

2025 Metropolitan Planning Organization Self-Certification

Prepared by the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC)
June 2025

Concurrent with the submittal of the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Onondaga County, the Towns of Hastings, Schroepfel, and West Monroe in Oswego County, and the Town of Sullivan in Madison County, is required to complete a self-certification of its planning process. This self-certification serves as documentation that the SMTC follows federal planning requirements in accordance with 23 CFR Section 450.336 and 49 USC 5303.

A. Required Agreements

Discuss status of necessary agreements. Please note status of the cooperative planning agreement and performance-based planning agreements between the MPO, NYSDOT and the transit operator. This includes provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to the development of financial plans that support the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP (23 CFR 450.314). This agreement also needs to address development of the annual listing of projects.

All required agreements are in place. The agency's cooperative planning agreement was approved by all relevant parties on March 5, 2010, and addresses key items such as the development of financial plans and the annual listing of projects. The performance-based planning agreement was approved on June 12, 2018.

B. Planning/Technical

1. **UPWP:** Discuss how the UPWP covers relevant planning activity and needs, including how the UPWP supports the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Please note any progress or scheduling issues.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) establishes the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) short- and long-range planning activities, as adopted by the MPO's Policy Committee. The UPWP adheres to the performance-based planning activities and needs outlined in SMTC's 2050 LRTP. The 2025-2026 UPWP was adopted by the SMTC Policy Committee on February 27, 2025. There is no known progress or scheduling issues.

2. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan:** Mention the following MTP Items: Horizon Date, MPO Approval Date, conformity approval date, fiscal constraint, required elements and implementation. Discuss program-level environmental mitigation activities and any current or planned consultation activities with Federal, State, and tribal, wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies. Discuss current or planned activities for consultation with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, economic development, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the Plan.

The LRTP is a blueprint that guides the Syracuse Metropolitan Area's transportation development over a 20-year plus period, legislatively required every five years in air quality attainment areas to reflect changing conditions and new planning principles. The LRTP specifically looks at transportation planning concerns such as comprehensive access to transportation; alternative transportation modes (especially bicycle and pedestrian); the impact of land development on the transportation system; transportation system reliability; safety; and preservation of the existing infrastructure.

The SMTC's current LRTP was adopted by the SMTC Policy Committee in September 2020 and amended in April 2022. The horizon date of the plan is 2050. The 2050 LRTP 2020 Update incorporates performance measures specified in federal surface transportation authorizations. Since 2018, national performance measure targets have been approved by the Policy Committee and included in the LRTP as required. A new Metropolitan

Transportation Plan (MTP) with new goals, objectives, performance measures, targets, and financial plan is under development and is slated for adoption by September 30, 2025.

Program Level Environmental Mitigation Activities & Current/Planned Consultation Activities

Environmental mitigation is incorporated into the current LRTP's goals. The SMTC's LRTP is a policy level document that does not contain many significant projects in the out-years for which potential mitigation activities would be appropriate though specific mitigation measures will be examined at the project phase via the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes and are therefore beyond the scope of the LRTP document. However, environmental mitigation may be a consideration in planning studies and other planning efforts. The SMTC has a project locations and environmental considerations interactive map on its website. The interactive map is intended to provide the public with a general understanding of environmental consideration in or near SMTC project areas.

The SMTC works with regulatory agencies through the SMTC Committee Structure, such as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, which is a voting member through this committee structure. In addition, the SMTC continually seeks participation from the Onondaga Nation. Federal transportation authorizations require MPOs 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. As part of the public outreach for the 2050 LRTP 2020 Update (April 2022 amendment), the SMTC completed outreach to applicable agencies. Similar outreach is anticipated for the MTP currently under development. List of agencies is available upon request.

3. **TIP:** Mention the following items: MPO approval, conformity approval, fiscal constraint, consistency with MTP and any other relevant issues. The TIP needs to contain a priority list of projects and strategies for 4 years; financial plan; and descriptions (type of work, termini, length, etc.) of each project in the TIP. Discuss status of consultation activities with agencies listed under "Metropolitan Transportation Plan" above.

The last complete TIP was adopted in August 2022 and continually maintained over the past three years. The 2026-2030 TIP is set to be adopted by the SMTC Policy Committee on June 13, 2025. Like the LRTP, transportation conformity is no longer applicable.

The TIP includes all essential project information so that projects are readily identifiable, together with selected key information such as *scope, element, purpose, location, and municipality*, to describe each entry. The TIP is fiscally constrained by fund source and Federal Fiscal Year and is routinely monitored to ensure fiscal constraint continuance. The SMTC's 2026-2030 TIP contains priority lists of projects and strategies for 5 years, as well as a detailed financial plan and descriptions for each project.

