and the planning and programming of transportation projects. These include SAFETEA-LU, TEA-21, ISTEA, ADA, and CAAA.

The TIP for the SMTC area is comprised of a staged three-year program (which may change to four under SAFETEA-LU) of transportation capital projects together with a three-year estimate of transit capital and maintenance requirements. While the TIP is usually approved biennially, the document may be amended as needed. The 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 adhere to the following requirements:

1. Identify transportation improvement projects recommended for advancement during the program year. The projects required are those located within the study area and receiving any 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 Plans 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 (TCM) as identified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Air Quality.
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.

The TIP should also include regional highway and transit projects 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 Consultant 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 Analysis Bureau (NYSDOT EAB), 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.

Implications of SAFETEA-LU on the TIP Process

The new SAFETEA-LU legislation now states that the TIP (and the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP)) must be updated at least once every four years, and NYSDOT and the NYS MPOs anticipate updating the TIP every two years. SAFETEA-LU also indicates that the TIP must contain a priority list of projects and strategies for four years, a financial plan, and descriptions (type of work, project limits, etc.) of each project in the TIP. In addition, investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities are to be included in the published annual listing of projects.

2. UPWP Process

The UPWP identifies the transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in the SMTC study area in support of the goals, objectives and actions established in the 2020 LRTP, which was adopted in January 1995. 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 that a coordinated transportation planning process occurs in the region, which will make positive contributions towards the achievement of the established 2027 goals regarding mobility, facilities, safety, the environment, economy and land use.

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 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 fulfill the Federal and State policies, and 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 into subsequent UPWP's to enable project closure. 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, consistent with the LRTP.

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.

3. Long-Term Funding

As a result of SAFETEA-LU and New York State reformatting its MPO funding formula, the SMTC's planning budgets have recently increased. We do not know if this increase is temporary or permanent. The SAFETEA-LU legislation has passed, and the funding allocated to the state has increased from previous transportation legislation. 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.