

## Chapter 1

# Introduction

## ABOUT THE SMTC

**The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council is a state-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), responsible for administering comprehensive, continuous, and cooperative transportation planning.**

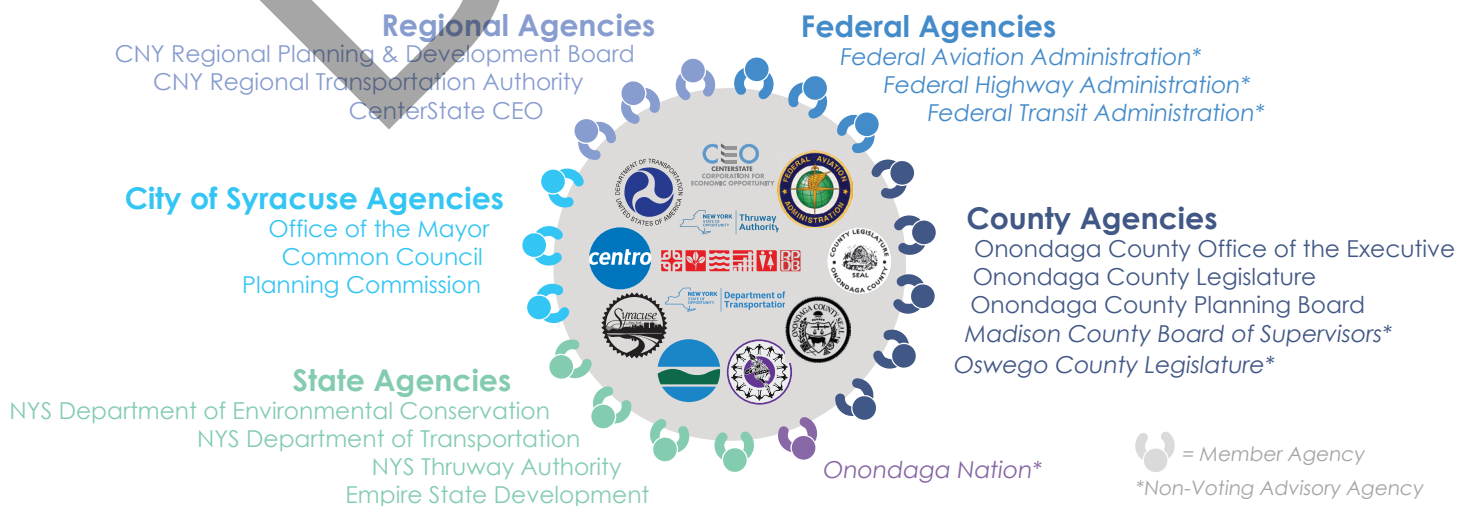
The SMTC's planning jurisdiction, called the Metropolitan Planning Area, includes all of Onondaga County (19 towns, 15 villages, and the City of Syracuse) plus the Town of Sullivan (including Village of Chittenango) in Madison County and the towns of Hastings (including Village of Central Square), Schroepfel (including village of Central Square), and West Monroe in Oswego County.

The SMTC provides a forum for cooperative decision making in the development of transportation plans and capital programs. A collection of member agencies, including federal, state, regional, county, and city representatives, comprise the SMTC, and a staff of planners and analysts carry out the day-to-day work to fulfill the requirements of the transportation planning