The TIP supports the SMTC decision-making process through a review by member agencies of proposed projects for inclusion on the capital program. The SMTC members evaluate TIP projects relying on the goals, objectives, and performance measures contained in the 2050 LRTP. This assures that a rational relationship exists between the 2050 Plan and the projects proposed in the TIP. The SMTC members' review also considers the needs and priorities of the SMTC planning area, progress achieved on existing projects and future expectations, scheduling and timing issues, and funding considerations for the most appropriate use of federal funds.

The SMTC, as required by federal transportation policy, consults as appropriate with applicable agencies identified above in B.2. As part of the public outreach for the 2026-2030 TIP, the SMTC completed outreach to applicable agencies.

4. Technical Areas: *Take the opportunity to highlight any technical emphasis areas of interest to the MPO.*

a. Census Data Compilation and/or Analysis

This task provides the SMTC with the ability to process, compile and analyze Census Data (i.e., American Community Survey [ACS] and Decennial data) relevant to the MPO area; and to continue to provide Census data, information, and analysis as input into appropriate SMTC planning studies. This effort supports long range activities, Travel Demand Modeling, Title VI, and general transportation planning for the MPO.

Data are linked to GIS, which allowed for maps to be created, and analysis performed that would not have been possible without the Census Data.

b. Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The SMTC continually improves and maintains its central GIS database library for use on all planning activities. Maintaining key datasets including Census data, road attributes, environmental conditions, transit routes and stops, vehicle data, and crash information is vital for SMTC's planning activities. Staff utilized ArcGIS Online on several projects to create maps for sharing transportation related data. Notable interactive maps include Project Locations and Environmental Considerations, Intelligent Transportation System Devices, and TIP Map.

c. Travel Demand Model

SMTC staff have made considerable progress with this task over the past few years. Selected major accomplishments under this effort include:

- Update of transportation network and traffic analysis zone attributes as necessary;
- Completion of various travel demand modeling efforts per member agency requests; and
- Completion of travel demand modeling related to in-house efforts and UPWP planning tasks.

5. Special Considerations:

a. *Title VI: Discuss how Title VI concerns are addressed in the planning process and documented in the UPWP, TIP and LRTP. These include Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) activities and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) activities.*

All tasks and activities conducted by the SMTC seek to ensure that the principles of Title VI receive appropriate attention. All projects are intended to respond to transportation issues to correct or avoid, as appropriate, a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental impact.

A formal Title VI Policy and complaint procedure, along with a Title VI Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan, are in place and available on the SMTC's website. Updates to the Title VI and LEP Plans will be made accordingly. To date, the SMTC has not received any discrimination complaints.

i. *Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – Please discuss any program or study level activities the MPO may have undertaken to identify and/or address the needs of LEP populations in the metropolitan area and any outreach activities.*

Though most SMTC planning activities include community outreach and engagement, one of the more recent LEP relevant examples is the Exploring Tomorrow's Transit effort SMTC staff completed in collaboration with Centro. Several public engagement activities were held throughout the planning effort such as Spanish text on outreach materials, translators at open houses, and a Spanish specific outreach survey. Also, the MTP currently under development produced a Spanish language survey and a project introductory video with Spanish language captions. Additionally, for planning studies where language groups within the population constitute 1,000

people or 5% of a subarea, staff will consider translating executive summaries or other study relevant materials into those languages upon request and posted online.

- ii. American with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Information should be given on any ADA-related efforts for the MPOs' planning activities including outreach, support and/or coordination with transit operators or other groups. Discuss efforts to make communications accessible and available to persons with impaired vision and hearing. Discuss efforts to hold MPO meetings in ADA accessible locations. Discuss any efforts to provide ADA Transition Plan assistance to members as applicable.

The SMTC maintains active participation in the CNYRTA Accessible Transportation Advisory Council (ATAC). Besides CNYRTA and SMTC, the ATAC consists of several human service advocacy organizations. Outreach to human service advocacy organizations also occurs during the development of the area's Coordinated Plan and the MTP. All SMTC public meetings (e.g., committee and planning studies) are held in ADA accessible locations. Additionally, on public meeting notices the SMTC includes text to denote special accommodations can be made to ensure participation.

- iii. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) – Indicate if Semi-annual DBE reports (Commitments/Awards and Payments) are submitted and if the MPO has signed the Hosts' DBE Plan or NYSDOT's DBE Plan.

DBE reports are submitted to the NYSDOT semi-annually. The CNY RPDB, as the administrative host of the SMTC, does not have a DBE Plan. Therefore, the MPO has not signed a host agency plan nor NYSDOT's DBE Plan. Relative to consultant procurement procedures, DBEs and Minority/Women Owned Business Enterprises are afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to any consultant invitation and are not discriminated against on the grounds of age, race, color, sex, creed, national origin, or disability.

