

DIRECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
Winter 2020



'Cuse Trolley on University Hill



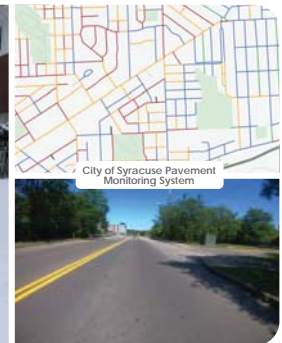
2020-2021 Work Program Adopted

On December 12, 2019, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's (SMTC) Policy Committee adopted the 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP document provides a mechanism for the coordination of transportation planning efforts by local, state and regional agencies through the SMTC. The UPWP incorporates into one document all transportation planning activities, conducted from April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021, in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the New York State Governor, the SMTC is responsible for carrying out the continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process for the Syracuse Metropolitan Area.

The 2020-2021 UPWP is available for viewing at the SMTC offices, 126 N. Salina Street, Syracuse, N.Y.; at the main branch of the Onondaga County Public Library, The Galleries, 447 South Salina Street, Syracuse; or on the SMTC website – www.smtcmpo.org.

Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

UPWP 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program





2020-2021 UPWP Project Overview

- Ten new projects
- Projects for the State and area municipalities
- One project in the Village of Chittenango, Madison County



University Hill area, Syracuse

The SMTC issued a call letter for project proposals in September 2019. Ten (10) projects were selected for inclusion in the **2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**. Project descriptions are noted below.

Joint Traffic Management Center (TMC) Co-Location - White Paper Evaluation

Requested by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), this project will begin the process of determining the feasibility of co-locating traffic management operations into a single, joint use,

and functional Traffic Management Center for the State, County, and City of Syracuse. Currently, in the Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area, SMTC member agencies are operating and maintaining standalone traffic operations centers. The NYSDOT Transportation Management Center is predominantly for the Interstate system in Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse Traffic Control Center covers numerous City owned traffic signals and, Onondaga County utilizes various ITS technologies.

This project will seek to identify new multi-agency management partnerships to potentially provide expanded coverage to the traveling public. Staff will create a final document outlining the research conducted, best practices, meeting summaries, outcomes, and order of magnitude costs. Work will begin on this project in April and with a final document expected in March 2021.

[Tuscarora Road Corridor Study](#)

The work on this project looks to increase the safety and mobility of bicyclists and pedestrians along this Village of Chittenango corridor. Village officials have noticed an increase in traffic on Tuscarora Road and attribute some of it to ‘pass through’ traffic during morning and evening commutes. This project seeks to identify plausible recommendations to potentially alleviate increased traffic using Complete Streets techniques and other applicable safety considerations. Work will be completed by the end of the program year.

The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) partnered with area municipalities to request the following studies.

[US Route 11 Corridor Study – Mattydale](#)

The Town of Salina has seen some limited growth along US Route 11 between Taft Road and Molloy Road in the Hamlet of Mattydale. The corridor generally consists of a few big box stores and various smaller developments and outparcels. A number of issues have manifested along the corridor such as limited planning, investment in, or requirements for transit, bicycle, or pedestrian infrastructure; and site planning that focuses on the vehicle, with massive parking areas and setbacks. The project is envisioned to take two years to complete following the completion of the current Cicero US 11 Corridor Study.

[Manlius Village Center Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Study](#)

The Village of Manlius is challenged with accommodating regional high traffic volume through its village center. Development in the village center is increasingly oriented toward a walkable environment, and the high volume, and perceived high speed of vehicles along with limited sidewalk capacity, wide pedestrian crossings, and other factors do not match the land uses that are increasingly emerging. This planning effort seeks to explore a variety of traffic calming improvements. The project will take two years to complete after initiation in the second quarter of the State Fiscal Year (SFY).

[Village of Skaneateles Pedestrian Safety and Access Study](#)

Staff will examine several areas of concern and recommend areas of opportunity to improve pedestrian conditions, reduce vehicular conflicts, and manage the multi-modal environment along the Main Street/US 20 Corridor in the Village of Skaneateles. Data collection will commence in the second quarter of the State Fiscal Year, with an Evaluation of Strategies finalization during the beginning of the 2021-2022 SFY.

The City of Syracuse requested the following studies:

[Dome Traffic Management and Events Strategic Plan](#)

This consultant-led study will review components of the 2000 University Hill Special Events Transportation Study in order to create a modern and applicable special events document. Staff will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) during the first quarter of the SFY 2020-2021.

