

# DIRECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Fall 2017



CSX freight train, East Syracuse

## What's New?

Ask any member of the staff at the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) 'what's new?' and they will most likely respond that it's more than our carpet and phone system! Staff has been involved in many different items during the spring and summer.

We wrapped up work on several Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) studies during the first portion of our program year. In addition, the SMTC served as host of the New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NYSAMPO) conference in late June. Following the conference, we held Planning and Policy Committee meetings to obtain acknowledgement of the work staff completed. Most recently, we have begun preparations for upcoming public meetings.

The newsletter will highlight 'what's new' at the SMTC.

And, if that was not enough to be working on, the SMTC offices were remodeled during the months of July, August, and September.



We have a new look! As you flip through our new newsletter we would love to hear your feedback on it. Send us an e-mail at [contactus@smtcmpo.org](mailto:contactus@smtcmpo.org).

Look for the icons to help orient you to the type of projects we are working on!



Topic - Bus Transportation



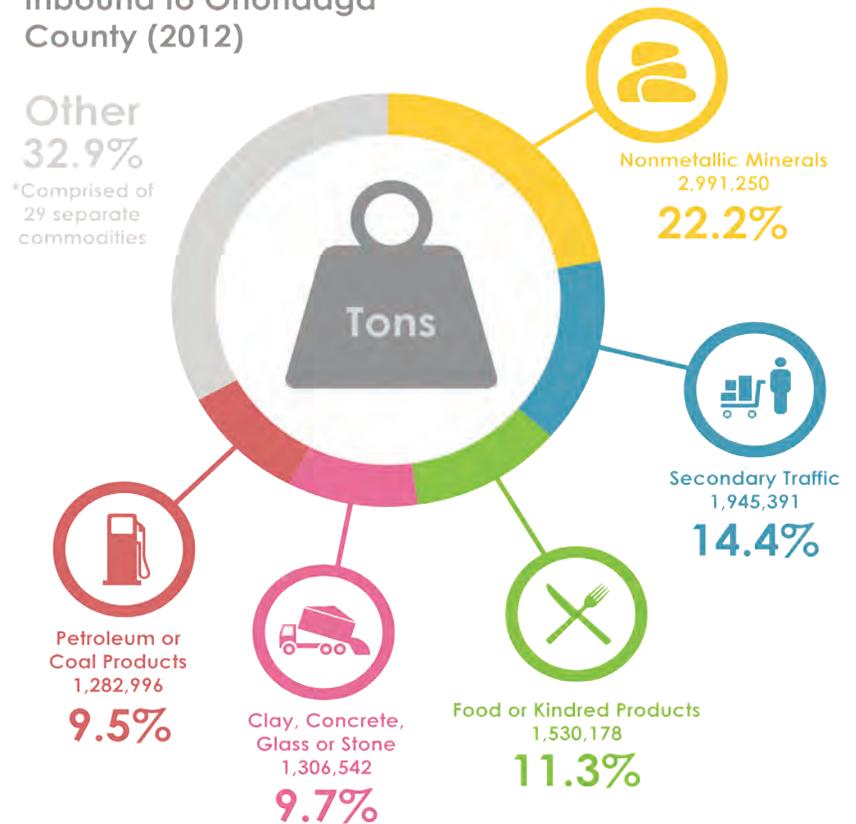
## Freight Transportation Profile Complete

- First SMTC Freight Plan
- 13.5 tons of inbound freight
- Key trading partner - Buffalo

The SMTC Policy Committee acknowledged the completion of the agency's first Freight Transportation Profile. Over the past several years there has been an increased interest in freight and goods movement and its relation to metropolitan transportation planning activities as the freight industry plays an integral economic role in our country and region. The Freight Transportation Profile assembles numerous datasets applicable to the freight transportation system and draws at times from previous agency completed documents to assist the SMTC staff, member agencies, and related freight businesses and stakeholders in the development of plans and programs in support of federal metropolitan transportation planning policies and regional activities to ensure continuance of freight mobility and reliability along the area's transportation network.