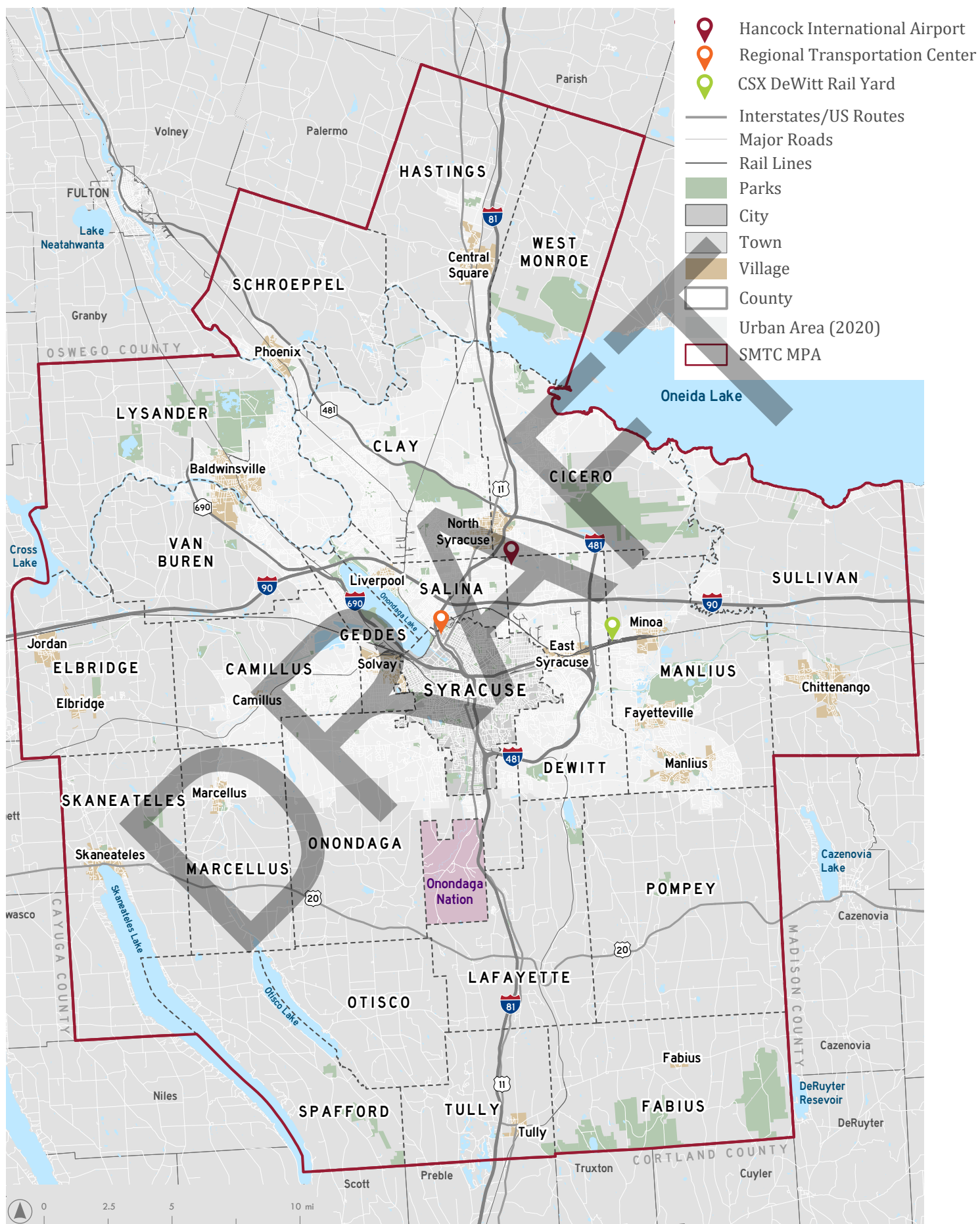
process as described in federal transportation law. This process provides our region with access to millions of dollars in federal transportation funding for projects involving highways, bridges, public transportation, freight movement, and active transportation. The SMTC also provides opportunities for citizens to participate in the transportation planning process. The SMTC Policy Committee is the final decision-making body for the council.

There are currently 14 designated MPOs in New York State, and over 400 MPOs across the entire U.S.

## The SMTC Policy Committee



**FIGURE 1.1: THE SMTC METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA (MPA)**



# ABOUT THE MTP

One of the core functions of every MPO is to maintain the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

