

DIRECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
Spring 2025



The Empire State Trail runs along Towpath Rd in the Town of DeWitt.



2025-2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) adopted

On February 27, 2025, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's (SMTC) Policy Committee adopted the 2025-2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). 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 UPWP incorporates into one document all transportation planning activities, conducted from April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area.

The SMTC issued a call letter for project proposals in the fall of 2024. Ten new projects were selected for inclusion in the 2025-2026 UPWP. Additionally, six major projects from the previous program year will be carried over for completion, as well as the management of two studies contracted out by member agencies. The UPWP also lists numerous recurring activities performed by SMTC staff such as data collection, travel demand modeling, and long-range planning. Flip to page 7 for a brief description of each new study:

More info about the UPWP:
smtcmpl.org/upwp

SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL



Unified Planning Work Program
2025-2026

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Villages of Minoa, Fayetteville, and Manlius Bicycle & Pedestrian Connection Study completed

Requested by the Village of Fayetteville, the SMTC's Villages of Minoa, Fayetteville, and Manlius Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections Study (Three Villages Study) was acknowledged as complete by the SMTC Policy Committee on February 27, 2025.

The purpose of the Three Villages Study was to evaluate and offer suggested improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network, connections, and access through the Greater Fayetteville area that links the villages of Minoa, Fayetteville, and Manlius to each other, as well as to neighboring parks and trails in the area, including the Empire State Trail, Green Lakes State Park, and Mill Run Park. This study sought to find out: where are the best places to make these connections, what are the right treatments, and would people change their behavior if sidewalks, bike lanes, or trails were built? Also considered was the in-depth work completed through previous studies in the area while trying to maintain focus on corridors that had not received as much attention.

Various treatment types for improving walking and biking are outlined in the Three Villages Study. Some are obvious, like sidewalks, while others are less well known in these communities, such as bike boulevards. Ultimately, the study provides potential treatment options for at least five locations that municipalities and road owners could consider based on their value to achieving the goals of improving connections and the significant support they received through the public involvement process. These include:

- Sidewalks on Highbridge Street, from Audubon Road to Wild Wood Ridge
- Separated bike facility along Minoa Road, near N. Manlius Road to Costello Parkway/N. Main Street (see graphic)
- Multi-Use Path on Rt 5 (E. Genesee Street) from Duguid Road to George Taylor Road / Pierson Road near the entrance to Green Lakes State Park

- Bike Boulevards on Clinton Street and other local streets in the Village of Fayetteville
- Ledyard Canal Trail sections could be formalized in the Town of Manlius and Villages of Fayetteville and Manlius.

In addition to helping the community visualize these projects, the study provides initial estimates on construction costs (excluding any property acquisition), as well as suggestions on funding sources.

Final report available at:
smtcmpo.org/all-publications/



The project team hosted two well attended public meetings to gain insight from community members.



SIDEWALK CONCEPT
HIGHBRIDGE STREET NEAR SPRING POND FISHERIES, FACING NORTH

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

New sidewalks are recommended along five corridors, including Highbridge St (above).



BIKE FACILITY CONCEPT
MINOA ROAD AT N MANLIUS ROAD, FACING NORTH

EXPANDED OR ENHANCED SHOULDER

The report recommends bicycle lanes as enhancements along three corridors, including Minoa Rd (above), as well as on four corridors that would require expanded pavement to accommodate the facility.



Downtown Parking: Wayfinding and Signage Guide acknowledged as completed

Over 18,000 parking spaces can be found throughout Downtown Syracuse, with over half available for public use, including on-street and off-street parking facilities. While the supply of parking spaces may be sufficient, visitors to the district often comment that finding parking is difficult. Some of this disconnect may be due to a lack of standardized signage identifying who is allowed to park where. To address these concerns, the Downtown Parking: Wayfinding and Signage Guide focuses on the creation of a unified signage program at publicly available parking facilities, paired with targeted wayfinding signs.

The signage program recommended within the Guide builds off the City of Syracuse Wayfinding Study Phase II report from 2014, which highlighted the potential development of a citywide wayfinding program to key destinations. To accommodate changes to the street network as a result of the I-81 viaduct project, SMTC staff identified additional signs to be incorporated into the overall wayfinding plan. Parking specific wayfinding recommendations are reserved for facilities with poor visibility from main travel corridors, including the Trolley Lot and City Center Garage.

At each publicly available facility, a standardized public parking sign is encouraged. By utilizing a standard design across the district, visitors are easily able to identify which facilities are available to them once they are near their final destination. While this recommendation is initially for the focus facilities identified by the Downtown Committee, the signage program is encouraged to expand to include all publicly available facilities.

In addition to the wayfinding and signage program, SMTC staff identified four key locations, near anchor destinations and entertainment venues, where bicycle parking could be expanded. Installing a standardized staple rack at each location could help improve accessibility for cyclists with minimal impact on the public right of way.