This project will provide detailed, site-specific traffic management and operations documentation during various events at the Syracuse University Carrier Dome that is inclusive of broader, day-to-day management

and operations recommendations in light of new access to the University Hill area, and transportation network changes anticipated by the NYSDOT's I-81 Viaduct replacement with a community grid. Two related documents will be developed: A detailed document with graphics, maps, time-specific traffic control plans/details and a Dome events strategic transportation study. The SMTC will lead the public involvement phase. The final document is expected in March 2022.

Syracuse Sidewalk Planning Study

Staff will update the existing sidewalk inventory with a more complete data set. The SMTC has created a Geographic Information System (GIS) sidewalk inventory that has been referenced in multiple planning activities. Through updating and expanding on data inputs, a sidewalk database may be generated to work through sidewalk replacement and upgrade scenarios. The City will provide the data collection efforts for this study. The study will be completed in the program year.

Syracuse School Loading Zone Study

Although not explicitly related, the State's I-81 Opportunities Project will shift travel patterns placing increased emphasis on the City's existing street grid. Several schools are located on or in close proximity to major commuter corridors. Improved school loading zone areas are necessary for improving student safety as travel patterns will very likely change as an outcome of the community grid alternative implementation. Recommendations for physical changes as well as potential policy adjustments will be considered as part of this planning effort. This effort will involve active participation from the Syracuse City School District. This project will be completed within the program year.

Syracuse Residential Parking Permits Study Phase 1

Several areas in the City of Syracuse (i.e., Downtown, University Hill, Tipperary Hill) have limited/constrained on-street parking capacity. This effort seeks to explore best practices of similar communities and legislative procedures, as appropriate, that may be necessary to implement a residential parking permit system for the

City. Evaluation of current on-street parking policies will be paramount to this effort. This project is expected to be completed during the second quarter of the SFY 2021-2022.

Syracuse Safe Routes to School Manual

Beyond providing safety improvements, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) facilities in the City of Syracuse may also likely seek to capitalize on existing trails and expand their reach/connections to neighborhoods and school facilities. This planning effort will compile best practices for SRTS and develop a guide/manual for the City and their public partners to utilize when planning for and implementing SRTS projects. It is envisioned that the SRTS guide/manual will include recommendations on materials, wayfinding styles, and conceptual routes. Work on this project is expected to be completed in December 2021.

In addition to the new projects, staff are completing projects from the 2019-2020 work program. They include: Safety Assessment and Analysis for the City of Syracuse; City of Syracuse and Onondaga County Department of Transportation (OC DOT) Traffic Counts; and Local Comprehensive Plan Assistance. An update to our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is on schedule for a September completion.

The complete 2020-2021 UPWP is available on the SMTC website - www.smtcmpo.org.

Interested in seeing where federal transportation dollars will be spent over the next several years? The SMTC developed an interactive project map that shows the numerous bicycle/pedestrian, bridge, paving, safety, and special projects programmed on the area's [2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#). The map will be updated quarterly to account for changes that may occur (i.e., project limits, schedule, cost). Look for 'SMTC's 2020-2024 TIP Map' on <https://smtc.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>. For more information on the TIP, visit www.smtcmpo.org.



Erie Boulevard Transit Mobility Enhancement Examined

- Requested by the Town of DeWitt
- Supported by Centro and the City of Syracuse
- Identifies opportunities for transit enhancements