What's the number one commodity transported to Onondaga County? How many tons of freight move out of the county? What modes of transport are used? These, and many other questions, are answered in the freight profile. Baseline (2012) and forecast (2040) commodity data (i.e., type of, weight, value, mode of transportation, and direction of travel) comprise a significant portion of the profile. SMTC staff created several useful infographics that summarize the freight commodity data. Based on TRANSEARCH data, in 2012, approximately 13.5 million tons of freight, valued at \$20.4 billion, was inbound to Onondaga County. By weight, the top commodity

### All Commodities by Weight Inbound to Onondaga County (2012)



inbound to Onondaga County was Nonmetallic Minerals. (See graphic above.) In terms of value in 2012, the top commodity was Secondary Traffic. Commodity data are also categorized by various New York State regions (i.e., Albany, Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, and rest of New York State). In all cases, freight tonnage and value transported by truck in all "directions" is the prevailing mode of transport both in 2012 and the 2040 forecasts. In terms of general trading partners, the key trading partner for Onondaga County in terms of both inbound and outbound freight is the Buffalo metropolitan area. The final report is synthesized into four sections:

1. Overview of the SMTC's transportation system.
2. Description of commodities carried over and along the freight system and the modes used to carry freight into, out of, and within the Syracuse MPA.
3. Outreach methods and input received from freight professionals in the Syracuse MPA.
4. Listing of near- and future-term freight capital projects.

A copy of the report is available on the SMTC web site, [www.smtcmpo.org](http://www.smtcmpo.org). For additional information, please contact Mario Colone at 315.422.5716 or [mcolone@smtcmpo.org](mailto:mcolone@smtcmpo.org).



Directions is a publication of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC). Formed in 1966 as a result of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962, and the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, the SMTC serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Syracuse metropolitan area, and provides a forum for cooperative decision making in developing transportation plans and programs. Its committees are comprised of elected and appointed officials, representing local, state, and federal governments or agencies (member agencies) having an interest in or responsibility for transportation planning and programming.

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Graphic Assistance: Kevan M. Busa



## SMTC Finalizes Analysis for Jamesville Hamlet Project

- Hamlet Master Plan being developed
- Three technical memorandums completed
- New amenities considered



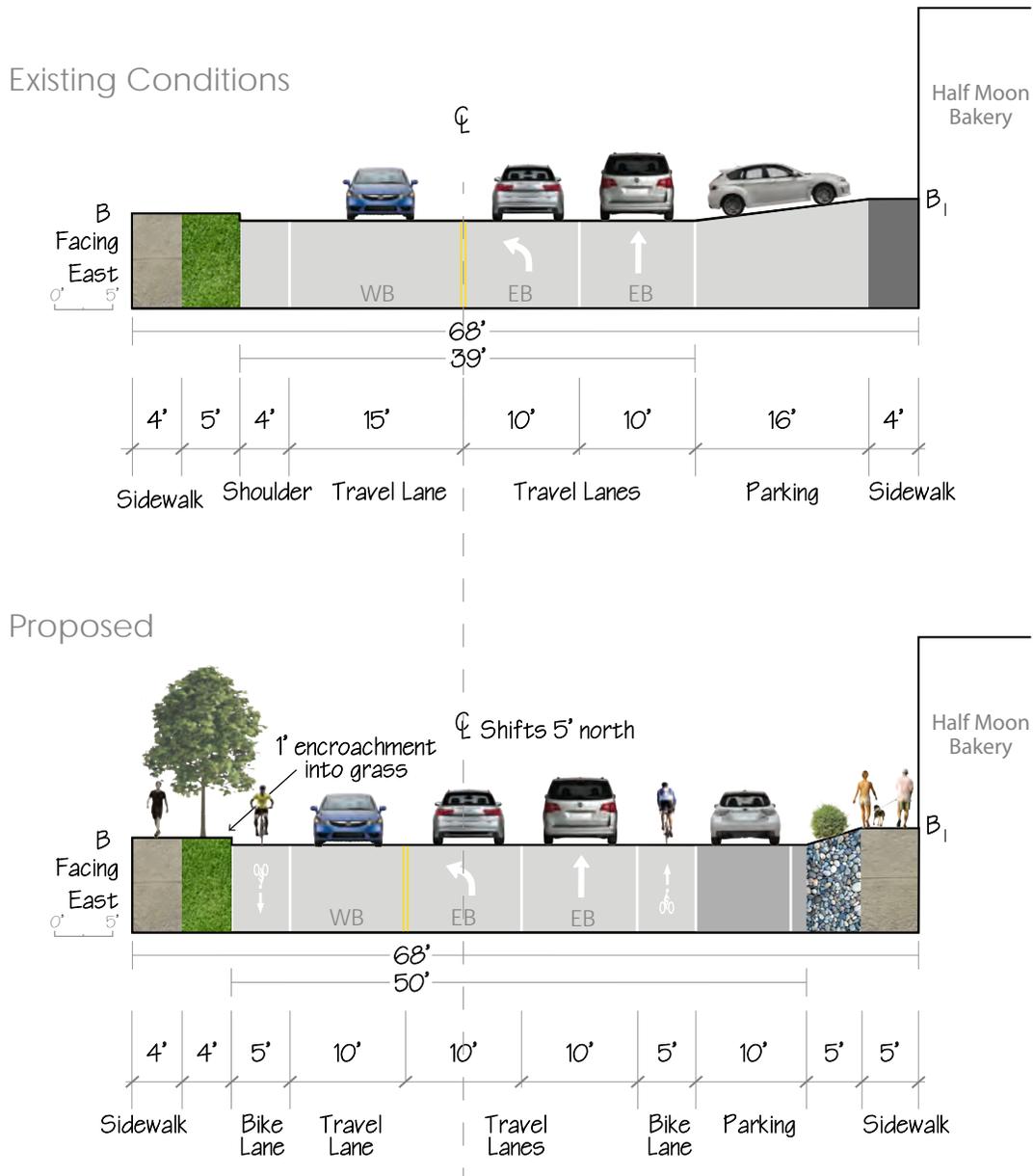
### Proposed road striping and streetscaping plan for Jamesville Hamlet

