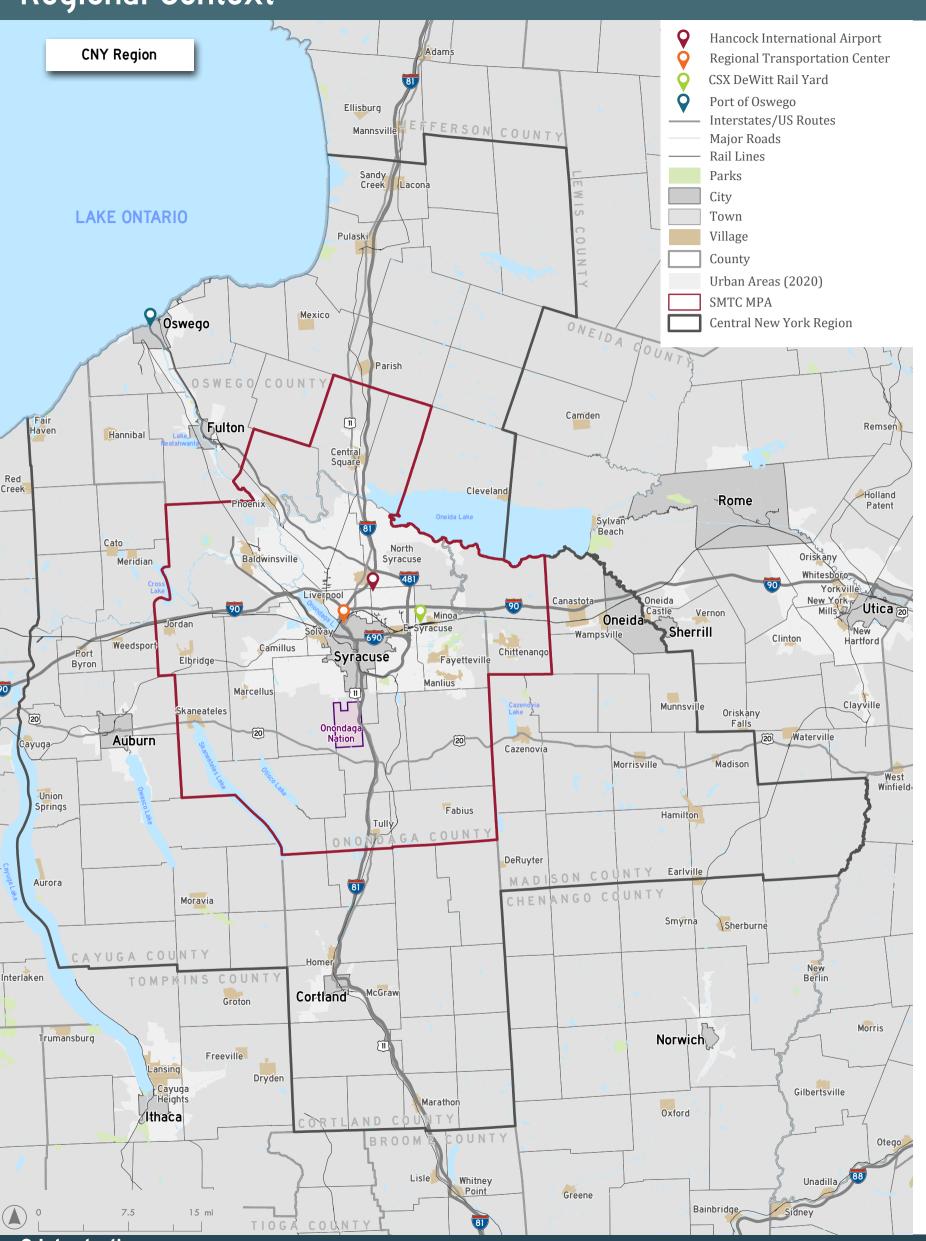


Regional Context



The Central New York (CNY) region Today, Onondaga County continues to includes Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, benefit as the transportation crossroads of Onondaga and Oswego counties (as defined Central New York. Interstate 81 serves as a by the Regional Economic Development significant north-south corridor reaching Council). Located in the center of New from Canada to Tennessee. It intersects the York State, CNY is in close proximity to NYS Thruway (I-90) just north of the City of Rochester, Buffalo, Albany, and Binghamton, Syracuse in the center of Onondaga County. and is about a four-to-five hour drive from The NYS Thruway runs east-west across New York City, Toronto, Boston, and other all of New York State linking with major major cities in the Northeast. The region interstate corridors in neighboring states. covers an area of 4,146 square miles and Onondaga County has two other facilities has a population base of approximately that are part of the interstate highway 785,000 residents comprising an urban network: I-481 and I-690. I-481 provides center, suburban areas, small cities and towns, and rural farming communities.

