



## **Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council**

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### **POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**June 1, 2023**

**11:00 a.m.**

**Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council  
Lower-Level Conference Room  
Corey Dunham, Vice Chairperson, Presiding**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Additions and Changes to the Agenda**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
  - February 23, 2023
- 3. Communications and Reports**
  - A. UPWP Status Report
- 4. Old Business**
  - I-81 Project Update
- 5. New Business**
  - A. TIP Amendments
  
  - B. I-81 TIP Amendment Process/Matrix Revisions
  
  - C. Coldbrook Creek Trail Study
- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Adjourn**

## **The Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Office of the Mayor • Syracuse Common Council • Syracuse Planning Commission • CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity • New York State Department of Transportation • New York State Department of Environmental Conservation • New York State Department of Economic Development • New York State Thruway Authority • Office of the County Executive • Onondaga County Legislature • Onondaga County Planning Board • Central New York Regional Transportation Authority • Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board • Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration

# SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the June 1, 2023 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

### Voting Members

Corey Dunham, Vice Chair  
Chris Tuff  
David Smith  
Rob Simpson  
David Bottar  
Jennifer Schultz  
Jim Beebe  
Jerrin George  
Odean Dyer  
James Fayle  
Dan Kwasnowski  
Kevan Busa

### Organization

City of Syracuse, Mayor  
CNY Regional Transportation Authority  
NYS Department of Transportation  
CenterState CEO  
CNY Regional Planning & Development Board  
City of Syracuse Common Council  
Onondaga County Legislature  
NYS Thruway Authority  
Onondaga County Executive  
Empire State Development  
Onondaga County Planning Board  
City of Syracuse - Planning

### Also Attending

David Roth  
Betsy Parmley  
Bren Daiss

NYS Department of Transportation  
NYS Department of Transportation  
CNY Regional Transportation Authority

### SMTC Staff

James D'Agostino, Mario Colone, Andrew Frasier, Meghan Vitale, Alex McRoberts, Joey DiStefano, Tom Bardenett, Danielle Krol, Kevin Kosakowski, and Lori Irvine.

### BUSINESS MEETING

Vice Chairperson Dunham called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. in the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's Lower-Level Conference Room.

#### 1. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. D'Agostino indicated there were no additions or changes to the agenda.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairperson Dunham inquired if there were any changes to the February 23, 2023, minutes.

Hearing none, Vice Chairperson Dunham called for a motion.

Mr. Dyer moved, and Mr. Smith seconded the approval of the minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

### 3. **COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**

#### A. **UPWP Status Report**

Mr. D'Agostino gave a brief update on the following items:

General Administration: Transition to the new program year is complete. The new budget is in place and new work items are being assigned to staff. Additionally, staff is working on completing projects from last year with one scope of work approved by the Planning Committee last week. Public Participation & Outreach: Several public meetings were held in April and May specifically for transit. Open house meetings were held at the Salt City Market and the Liverpool Public Library, which were both very successful. There was also a virtual workshop which was successful but not as heavily attended as the in-person meetings. Additionally, staff are working on completing projects from last year with one Scope of Work approved by the SMTC Planning Committee last week and another project on today's agenda for acknowledgement of completion. Federal Transportation Legislation Examination & Evaluation: SMTC staff has met with Joe Driscoll from the City of Syracuse many times regarding their Reconnecting Communities grant of \$500,000. Additionally, SMTC staff is working with the County on their Safe Streets for All grant which is approximately \$450,000. The County is currently entering into a contract with a consultant on that project. 2023 NYSAMPO Conference Hosting: Earlier in May, the SMTC hosted the NYSAMPO Conference at the Marriott-Downtown which was very successful with approximately 250 attendees. Census Data Compilation and/or Analysis: SMTC continues to review the new urbanized area issues. SMTC is waiting for Albany, NYSDOT for clarification as this needs to be completed by the end of the calendar year or the Census identified Urban Area becomes our area by default. Geographic Information Systems – SMTC: Staff participated in a "Career Coaching" day at Fowler and Syracuse University to provide insight into careers in GIS. SMTC acquired new GIS employment-based data that is critical to update the model for Micron and other various projects. Mr. D'Agostino indicated that multiple employment datasets have now been merged to get an average of the best possible data. Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning: Final changes have been made to the bike map and it has been sent to the printer. Maps are expected to arrive this summer. Bridge & Pavement Condition Management System (BPCMS): SMTC staff are working towards the completion of the 2022-2023 BPCMS Report and have begun the pavement rating collection process. SMTC is waiting for Albany, NYSDOT to release their digital pavement rating data to SMTC. MPO Area and Regional Planning Assistance: Staff worked with WSP, the EIS consultant for Micron, per the County's request. SMTC has transmitted their information to WSP and once the model has been modified to include I-81 information SMTC will need to redo and give it back to them as the current model does not include I-81. A conflation process is underway and expected to be completed by September at the latest. Rail, Truck & Transit Planning: As part of the NYSAMPO Conference, approximately 18 people attended an in-person facility tour at the Liverpool Amazon location. Traffic Safety: Staff moderated a conference session on liability issues and traffic safety planning at the NYSAMPO conference and attended the in-person Safety Working Group meeting which reviewed and provided comments on a statewide scope of services. SMTC staff is working with NYSDOT regarding learning their new CLEAR system for accidents. City of Syracuse On-Call Planning Support: SMTC has formally transmitted the completed Priority Crosswalk Location Study to the City. Dome Traffic Management & Events Strategic Plan: A two-day Operations Plan Workshop was held with the Study Advisory Committee on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at Club 44 inside the dome. The goal of completing the project is by the end of the calendar year, or, by the end of the program year at the latest.