The SMTC recently completed a technical analysis for the Jamesville Hamlet area. The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) is creating a master plan for the hamlet. The CNYRPDB, along with the Town of DeWitt, requested assistance from the SMTC with the transportation elements of this effort. This assessment was completed as part of the 'Comprehensive Plan Assistance Block' as requested by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA).

The SMTC's work is documented in three technical memorandums, which are available on the SMTC web site. Tech Memo 1 includes an inventory of facilities and accident analysis and Tech Memo 2 examines existing and future baseline traffic operations in the hamlet, including additional

traffic that could be generated by redevelopment of a nearby former cement plant. In Tech Memo 3, the SMTC developed and evaluated a variety of possible concepts for improving traffic flow, accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians, improving on-street parking, and generally improving the sense of place in the Jamesville hamlet.

The analysis results and feedback from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) indicate that, at this time, significant changes to the intersection configuration in the hamlet core area are not feasible. As the Town considers future redevelopment of the former cement plant site, the possibility of providing access via a driveway or new public roadway intersecting Route 173 west



Existing (top) and proposed (bottom) road cross-section on Route 173 in Jamesville between South St. and the railroad

of the hamlet core should be considered as an alternative to providing access through an existing driveway in the hamlet core area. The proximity of the intersections in the hamlet core, along with other physical impediments such as the railroad and steep grades, constrains the capacity of this area to accommodate significantly more trips.

However, bicycle accommodations, parallel parking along Route 173, an additional crosswalk, and streetscaping improvements could be pursued without modifications to the intersection operations. Tech Memo 3 presents a conceptual plan for these improvements which, implemented together, would create a stronger sense of place and enhance

the experience of pedestrians and cyclists in the Jamesville hamlet area. The improvements shown on the concept plan are within the State's right-of-way on Route 173, so the Town will need to work closely with the NYSDOT, as well as local business owners, to implement any changes.

The information in the tech memos is being used by planners at the CNYRPDB as they complete their work for the Town of DeWitt.

For further information on the analysis, contact Meghan Vitale at [mvitale@smtcmppo.org](mailto:mvitale@smtcmppo.org) or 315.422.5716.



## An Overview of SMTC's Work Link Study

- Limited late-night bus service in the Syracuse area
- Some cities use more efficient transportation options to help workers commute during late night/early morning hours
- Explored alternatives like vanpools, subsidized Uber and Lyft rides, and vehicle sharing programs

Transit service is critical for people who are trying to work their way out of poverty. Many of the jobs that are a good fit for entry-level workers are in industries like warehousing, manufacturing, food service and retail – jobs that are frequently found in the region's suburban towns. Without bus service, these opportunities would be inaccessible to the thousands of low-income city residents who do not own cars.