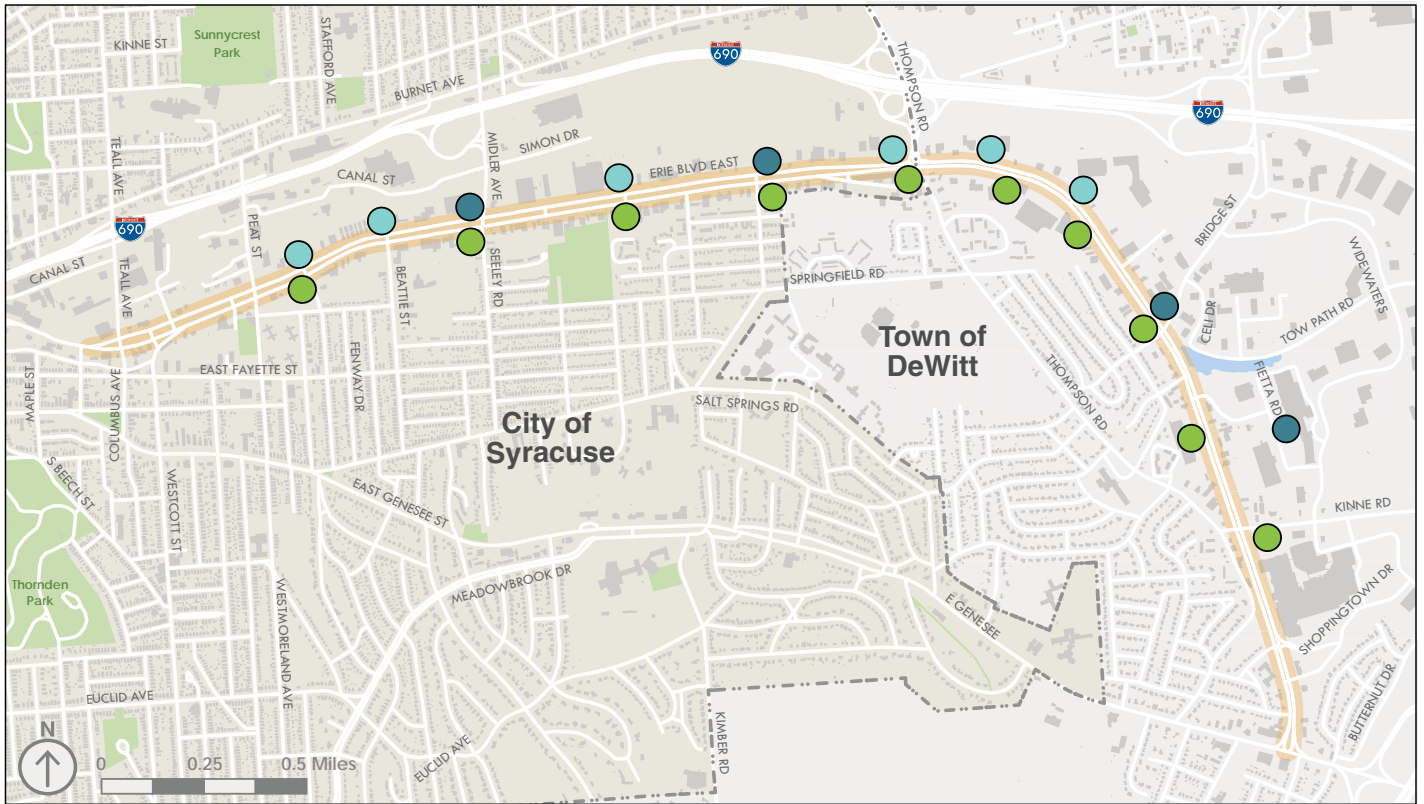
Transit service along Erie Boulevard, Syracuse

The **Erie Boulevard Transit Enhancement** began in the spring 2019 and was completed in the fall of 2019. The study was a technical analysis for the Town of DeWitt, who was looking to enhance the ridership experience along the Erie Boulevard East corridor. As a planning-level analysis, there was no public outreach. A working group consisting of the Town of DeWitt, City of Syracuse, New York State Department of Transportation, and Centro was assembled. The SMTTC looked at the existing bus stops and their amenities along the bus route 168 from Beech Street (City of Syracuse) to East Genesee Street (Town of DeWitt). Based on the existing

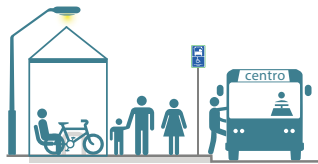
condition inventory and ridership data, there were multiple recommendations for enhancements.

A consolidation of stops was recommended from 29 stops down to 20 stops making the overall performance of the system faster and more effective. Multiple stops within a distance of a quarter mile or less were consolidated to one location. With the recommended 20 stops along the corridor, there are less stops that would need enhancements. Basic bus stop needs such as a connection to a sidewalk, concrete landing pad, benches, and shelters, stops were prioritized by level

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



● LEVEL 1



High usage,
primarily boarding

Stop Details

- Bus Shelter Structure
- Large waiting concrete pad
- Bench within shelter
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Connection to sidewalk
- Schedule on wall of shelter
- Real time display
- Bike rack
- Trash/recycling bin
- Corridor branding signage
- Trees/plantings

● LEVEL 2



Moderate usage,
primarily boarding

Stop Details

- Large waiting concrete pad
- Bench
- Connection to sidewalk
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Real time display
- Corridor branding signage
- Trees/plantings