- b. Private Operators: Discuss how private operators are accommodated.

Private operators are accommodated through invitations and opportunities to participate in specific studies. This is done either through direct solicitation or public notices.

- c. Planning Factors: Discuss how these are considered in planning process and products.

The federal Planning Factors are considered in planning studies and documents, as appropriate. The planning factors helped to establish several LRTP goals that in turn guide the creation of the UPWP, and the evaluation and selection of capital projects for the TIP.

- d. Congestion Management Process (CMP): Discuss the status of CMP and how it is used.

The latest CMP document (June 2025) aligns with the eight steps suggested by the FHWA for completing a CMP. The standalone congestion management document is inclusive of multimodal data, analysis, objectives, performance measures and strategies. Through the CMP the SMTC helps its member agencies to identify areas of concern and establish a toolbox of potential strategies for addressing congestion and reliability. These strategies could be included in municipal capital programs, SMTC's TIP or UPWP. Low-cost operational improvements are suggested for implementation before more capital-intensive treatments.

- e. Participation Plan: Discuss the status of public involvement/participation plan procedures and a periodic evaluation process to determine its effectiveness. Discuss how visualization techniques will be employed for Plans and TIPs. Discuss status of making public information available in electronically accessible formats such as the World Wide Web. Discuss incorporation of consultations which are listed under "Transportation Plan"

and “TIP” in this document. Address coverage in the participation plan of users of pedestrian walkways, bicycle transportation facilities, and the persons with disabilities.

The SMTC’s 2021 Public Participation Plan is available on the SMTC website. Opportunities for public involvement are welcomed in all planning activities. This includes a public involvement section for almost all UPWP planning studies, thereby assuring a continual review process to meet the objectives of meaningful public involvement. Changes are incorporated into the public involvement process as needed and dictated by the nature of specific projects. Since the SMTC utilizes tailored public involvement plans (PIP) for most UPWP projects, the public participation process is evaluated regularly. Virtual Public Involvement plays a large part in engaging with the community. Updates to the overall agency PPP will be considered.

Visualization techniques for Plans and TIPs

Since the SMTC LRTP is not project specific, visualization techniques for the Plan are focused on a system-wide scale. The LRTP/MTP has a companion Transportation Atlas. The Atlas contains numerous transportation and socio-economic related data, maps, infographics, and summary text. For the TIP, visualization techniques include mapping to show the location and nature of individual transportation projects via GIS within the TIP document. The ArcGIS Online TIP interactive map is updated quarterly to account for cost and/or schedule changes.

Status of making public information available in electronically accessible formats such as the World Wide Web

The SMTC website contains general information on the SMTC, detailed information on its studies, products, public participation opportunities, and other pertinent news and developments. The website has been useful and cost-effective in its posting of final reports and has become a site that the public relies on for meeting notices, in addition to the SMTC social media channels (e.g., Facebook and Instagram).

The SMTC creates subpages within the agency website and/or separate websites specific to individual UPWP projects. The SMTC Facebook and Instagram channels are used in tandem with the agency website. The SMTC continues to use its website and social media channels for publicizing project news, updates, and opportunities for public participation. An agency YouTube channel was created in 2020 and meeting recordings such as, but not limited to, our quarterly Forum on Active Transportation meetings are posted.

Incorporation of consultations which are listed under “Transportation Plan” and “TIP” in this document

The SMTC has incorporated consultations pursuant to federal surface transportation authorizations that are noted under “Metropolitan Transportation Plan” and “TIP” in this self-certification.

Coverage in the participation plan of users of pedestrian walkways, bicycle transportation facilities, and the persons with disabilities

The SMTC’s Public Participation Plan addresses coverage of “representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities” and “representatives of the disabled.” The groups are provided with a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process and comment and provide input on the contents of the LRTP and TIP as described in the 2021 Public Participation Plan.

- f. *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Agency Transportation Plans: Discuss the MPO’s coordinated planning process including development of or implementation of these Plans.*

The coordinated plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes and provides strategies for meeting the transportation needs of these target populations. The coordinated plan development process includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers along with participation by the members of the public. The current Coordinated Plan was completed in 2022, and an updated document is anticipated in 2026.

C. Administrative/Management

1. Progress Reports: *Indicate if reports are submitted to FHWA/FTA on time.*

Progress reports are submitted on time on a biannual basis. The format used was developed to provide a comprehensive and complete examination of the SMTC program activities.

2. Bills: *Indicate if bills are submitted on time and paid on time.*

Bills are submitted for review and paid on time.

3. Audits: *Indicate if audits are completed in a timely manner and if any identified deficiencies are corrected.*

Audits are conducted in a timely manner, consistent with the host agency requirements. Any administrative/financial suggestions resulting from an audit are presented to and considered by the SMTC Executive Committee. Any deficiencies noted in the audits have been addressed.