Centro's bus service is extensive, with more than 100 routes and over 18,000 riders daily. Nearly 80% of the jobs in Onondaga County can be reached by bus. But no transit system can run to every job or run around the clock without being extremely inefficient – gaps in the transit system are unavoidable. One of the most significant transit service gaps in our region is one found in many cities: overnight service. Syracuse has virtually no bus service after 11:00 p.m.

The SMTC's Work Link Study analyzed the transit system's effectiveness in serving employment centers, and looked specifically at options for helping low-income workers get to and from second- and third-shift jobs. SMTC staff reviewed options from across the country, and solicited input from a variety of stakeholders. Working with a Study Advisory Committee, the SMTC identified three concepts that could be initiated or expanded in our region.

- "Modified vanpool": This model is currently working in our region, operated by local non-profit, Providence Services of Syracuse. Anyone can use this service, which takes reservations on scheduled vanpool routes and charges \$5 for each trip. Providence Services is not a door-to-

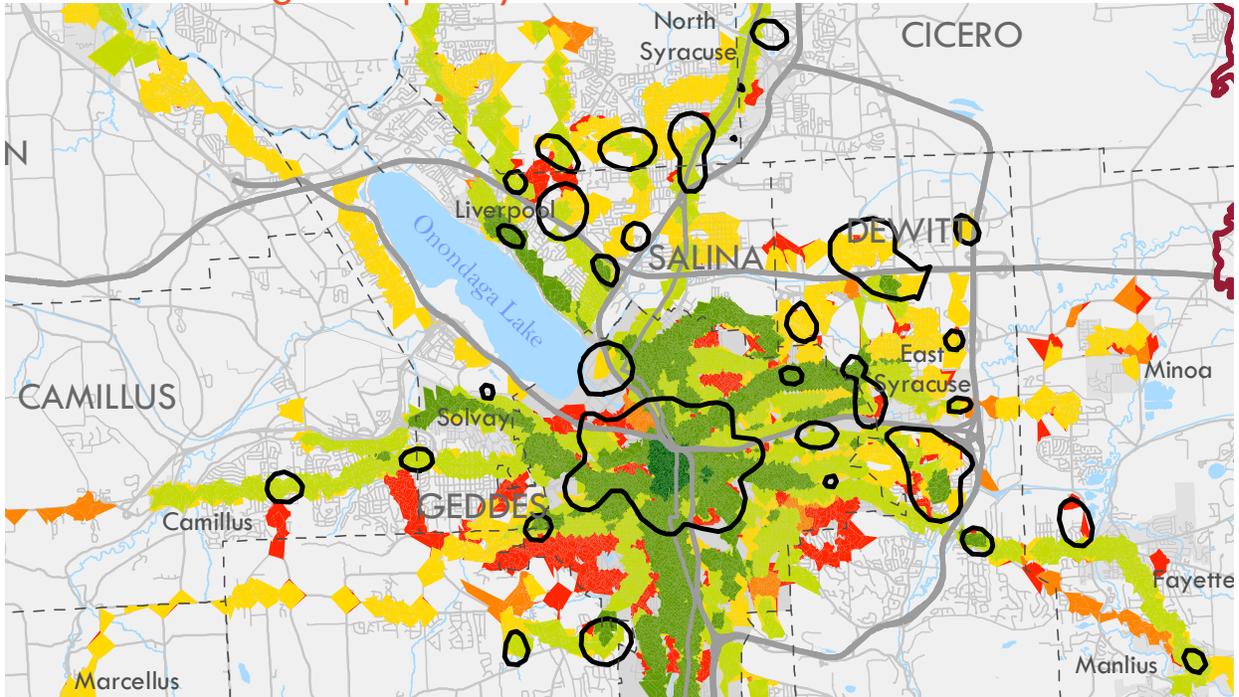
door service: there are ten designated pick-up sites in the city, and riders are given a window of time in which they will be picked up. With additional support, this small program could be scaled up and marketed to a larger group of clients.