● LEVEL 3



Primarily alighting

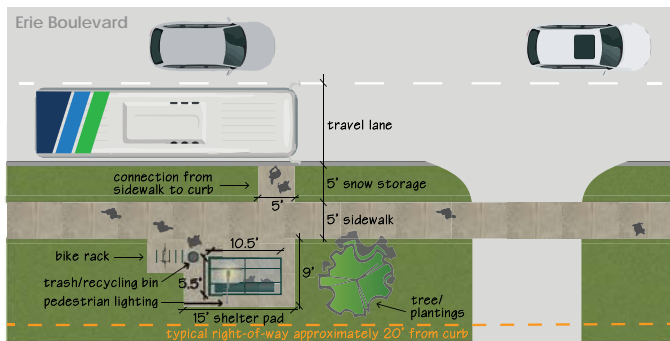
Stop Details

- Large concrete landing pad
- Connection to sidewalk
- Corridor branding signage

of recommended bus stop infrastructure. Ridership and location also played a major role in the decision of what stops got a high level of recommended amenities. Another recommendation was re-routing the bus route 168 through Marshall's Plaza for better circulation and the addition of a stop on Erie Boulevard. This re-routing is based heavily on the future development of the ShoppingTown site. A consistent branding and signage throughout the corridor was also recommended.

This analysis was an informational piece that was presented at both the Planning and Policy Committee meetings and will hopefully help aid the Town of DeWitt and the City of Syracuse in enhancing the bus user experience along Erie Boulevard East. The final report can be found on the SMTCMPO website - www.smtcmpto.org. For further information please contact Kevan Busa at kbusa@smtcmpto.org or 315.422.5716.

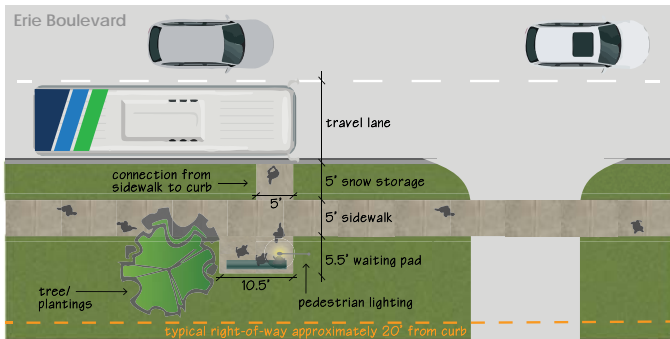
LEVEL 1



PROPOSED



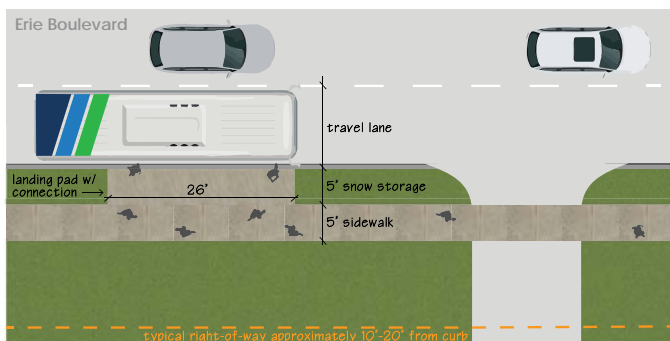
LEVEL 2



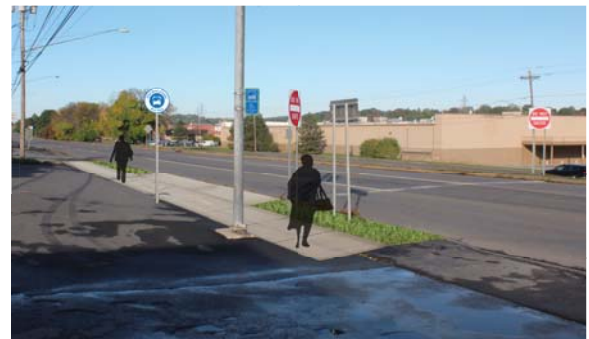
PROPOSED



LEVEL 3



PROPOSED





Community Streets Review Conducted

- Requested by the City of Syracuse
- Examines 'tactical urbanism'
- Starts with a temporary project to determine if an idea would work in practice



National Park(ing) Day 2019, Downtown Syracuse

When bicycle advocates in Macon, Georgia, wanted to demonstrate that bike lanes were possible on the city's streets, and that they would be used, they decided to make their point in the most visible way possible: they built them. The result was billed as "the world's largest pop-up bike-lane network" - five miles of temporary bike lanes, created with spray paint and traffic cones that only lasted a week, but have fueled conversations about the city's bike infrastructure for the past three years.

Other cities have been experimenting with similar ideas: in Los Angeles, the City's Department of Transportation has a program that uses residents' ideas

to convert portions of city streets into pedestrian plazas. In Portland, Oregon, the city allows residents to paint colorful murals in intersections. And in Burlington, Vermont, a non-profit temporarily re-configured a problematic intersection to make it safer for pedestrians, carefully noting which elements did and did not work as expected.