4. Annual Program: *Indicate if the annual program is closed out in a timely manner.*

The annual program closeout is conducted by the NYSDOT following submission of final requests for payment and a final progress report. Closeout is managed in a timely manner.

5. Budget: *Indicate if budgets are kept current and amendments processed as appropriate.*

The SMTC Executive Committee reviews the budget status each month as part of the monthly financial report prepared by the host agency. Amendments to the budget are made as needed to maintain accurate and current financial records.

6. Consultant Selection: *Discuss MPO or host consultant selection procedures. Discuss DBE provisions.*

The SMTC engages consultants for specialized technical work as outlined in the SMTC Operations Plan. Solicitations for consultant services are sought through the publication of notices through the New York State Contract Reporter and posted on the SMTC website. Notice of services sought may be sent directly to firms that either have experience or a recognized expertise in a particular field of study. With respect to DBE provisions, the consultant proposal screening process includes an assessment of several key factors, one of which is meaningful DBE participation. DBE participation is a consideration but not a requirement. The SMTC welcomes and encourages DBE and joint minority/non-minority ventures and/or sub-contracting in the agency's contracts.

7. Central Staff/Host Relations: *Discuss any staffing or recruiting issues. Indicate if staff has the political support it needs for effective accomplishments.*

The SMTC has a supportive relationship with the host agency and can recruit and support the staff necessary to carry out the tasks identified in the UPWP. Also, the SMTC has the support of elected officials necessary for effective accomplishments.

8. Decision Making: *Indicate if committees are adequately structured and staffed. Are reasonable decisions reached in a timely fashion?*

The SMTC committee structure is appropriate for the size and scope of the MPO's planning program. Staff can provide the necessary support for the effective operation of the SMTC committee structure. The committee decision-making process arrives at reasonable decisions in a timely fashion.

9. Governance: *Are foundational documents for the MPO such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), operating procedures and financial/staffing plans reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that they are still relevant to current MPO operations? Do members and host understand and execute their roles in a way that supports independent and unbiased work by MPO staff and sound MPO decisions? Discuss status of working relationships with other governments, i.e., local, international and tribal governments.*

All foundational documents (e.g., MOU's, Operations Plan, Staffing Plan) are reviewed and updated on a periodic basis. The members and the host continue to understand and execute their associated roles in a supportive and appropriate manner that does support unbiased work and sound decision-making. The MPO staff members also have an excellent working relationship with their local, State and Federal partners, and representatives of the Onondaga Nation.

10. Procurement: *MPOs need to address an extensive list of requirements applicable to FTA recipients and their FTA assisted procurements in a transparent manner with appropriate documentation. Certify that the MPO and its subrecipients have:*

- Complied with FTA Circular Guidance 4220.1F, Third Party Contracting Requirements and the most recent FTA Master Agreement.
- Maintained a written history of all FTA related procurements.
- Incorporated clauses and certifications for eligible FTA assistance program funding.

There have been no FTA procurement activities undertaken by the SMTC in several years. The overall standard consultant contract was updated to comply with Third Party Contracting Requirements and revised to incorporate by reference related clauses and certifications. Updates to consultant procurement materials will occur as necessitated.

RESOLUTION
SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE

June 13, 2025

WHEREAS, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) as the State designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Syracuse Metropolitan Area in accordance with Federal requirements carries out a comprehensive, continuous and cooperative planning process for the metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, Under 23 CFR Part 450.336, the SMTC is required to perform a self-certification process in conjunction with the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update; and

WHEREAS, the SMTC adopted the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan in September 2020, which includes the consideration of various national performance measures and related targets along with the effects transportation investments may have on economic development, the environment, infrastructure needs, intermodal connectivity, land use, safety and security in accordance with federal surface transportation authorizations; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee adopted the 2026-2030 TIP on this day June 13, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee adopted the current Unified Planning Work Program in February 2025.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Policy Committee of the SMTC hereby certifies that the metropolitan transportation planning process is addressing the major issues in the Metropolitan Planning Area and that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

1. 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450 Subpart C;
2. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
3. 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
4. Section 1101(b) of the IIJA and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects;
5. 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-Aid highway construction contracts;
6. The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37 and 38;

7. The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
8. Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and
9. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in accordance with 23 CFR Part 450, the Policy Committee of the SMTC does hereby adopt this resolution for MPO self-certification.

Done and ordered this 13th day of June 2025 by consensus of the SMTC Policy Committee.

Corey Dunham
Chairperson
SMTC Policy Committee

New York State Department of Transportation
Secretary
SMTC Policy Committee

Date: June 13, 2025

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