- Subsidized rides through a transportation network company (Uber/Lyft): Transportation network companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft allow anyone with a smart phone to request and pay for a ride with a few taps on a touchscreen. Many communities use subsidized taxi rides to provide late-night rides to work for low-income workers; not only are TNCs less expensive than traditional taxi cabs, but the system for hailing and scheduling rides is largely automated, lowering program administration costs.

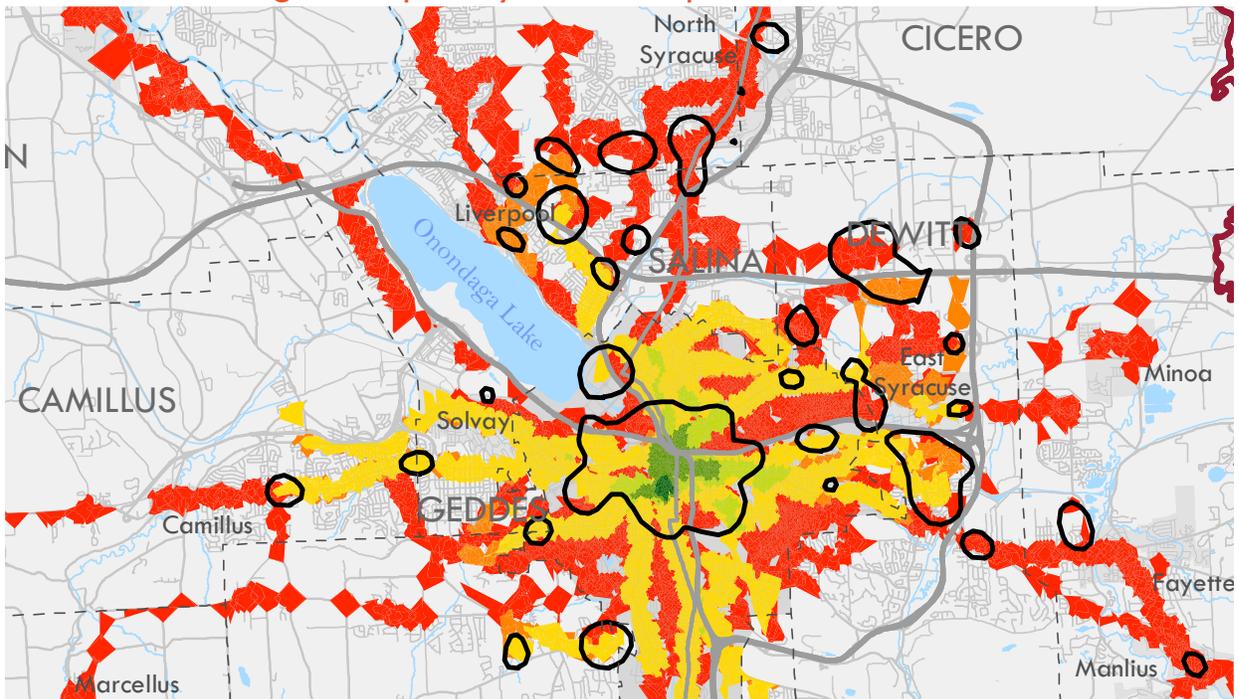
- Cooperative vehicle sharing: A cooperative vehicle sharing program would take advantage of vans and other vehicles already owned and operated by local human service organizations. In many cases, these vehicles were purchased with public grants, and are not in use after 6:00 p.m. or on weekends. Using these vehicles to help low-income workers get to work would align well with the mission statements of several local non-profit organizations, and could lead to greater collaboration in how their clients get from one program or facility to another. There is very little precedent for this approach, however, and it would require that participating organizations answer numerous logistical questions.

The final report is available on the SMTC's web site, [www.smtcmpo.org](http://www.smtcmpo.org). For further information, contact Aaron McKeon at [amckeon@smtcmpo.org](mailto:amckeon@smtcmpo.org) or 315.422.5716.

## Transit Coverage Frequency - 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.



## Transit Coverage Frequency - 10:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.



The “cold” spots in these maps (greens and yellows) have multiple bus runs on weekdays during the period shown. “Hot” spots (red and orange) have few or no bus runs. The black polygons in these maps represent areas with lots of job opportunities. Bus service is robust during the morning (top) and evening commutes, but falls off dramatically after 10:00 p.m (bottom).