Doing this kind of thing without the municipality's prior knowledge and approval is sometimes called 'guerilla urbanism'. Guerilla urbanism has become fairly widespread over the past 20 years. Examples include turning old pallets into chairs (to be used in 'chair bombing' otherwise empty sidewalks), using

toilet plungers as makeshift bike lane delineators, and planting gardens in vacant lots.

Unsanctioned actions offer the attractive possibility of making small, quick changes. But they also offer the unattractive possibility of an arrest, since making changes in the public right-of-way without permission is illegal. The guerilla approach is also, by its nature, secretive – it is not a tool for including stakeholders, weighing different points of view, and collecting data. It is not, in short, a good planning tool.

A tactical urbanism project, on the other hand, can take three to six months to plan, design, and approve, but sanctioned pop-up projects can be more heavily publicized, can include large groups installing large projects, and are frequently accompanied by social media, press coverage, and conclusions backed up by data. Projects of this kind usually include a public outreach element – a survey or other means of getting feedback on the project from the general public.

The City of Syracuse is currently developing a process through which residents and community groups would be able to install temporary tactical urbanism projects with the City's permission. Tentatively called 'Community Streets', this program would include an application process and requirements for meeting with City staff

and consulting with stakeholders, with the degree of complexity in the approval process varying according to the project's characteristics. Projects like painting a curb extension or installing a parklet (a public seating area in the space typically used for on-street parking, as seen on page 8) on a low-volume street might be the kind of thing that the City could approve fairly quickly. More complicated projects, like creating a mile-long temporary bike lane, would likely involve multiple meetings with the City and a presentation by the team sponsoring the project in a public forum, such as a TNT meeting.

To support the development of the Community Streets program, the City requested that the SMTC compile research on how similar programs work in other cities. The resulting [Community Streets White Paper](#) was presented to the SMTC's Policy Committee in December 2019. The white paper includes information on the best locations in which to install pop-up projects, materials to use, types of projects to consider, how to evaluate projects' effectiveness, and a draft review and approval process.

The White Paper is available on the SMTC's website - www.smtcmpo.org.

*Pop-up bike lane in Macon, GA
Photo courtesy of www.thebrainstormlab.com*





City of Syracuse Supplemental Pavement Rating Data Available

- Part of the SMTC's BPCMS
- All City-owned roads rated
- Web-based application developed

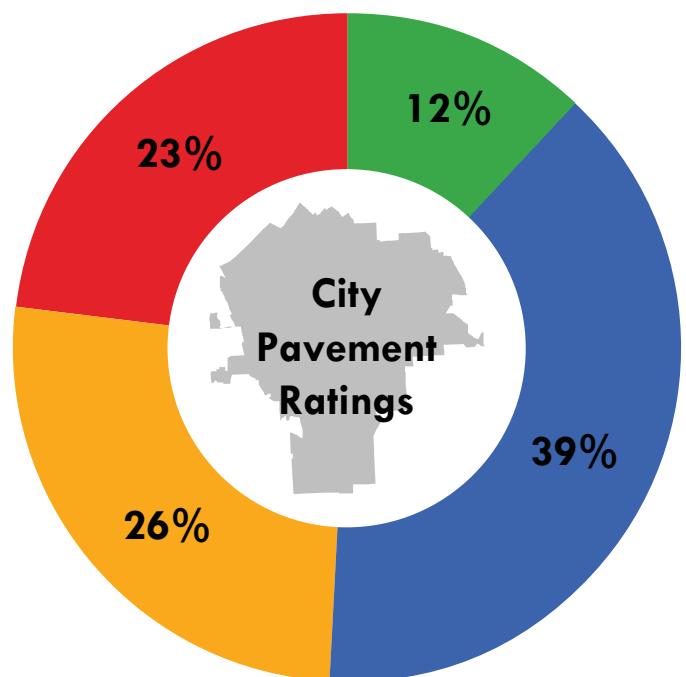
The SMTC regularly provides pavement ratings on federal-aid eligible roads to the City of Syracuse as a part of its **Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System (BPCMS)** report. This year, at the request of the City, the SMTC provided ratings on all city-owned roads, from heavily traveled commuter routes to quiet neighborhood streets. The City indicated that having consistent pavement ratings would allow the Department of Public Works and other City entities to make data-driven decisions for street repair, reconstruction, and preventative maintenance.