from their location at the center of New I-481 east of Syracuse and to I-90 west York State. The establishment of the Erie of Syracuse. This highway also has an Canal and the subsequent development of major railroad corridors, as well as the interstate highway system across Onondaga County, ensured Central New York's rise to prominence through continual access to 81 Viaduct Project, significant changes to major transportation routes for nearly the transportation system in the Syracuse two centuries.

access around the eastern periphery of Syracuse, then becomes NYS Route 481 as it extends west of I-81 and continues Syracuse and Onondaga County benefit to the City of Oswego. I-690 connects to extension farther northwest as NYS Route 690. Other significant east-west corridors that span across the state include US Route 20 and NYS Route 5. Due to the Interstate area are underway. These changes will

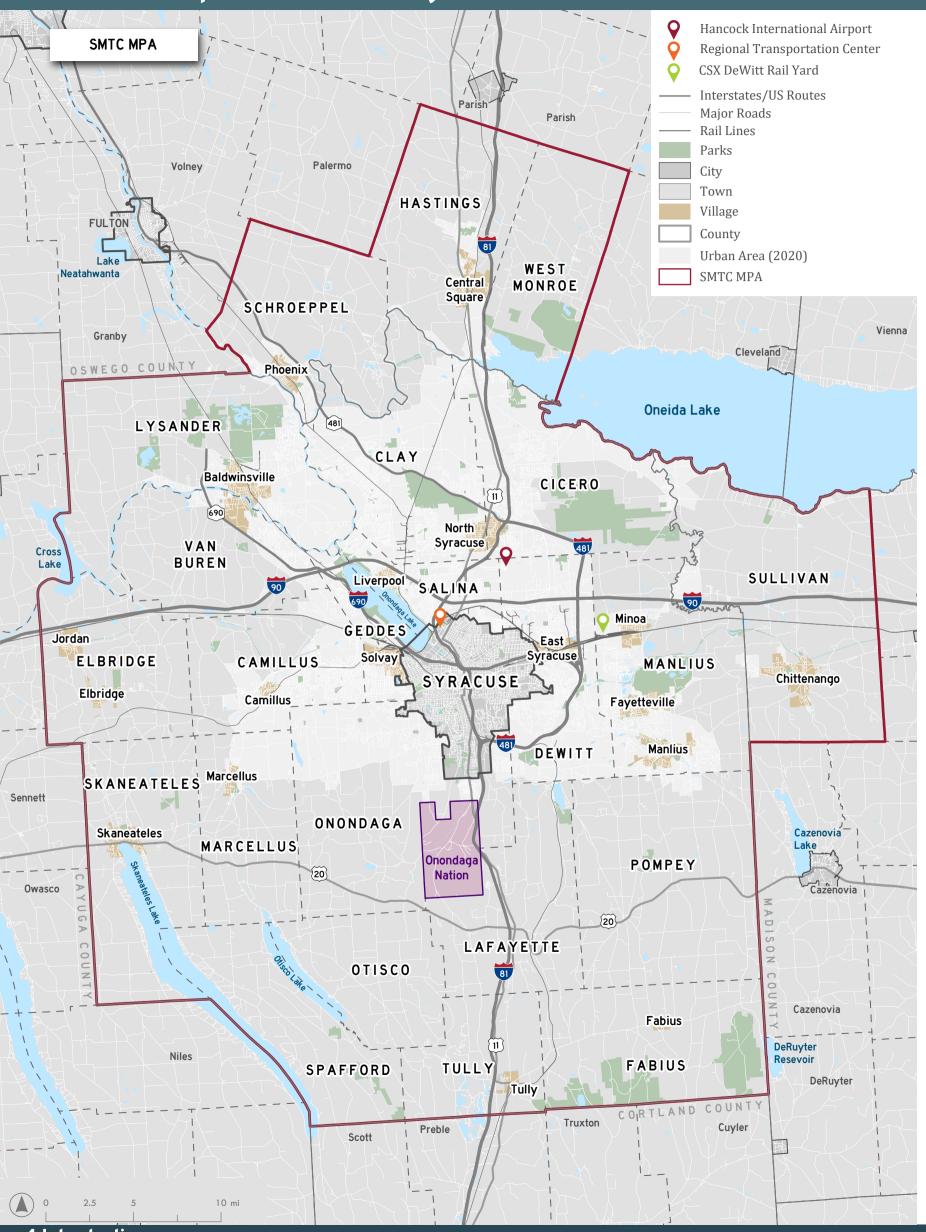
result in the renumbering of highways in the region as the project nears closer to completion in coming years.