## NYSAMPO Conference Held in Syracuse

- Held June 19 - 21, 2017
- Technical Sessions and Trainings
- 188 Participants

The SMTC served as the host of the New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization's (NYSAMPO) 2017 Conference, at the Marriott Syracuse Downtown, June 19-21. A total of 188 attendees participated in the conference.

The conference kicked-off on June 19, with a training session, Combating Roadway Departure Crashes, presented by the Cornell Local Roads Program. June 20 began with two training sessions. Signal Timing and Traffic Engineering Principles was presented by staff from Fisher Associates. Eric Mower + Associates facilitated Messaging and How to Present It.

Meghan Cook, Center for Technology in Government at the University of Albany, served as the Plenary Speaker on June 20, discussing Building Smarter Cities: Trends, Examples, Research, and Lessons Learned. Tuesday ended with a networking reception. DeLania Hardy, Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), provided remarks to the attendees.

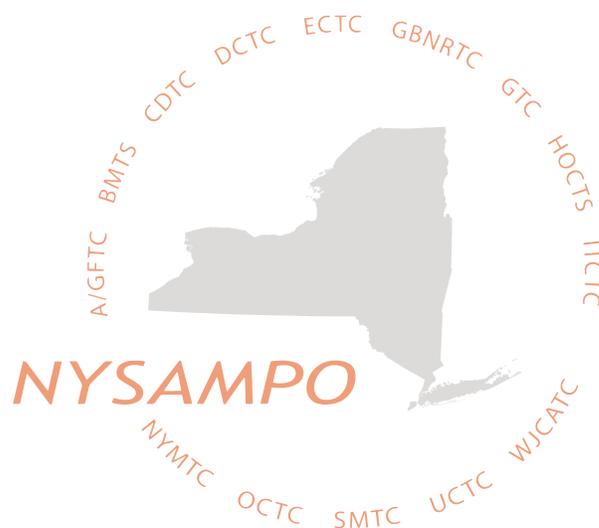
Princeton University's Alain Kornhauser, PhD., spoke at the morning Plenary Session on June 21, relative to Automated Vehicles: What, Why & When. Lois New, New York State Department of Conservation Office of Climate Change, presented Collaborating Towards a Low Carbon Transportation System of the Future during the lunch Plenary Session.

Attendees were offered eleven technical training sessions over two days. The topics included: Safety, Planning for Resiliency, Urban Mobility, Transportation Asset Management, Pedestrians and Bicyclists; Transportation Technology, Statewide Planning, Data, Environmental Justice Considerations, Long Range Plans, Performance-Based Planning. Copies of the presentations are available under the events tab on the Association's web site at [www.nysmpos.org](http://www.nysmpos.org).

Seven consultant firms staffed vendor booths. Six additional consulting firms provided sponsorship of the conference. On behalf of the NYSAMPO, thank you to all that participated in the conference.



Main Ballroom Presentation





## Central DeWitt Mobility Plan Finished

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Built off Moving DeWitt
- Linking Erie Canalway Trail to Neighborhoods



Old Erie Canal State Historic Park, DeWitt

The Central DeWitt Mobility Plan identifies a “menu” of potential planning-level improvements for several town, county, and state-owned roadways to help establish a pedestrian and bicycle network linking the Erie Canalway Trail to the surrounding neighborhoods.

This effort builds off a town-led initiative known as Moving DeWitt. The Moving DeWitt initiative identified a community desire to enhance safety and mobility by improving walking and bicycling amenities along several major roadways. After assessing the desired roadways, the SMTC identified several types of potential amenities to choose from: enhanced shoulders with edge line rumble strips, protected and unprotected bicycle lanes, shared-lane markings i.e. “sharrows”, advisory shoulders, buffered and non-buffered sidewalks, yield roadways, enhanced high-visibility crosswalk markings, and enhanced pedestrian warning signage. The SMTC identified

which amenities are appropriate to consider for each roadway.