Consistent with previous BPCMS reports, the SMTC rates pavement using the NYSDOT's Surface Score rating scale, which is a windshield survey providing ratings ranging from 1 (impassible) to 10 (new pavement). The ratings on this scale are given based on the frequency and severity of surface cracking. Roads with a score of 9 or 10 are considered Excellent, 7-8 are considered Good, 6 is considered Fair, and 1-5 are considered Poor.

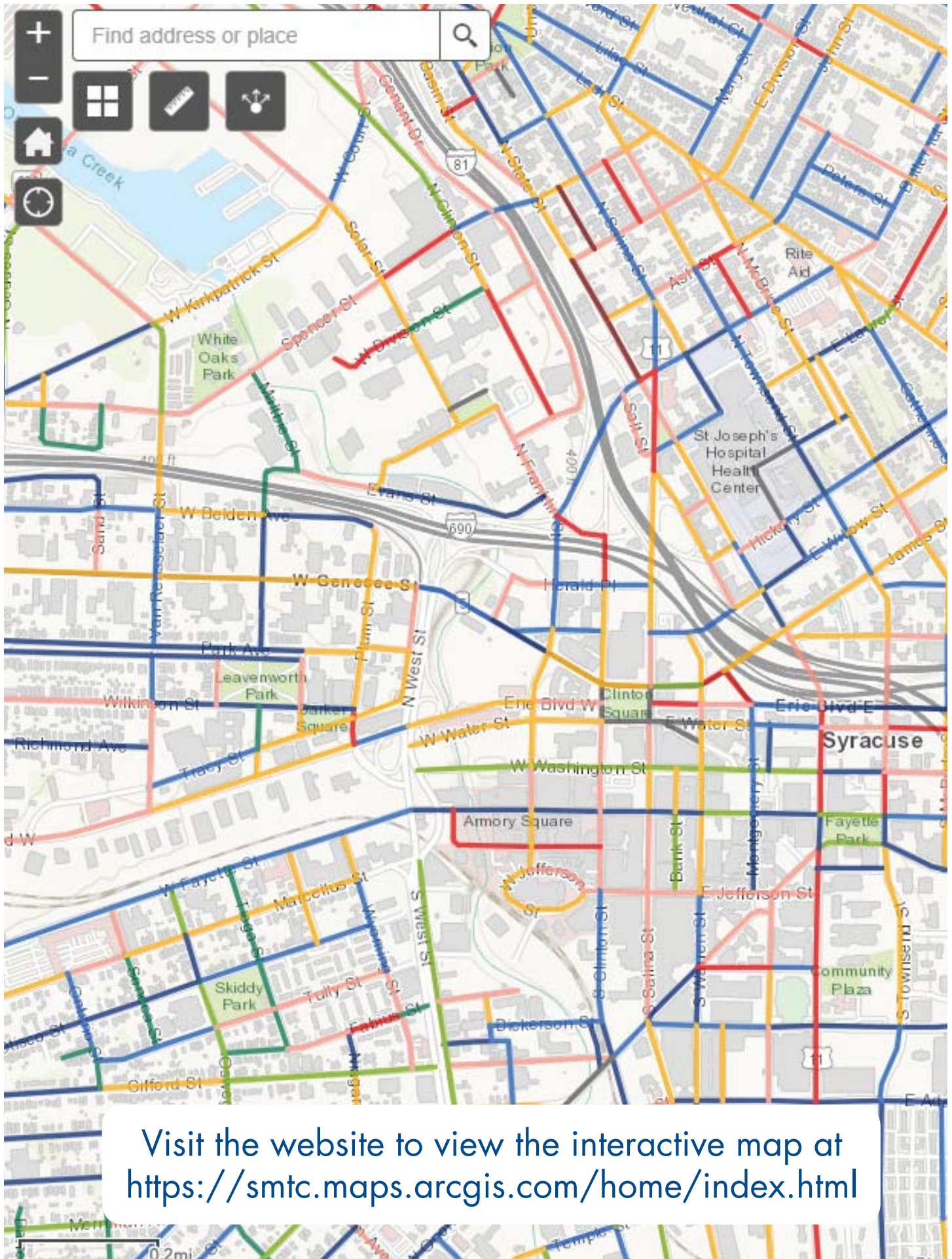
Overall, the SMTC rated approximately 393 center-line miles in the City. Of these miles, 12% were considered Excellent, 39% Good, 26% Fair, and 23% Poor. The weighted average rating for the City was a 6.6. The City, in coordination with the SMTC, recently announced the release of a web-based application, which allows the viewing of pavement scores along with a photo and additional road information. That application is available at www.smtcmpo.org.