Syracuse Sidewalk Planning Study: SMTC interns are currently rating sidewalks and collecting data for the database which is continuing to grow. SMTC staff needs to work with the City of Syracuse on figuring out a permanent storage and maintenance system for this effort. Syracuse Safe Routes to School Procedural Manual Phase 2: A survey was distributed via classes at Grant Middle School to help aid in the development of this project. Mr. D'Agostino indicated the project is coming along nicely. CNYRTA Public Outreach: The Exploring Tomorrow's Transit (ETT) survey is closed with over 1,000 responses received. Many meetings and outreach have occurred with a FOCUS Forum scheduled in June. Westvale Plaza Revitalization: Progress is on target with no issues. A virtual public engagement session will be held in June. Coldbrook Creek Trail – City of Syracuse: The project is complete and will be presented to the committee later on the agenda. Westside Trail – City of Syracuse: A SAC meeting was held at the end of April and a TNT Meeting was held in May. This project is progressing on target. Nedrow Route 11 Corridor Study: A public meeting was held in April. The project is moving along nicely with excellent public involvement including Onondaga Nation, an active member participating in the study that reflects on the local issues and needs. Travel Demand Modeling: The conflation project is about halfway complete. Work continues on updating the SMTC model to coincide with the conflation project so it can be used immediately when it's complete. The SMTC is working with Onondaga County for their growth plan to help identify future households and the latest employment data for the Micron study that can estimate the impact on our transportation system. Micron Development Area Transportation System Assessment: SMTC is working with Onondaga County regarding work efforts focused on Route 31 for their enhanced transit examination project that could perhaps mean Bus Rapid Transit or something more significant with exact boundaries TBD. A Request for Proposal should be going out in the near future for a consultant. Greater Fayetteville Area Bicycle & Pedestrian Connection: The Scope of Work for this project was presented and approved by the SMTC Planning Committee last week. Brewerton Trail Network – Cicero: Staff are in the process of scoping this project out. TIP Development: There are a couple of amendments on today's agenda for I-81 and a related TIP amendment for possibly revising the TIP amendment process as it relates to I-81.

This is an information item only.

#### 4. **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **I-81 Project Update**

Ms. Parmley gave a brief I-81 project update.

Ms. Parmley indicated that the I-81 project is “full steam ahead” as contract one, which is the northern interchange of I-81 and I-481 in Cicero is underway with preliminary construction underway and major construction starting this summer. Contract two, which is the southern exchange and I-481 for improvements to make the conversion from I-481 to I-81 should be awarded by the end of June with the design build process running through the end of 2025. Contract 3 is the Inner Harbor, Bear St., Court St. and Spencer St. bridge replacement and North Clinton St. NYSDOT is coordinating with the City of Syracuse and expecting to award this contract in the fall. Ms. Parmley indicated there is a lot of utility work needed for this contract and NYSDOT is working closely and collaborating with the local utility companies. NYSDOT is also working on design only for the other two contracts of phase one due to the ongoing litigation. NYSDOT does not have permission to proceed with contracts four and five at this time. Ms. Parmley indicated the State lawsuit is now fully in Appeals Court. She anticipates the Federal and State case to be wrapped up by the end of the year.

Chairperson Dunham asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Schultz asked if contract five is when the viaduct will be deconstructed.

Ms. Parmley indicated that only a portion of the viaduct will be deconstructed in contract five with phase two having the major viaduct destruction.