Developing a complete and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network will require coordination between the town, the county, and the state. To reduce cost and increase implementation feasibility, potential facility improvements were considered for their ability to be incorporated within the existing pavement width and road right-of-way. Providing several facility improvement options to choose from provides the road owner with some flexibility to determine which facilities best balance costs and needs.

The report is available on the SMTC web site, [www.smtcmpo.org](http://www.smtcmpo.org), and at the Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville. For more information about the study, contact Michael D. Alexander at 315.422.5716 or [malexander@smtcmpo.org](mailto:malexander@smtcmpo.org).

Join us for the 3rd and final Open House on the:

# Syracuse Metropolitan Area Regional Transit Study Phase 1

Thursday, November 2, 2017  
Drop in any time from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m.  
(Presentations at 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.)

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) invites you to attend the third and final open house for the Syracuse Metropolitan Area Regional Transit Study Phase 1 (SMART 1). Stop by to learn about the conclusion of our multi-year enhanced transit feasibility study.

Interactive stations, staffed by the project team, will be available for the public to “walk through” and learn about the project background, final **Bus Rapid Transit** alternatives, and next steps. A presentation will take place at 5:00 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m.

## Can't make the meeting in person?

Meeting materials will be available online beginning November 2 at [www.smtcmpo.org/SMART](http://www.smtcmpo.org/SMART)



### Meeting Location

SKY Armory  
351 South Clinton Street  
Syracuse, NY  
\*\*Main entrance is on Clinton St. (between Modern Malt and the Clinton St. Garage).\*\*  
Meeting location is 0.4 miles from the Centro Transit Hub.

### Parking

On-street & area parking garages available. Parking will not be validated.

### Accommodations

All attendees will receive two complimentary single-use Centro bus passes at the meeting.

The meeting facility is ADA accessible. American Sign Language (ASL) and Spanish interpreters will be available at the meeting (Intérpretes de español estarán disponibles en la reunión).

### Additional info

For more information about the study contact Mario Colone, SMTC Program Manager, at 315.422.5716 or [mcolone@smtcmpo.org](mailto:mcolone@smtcmpo.org).



## SMTC Creates Bicycle and Pedestrian PSA's

- Identified behavioral-related bicycle/pedestrian safety issues
- Five different PSA's taught the rules of the road
- Watch the PSA's on YouTube links available on the SMTC web site

The SMTC co-branded five 30-second 'Smart Cycling' bicycle safety education videos with AAA and the League of American Bicyclists (League). The five videos address the following topics: 1) bike lanes, 2) sharing the road, 3) turning and signaling, 4) lane positioning, and 5) 'humanizing' bicyclists as legitimate road users.

The SMTC partnered with Spectrum, the local cable company, to broadcast the videos on television in the greater Syracuse area during 'Bike Month' – May 2017. A new video was featured each week and was shown several times a day on Spectrum News, Fox, CNN, and MSNBC. Spectrum estimated that 350 commercials were shown and more than 201,000 households viewed the videos (at least four times) during the campaign.

The SMTC kicked-off the process by identifying behavioral-related safety issues exhibited by drivers and bicyclists that are common in its Metropolitan Planning Area's (MPA) rural, suburban, and urban communities. The SMTC collaborated with area police departments, the Onondaga County Traffic Safety Advisory Board (OCTSAB), planners, and the local bicycling community. Together these stakeholders helped identify and prioritize local behavioral-related safety issues. The SMTC addressed the priority issues by portraying state and local laws as the 'rules of the road' in the educational videos.

After conducting a nationwide search of existing public safety education campaigns, the SMTC discovered an online educational video series entitled 'Smart Cycling', which was produced by the League. AAA prepared one of the videos in conjunction with the League. The League's videos



were edited and shortened for television by selecting the most relevant clips, authoring new narratives, and conducting new voiceovers and background music. AAA's video was used "as is". Feedback was extremely positive and the SMTC ran another campaign during the month of September. The SMTC is also coordinating with its partner agencies throughout the state to determine the level of interest of expanding the campaign statewide. Additional coordination with the League and AAA is also ongoing to promote the campaign to a larger audience in New York and other states.

Watch the YouTube videos on the SMTC web site, [www.smtcmpo.org](http://www.smtcmpo.org).

SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL  
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**SAVE THE DATE!**

SMART 1 Final Public Meeting -  
Thursday, November 2nd



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