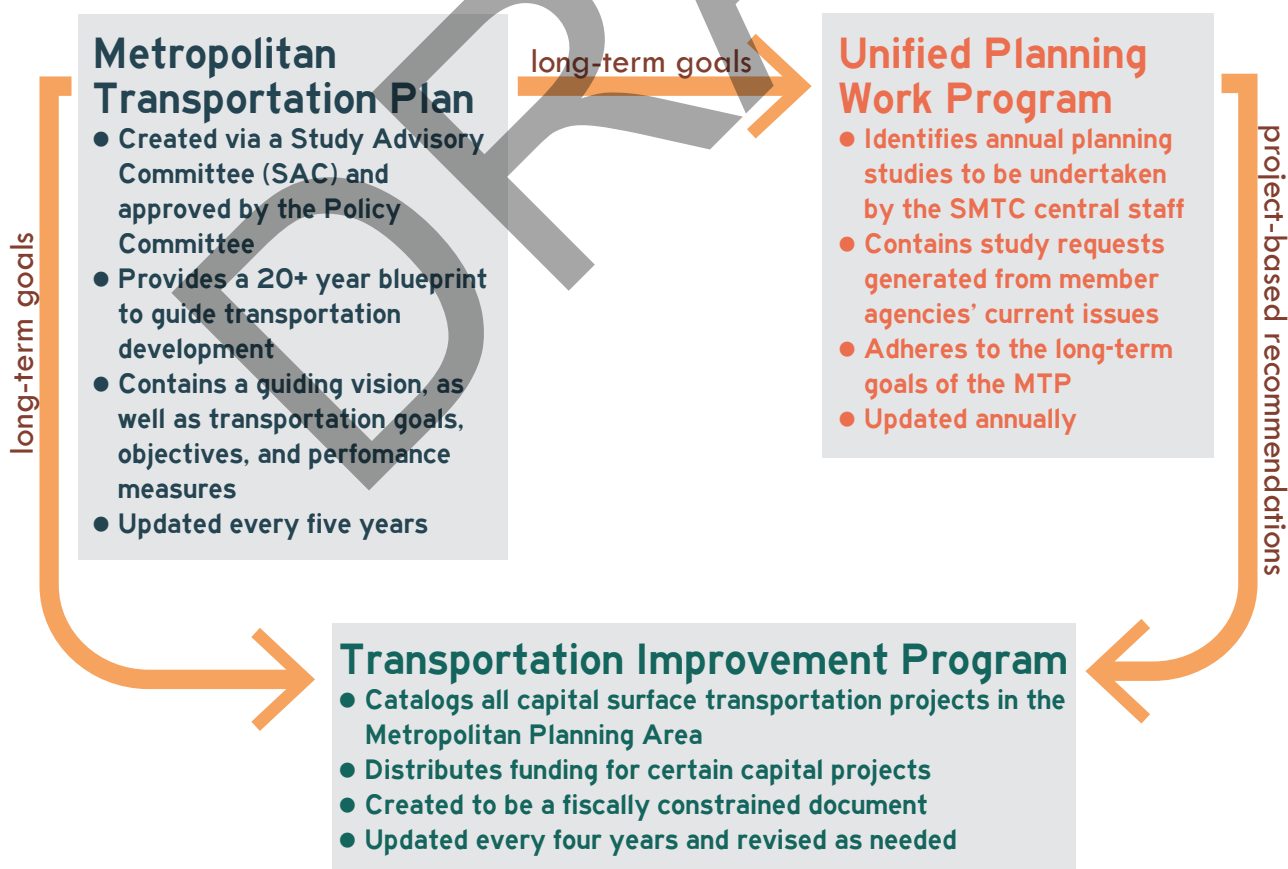
Federal legislation stipulates that the MTP (also referred to as a Long-Range Transportation Plan) must articulate a 20+ year vision for the future of the region's transportation system based on the latest projections of regional population and economic growth, travel demand, and available funding along with public and stakeholder input. The SMTC is required to update our

region's MTP at least once every 5 years. Recent federal legislation requires MPOs to utilize a performance-based planning and programming process with measureable objectives, associated performance measures and targets, and monitoring of progress over time. The MTP includes a System Performance Report for the federally-required performance measures.

For more detail about the structure and function of the SMTC and the evolution of the SMTC's MTP/LRTP, see Appendix A.

## SMTC Guiding Documents

The SMTC has three core functions, embodied in three guiding documents: long-range planning through the MTP, an annual program of transportation planning activities through the UPWP, and administration of federal surface transportation money through the TIP.



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