The CNY region is served by a number of multimodal transportation hubs. Commercial passenger and freight air travel are served by the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The Regional Transportation Center offers Amtrak passenger rail service and intercity bus services. CSX's DeWitt Rail Yard is a major intermodal freight facility. The Port of Oswego is the first U.S. port-of-call and deepwater port on the Great Lakes from the St. Lawrence Seaway, and handles more than one million tons of cargo annually. These multimodal hubs are critical elements of the transportation network for moving people and goods to support the economy in CNY.



2 Introduction

SMTC Metropolitan Planning Area



The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council is a state-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), responsible for administering comprehensive, continuous, and cooperative transportation planning. The Council's planning jurisdiction, called the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), includes Onondaga County and portions of Madison and Oswego counties. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Syracuse Metropolitan Area, the Council, as directed through federal metropolitan transportation planning policy, acts as a clearinghouse where long-term and immediate transportation planning decisions are made for the region.

The MPO defines the geography of the MPA, with approval from the Governor. The MPA must include at least the existing urbanized area as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau based on population density and

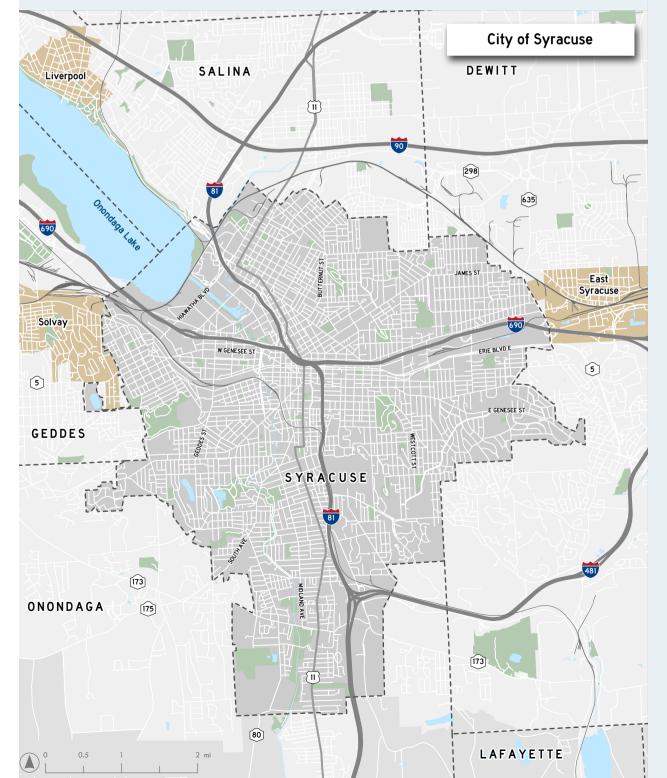
the contiguous area expected to become urbanized over a 20-year planning horizon. The urbanized area is the densely settled portion of our region, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Urban Area Boundary (UAB) is an expansion of the Census-defined urbanized area that includes those areas that are locally considered to have urban characteristics but that do not have the population density necessary to qualify for inclusion in the urbanized area, like airports, warehousing districts, or parks. The UAB is the official "urban/rural" boundary for functional classification and roadway design standards. The MPO also defines the UAB, with approval of the Federal Highway Administration. The SMTC must re-examine the UAB and the MPA each time new decennial census data are released. Both the MPA and UAB boundaries seen on this map were updated

in 2023 to reflect the 2020 Census. The current MPA consists of: all of Onondaga County; the Town of Sullivan in Madison County; and the towns of Schroeppel, Hastings, and West Monroe in Oswego County. This results in a total of 23 towns, 18 villages, the Onondaga Nation, and one city (Syracuse) that are in the MPA. The decision to include entire towns outside of Onondaga County in the MPA was based on the percentage of a town's total population that commutes into Onondaga County.

Federal transportation funds may be spent on capital projects and planning studies in any of the municipalities within the MPA. The SMTC planning process leads to the allocation of millions of dollars in federal transportation funding each year. This funding goes toward road, bridge, safety, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian projects as well as planning studies addressing multimodal issues throughout the MPA.

The SMTC cannot implement particular transportation improvements, but serves as a collaborative forum where transportation issues are studied. Implementation of capital projects and other recommendations from SMTC studies is the responsibility of the member agencies and the infrastructure owners.



4 Introduction