Final report available at:
smtcmpo.org/all-publications/



Concepts depicting a unified signage program at various publicly available parking facilities around Downtown Syracuse.



Syracuse Pavement Prioritization Program

SMTC staff recently delivered another set of pavement maintenance recommendations as a part of the City of Syracuse's Pavement Prioritization Program. Each year, SMTC staff assign a pavement condition rating to each City-owned road on a block-by-block basis.

The model developed as a part of the program assigns weights to other road attributes (such as traffic volumes, functional classification, land use, and more) in addition to pavement ratings to help stratify the road network. The model also includes demographic data to ensure that the roads selected are distributed equitably across the city. Ultimately, the model produces a list of road segments which could be reasonable candidates for reconstruction.

This data-driven approach with a focus on equity aligns with the City's goals and can help maintain and improve the state of the road network through strategic investment.

Final memo available at:
smtcmpo.org/all-publications/

PAVEMENT PRIORITIZATION PROGRAM





SMTC staff present at the Onondaga County Planning Federation’s Planning Symposium

Two SMTC staff members presented at the Onondaga County Planning Federation’s 36th Annual Planning Symposium on March 26. Meghan Vitale, Principal Transportation Planner, and Andrew Frasier, Senior Transportation Analyst, led a session titled “Regional Transportation Goals & Strategies: from planning to local implementation.” Ms. Vitale talked about the regional goals of the new 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which is due to be adopted in September 2025, how those goals support municipal and regional growth, and how communities can implement those goals

through the design of local road networks and multi-modal facilities. This presentation included references to the planning and financing tools documented in SMTC’s recent “Financing Local Mobility” study (available at smtcmpo.org/financinglocalmobility). Mr. Frasier highlighted recommendations for communities along the Empire State Trail that were identified in the 2022 Onondaga County Empire State Trail Local Economic Opportunities Plan. SMTC staff appreciated this opportunity to present our work and engage with local planners and municipal board members!



SMTC staff presented at the 2025 Onondaga County Planning Federation’s Planning Symposium held at the Marriott Syracuse Downtown.

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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.

2025-2026 UPWP adopted

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Active Transportation Plan (Cicero)

Create an active transportation plan that is safe and efficient and that serves as an asset to the Town of Cicero's local residents and businesses.

Fayetteville – Route 5 Transportation & Smart Growth Opportunities (Fayetteville)

Revisit key issues identified in the SMTTC's 2018 Fayetteville Route 5 Transportation and Land Use Study and provide an updated technical analysis.

CNY Regional Planning and Development Board Planning Assistance (Hannibal)

Analyze roadway realignment scenarios in the village and traffic calming opportunities along NY 3.

OC DOT Operations and Safety Analysis (Onondaga County DOT)

Operational and safety assessments for Henry Clay Blvd (Buckley Rd to Taft Rd) and South Bay Rd (I-81 bridges to Lakeshore Rd), including evaluating the impacts of future anticipated development.

Empire State Trail Economic Opportunities – Phase II (Onondaga County Planning)

Discuss interest in implementation with roadway owners and generate planning level order-of-magnitude costs for various segments identified in the Empire State Trail Local Economic Opportunities Plan.

Bicycle Commuter Corridor Implementation (Onondaga County Planning)

Engage road owners and stakeholders in the next steps toward implementation of the SMTTC's 2013 Bicycle Commuter Corridor Study.

Intersecting Community Needs: Food Access & Transportation (Onondaga County Planning)

Update Onondaga County's 2017 Food Environment Study with a variety of transportation metrics examined throughout the county.

Bear Trap Creek Connector (Syracuse)

Study and propose a connection between the Bear Trap Creek trailhead just north of City line to the Regional Transportation Center/Market area, City of Syracuse Creekwalk, and future Onondaga Lake Canalways Trail.

Midler Ave and New Court Ave Multimodal Study (Syracuse)

Identify opportunities to continue bike infrastructure and pedestrian improvements along Court St, New Court Ave, and Midler Ave.

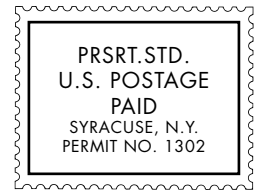
Nottingham Road Multimodal Improvements (Syracuse)

Evaluate existing conditions along Nottingham Rd (Broad St to Waring Rd) and identify opportunities to improve consistency of bike/pedestrian accommodations and enhance safety.



Existing bike route signage along Rt 31 in the Town of Cicero.

SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
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New York State Association of MPOs 2025 Conference

SAVE THE DATE!
May 13-14, 2025

SMTC member agencies and municipalities may attend for free.

REGISTER HERE

Marriott Syracuse Downtown
100 E Onondaga St, Syracuse, NY 13202