Information about the data collection process is available on the SMTC's website - www.smtcmpo.org. For further information, please contact Andrew Frasier, 315.422.5716 or afrasier@smtcmpo.org.

City of Syracuse Pavement Rating Percentages



- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor



Visit the website to view the interactive map at <https://smtc.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>



Congestion Management Process Reviewed

- Federally required for metropolitan areas with populations over 200,000
- Utilized National Performance Management Research Data Set
- Establishes new Performance Measures

The SMTC Policy Committee acknowledged completion of the [Congestion Management Process \(CMP\) 2019 Status Update](#) report. This process aids in identifying locations throughout the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) that may need improvements to relieve congestion and is required by federal legislation in metropolitan areas with urban populations greater than 200,000. The Congestion Management Process was developed to align with eight actions suggested by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for completing a CMP and is inclusive of multimodal data, analysis, objectives, performance measures and strategies:

- Develop Regional Objectives for Congestion Management
- Define CMP Network

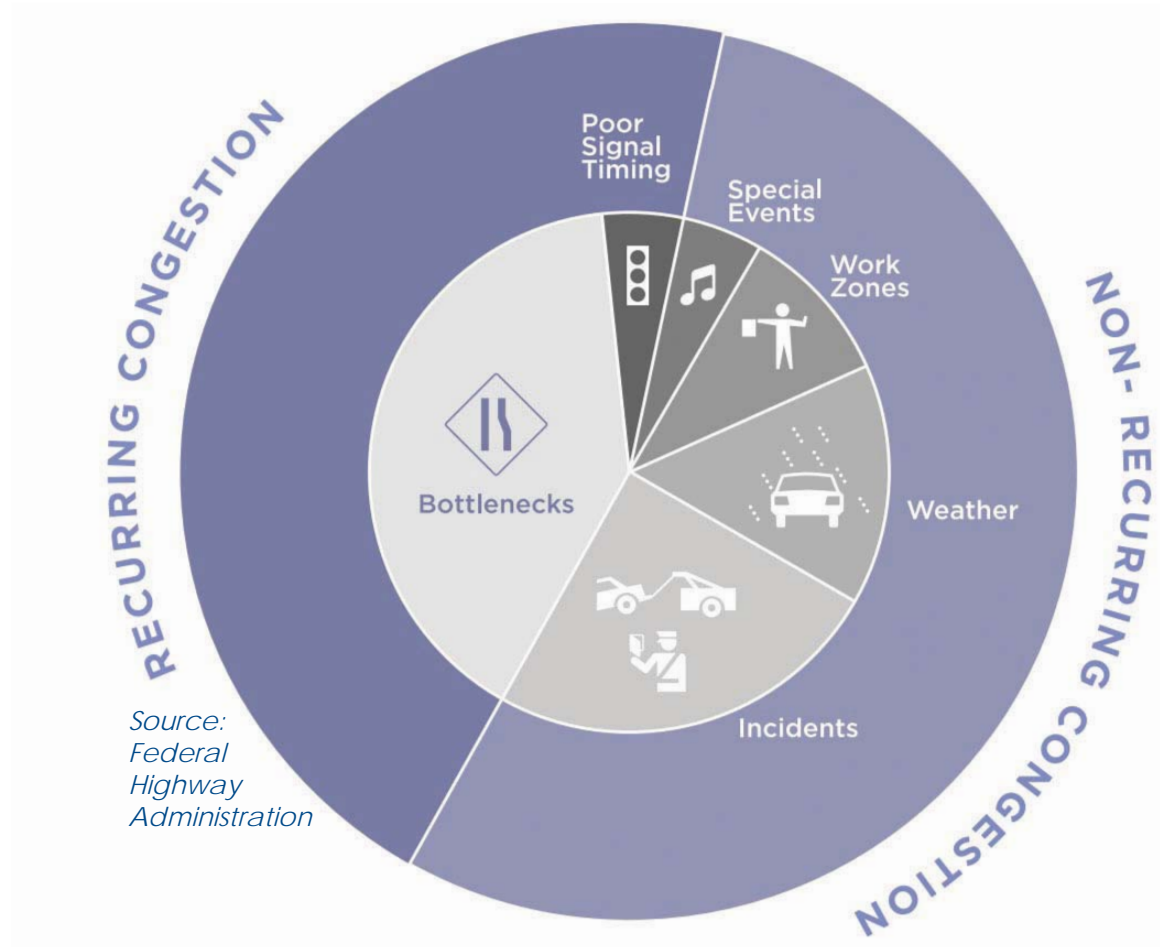
- Develop Multimodal Performance Measures
- Collect Data/Monitor System Performance
- Analyze Congestion Problems and Needs
- Identify and Assess Strategies
- Program and Implement Strategies
- Evaluate Strategy Effectiveness.