Ms. Schultz asked when the project will be completed.

Ms. Parmley indicated at the end of 2028.

Mr. D'Agostino asked if there were any design build changes on the previously awarded contracts, would it need to go back out to the public for their comments.

Ms. Parmley explained that once the contract has been awarded, Alternative Technical Concepts, also known as ATC's, would become part of the contract if it is equal to or better than the original concept, it does not go back out to the public for comment as it becomes part of the procurement process. Ms. Parmley indicated that NYSDOT would then set up open houses to educate the public on the changes to the original EIS.

Mr. Dyer asked what was currently happening at the northern interchange of Rte. 481 and Rt. 81.

Ms. Parmley indicated that NYSDOT is widening the ramp to include multiple lanes in both directions.

Vice President Dunham asked if there were any more questions.

There were none.

This was an informational item only.

## 5. **NEW BUSINESS**

### A. **TIP Amendments**

Mr. D'Agostino indicated there are two I-81 Viaduct Project related TIP amendments that are proposed for modification to the 2023-2027 TIP and statewide TIP.

Change in schedule:

o PIN 350193 (BRIDGE, NEW AND REPLACE, I-690 OVER CROUSE & IRVING, CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA CO). □ Sponsor New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). NYSDOT is proposing to delay the Construction and Inspection phases from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 22/23 to FFY 23/24. Compensating offsets provided by outside Metropolitan Planning Area funds.

o PIN 350194 (BUSINESS LOOP 81, SOUTHERN SECTION, PHASE 1, CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA CO). □ Sponsor NYSDOT. NYSDOT is proposing to delay the Construction and Inspection phases from FFY 22/23 to FFY 23/24. Compensating offsets provided by outside Metropolitan Planning Area funds.

Mr. Roth gave a brief explanation of each TIP amendment indicating that NYSDOT intends to shift the funds from FFY 22/23 to FFY 23/24 for both amendments.

Mr. Simpson asked if these proposed changes would affect the timing of the project and Mr. Roth indicated it will not.

Mr. Simpson also asked if there was any concern regarding the funding for the following year and Mr. Smith replied that he is not concerned.

Vice Chairperson Dunham asked if there were any more questions.

There were none.

Vice Chairperson Dunham called for a motion.  
Mr. Simpson moved, and Ms. Schultz seconded the approval of the TIP amendments.  
The motion passed unanimously.

**B. I-81 TIP Amendment Process/Matrix Revisions**

Mr. D’Agostino indicated there is an existing TIP Amendment Process and a Matrix outlining when specific amendments are brought to which committees (Executive, Planning and Policy). It was determined by the Policy Committee that all I-81 related TIP Actions would be brought to the Planning and Policy Committees given the importance of this project.

NYSDOT is proposing revisions to this matrix due to the size, scope and nature of the I-81 Viaduct Project contracts and their funding needs.

Staff provided an overview of:

- Existing TIP Matrix and Amendment Process (General)
- Existing I-81 Amendment Process
- NYSDOT Proposed Revisions
- Staff’s Opinion on Proposed Revisions
- Planning Committee’s Recommendation to Policy Committee

Discussion occurred.

Vice Chairperson Dunham called for a motion that the Policy Committee approve the recommendation brought forth from the Planning Committee in conjunction with the additional notification to the Policy Committee of any changes that occur at the Executive Committee meetings.

Mr. Bottar moved, and Mr. Dyer seconded the motion.  
The motion passed unanimously.

**C. Coldbrook Creek Trail Study**

Mr. D’Agostino indicated that the Study was initiated as part of the 2022-2023 UPWP on behalf of the City of Syracuse. Responding to the concerns of residents regarding flooding along Coldbrook Creek, the City of Syracuse initiated an investigation into a potential sediment removal project. As an outgrowth of this investigation, the City requested the SMTC to identify opportunities along the existing “goat” path and local street that run alongside the creek to help:

- Increase pedestrian and bicycle trips to local amenities;
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled and personal vehicle trips;
- Provide more trails to connect the Valley neighborhood to nearby destinations;
- and
- Expand and connect the existing/planned regional trail network.

Mr. Bardenett gave a detailed presentation.

After a brief discussion, Vice Chairperson Dunham called for a motion that the Policy Committee acknowledge the completion of this report.

Ms. Schultz moved, and Mr. Busa seconded the motion.  
The motion passed unanimously.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**  
None

7. **ADJOURNMENT**  
Vice Chairperson Dunham called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Roth seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:00  
p.m.