The network of interest for this update focuses exclusively on primary commuter corridors inside the adjusted urban area which consist of roadways that are part of the National Highway System (NHS), arterials carrying 10,000 or more Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) and those roadways that close the numerous disconnects between the two. Collectively, the primary commuter corridors cover 374 centerline miles, representing 16% of all centerline miles in the urban area.

Traffic on Route 11, Cicero



Causes of Congestion



Relying on speed and travel time data from the National Performance Management Research Data Set, which is a comprehensive vehicle-probe based data set, all traffic, freight and transit congestion are mainly evaluated in this update report utilizing the Travel Time Index (TTI), Total Hours of Excessive Delay per mile (TED/mile) and Level of Travel Time Reliability (LOTTR) performance measures. In addition, the Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) measure is used solely for trucks traveling on a road segment.

Congestion was defined in this report as any road segment within the identified network that had a) a TTI value of 2.0 and above (meaning a trip along a segment was found to take twice as long compared to free-flow conditions); b) a TED value of 40,000 or more person

hours/mile (excessive delay experienced by drivers in the 90th percentile); c) a LOTTR value of 1.5 and above (meaning a level of unreliability determined by FHWA as too much for any vehicle to experience); d) a TTTR of 4.0 and above (meaning a level of unreliability determined by New York State as too much for trucks to experience). Analysis identified that 40.6 miles were found to be congested under the TTI measure, 18 miles under the TED measure; 78.3 miles under the LOTTR measure; and 3 miles under the TTTR measure.

Various improvement strategies that will most likely benefit the identified congested locations have been included in this documentation. As congestion in the SMT urban area typically takes place during peak commute times, strategies focused on the reduction

of single occupancy vehicles are recommended for implementation prior to capacity expansion activities. Additionally, as development patterns expand outside of the urban core into the suburban and rural localities of the SMTC planning area, a greater emphasis should be created to promote more sustainable and efficient transportation and land use patterns.

The findings of this analysis are similar to all previous congestion management documents that identified only a very limited number of segments and intersections that are considered congested according to performance

measure and supplementary analysis. These localized, peak period segments are identified primarily during the morning and evening commute times along interstate segments in the City of Syracuse, and a few roadways to the east and north of the City where the majority of households exist.

The final report is available on the SMTC website - www.smtcupo.org. For additional information or to request a copy of the report, please contact Kevin Kosakowski at 315.422.5716 or via e-mail at kkosakowski@smtcupo.org.

How well do you know the SMTC? Try our Transportation Word Search!

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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.

Editor: Patricia A. Wortley

Graphic Assistance: Kevan M. Busa

PUBLIC MEETING

GEDDES/FAYETTE STREETS COMPLETE STREETS REVIEW

**Thursday,
February 6, 2020
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

A presentation will be given at 6:30 p.m. There will also be exhibits and design ideas for your review.

PSLA @ Fowler Auditorium
227 Magnolia Street
Syracuse, NY
(Use the *EVENT* entrance)

The meeting location is served by CENTRO routes 138/236 (Auburn-Camillus) & 74/274/374 (Solvay). The facility is ADA accessible, and a Spanish interpreter will be present. To request special accommodations, please contact: Patricia Wortley at 315.422.5716 or pwortley@smtcmpo.org.

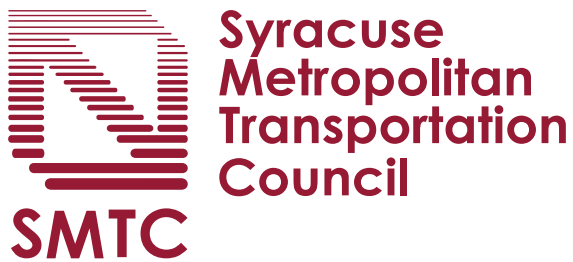
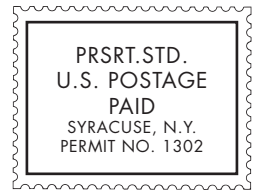
The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) is currently conducting the Geddes & Fayette Streets Complete Streets Review on behalf of the City of Syracuse. This planning-level study examines opportunities to add or improve bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities within the existing right-of-way along South Geddes Street (from Erie Boulevard West to Bellevue Avenue) and West Fayette Street (between Walton and Tompkins Streets). We are seeking your input and feedback on draft concepts for these corridors.



**Syracuse Metropolitan
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