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In Reply Refer To:
TRO-02
HPM-NY

March 31, 2026

Corey Dunham
SMTC Policy Chairperson
Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
100 Clinton Square, 126 N. Salina Street, Suite 100
Syracuse, NY 13202

RE: Federal Certification Letter and Report for
Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

Dear Ms. Dunham,

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are pleased to submit our 2025-2026 Certification Review report on the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) transportation planning process in the Syracuse, New York Transportation Management Area (TMA).

Overall, we find that the transportation planning process meets or exceeds many of the requirements contained in 23 CFR § 450.336 and 49 U.S.C. § 5303. Included in the Certification Review report are eleven (11) topic areas related to the federal metropolitan transportation planning process with six (6) recommendations for consideration in furthering program excellence, and three (3) commendations to recognize best practices. There are no corrective actions included in the report.


We would be willing to discuss our conclusions and recommendations with SMTC after the MPO has had an opportunity to review our findings. Our goal remains to help the SMTC fulfill the requirements for an effective metropolitan transportation planning process for the good of the public and the overall transportation system.


We would like to especially thank Jim D'Agostino and the entire SMTC staff for their time and assistance in working with us to conduct the Certification Review, and for their work to support public engagement as part of the review. The professionalism of the MPO staff and the work they complete are clear examples of what an effective metropolitan planning processes can

achieve. We also thank the members of SMTC's Policy Committee for their engagement and feedback during the review process.

If you have any questions concerning this review, please contact Ben Fischer (FHWA) at benjamin.fischer@dot.gov and James Goveia (FTA) at james.goveia@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

For  3/26/26
Richard J. Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
New York Division


Michael Culotta
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
Region 2

cc:

James D'Agostino, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
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SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL CERTIFICATION REVIEW FINDINGS

The following findings from the Federal team's review of the SMTC's transportation planning process provides the basis for the recommendations and commendations outlined below and in the Appendix. Where the MPO employs practices that the Federal Team considers very good but may not rise to the level of a commendation, we mark them in these findings as notable. A full list of the appendices is provided at the end of this report.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- The Long Range Transportation Plan for the greater Syracuse area, 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), establishes transportation priorities, develops goals and objectives, and provides strategic direction for transportation policy, planning, and investment decision making for the greater Syracuse area. The 2050 MTP guides decision-making regarding the transportation system in the region over the next 25 years and incorporates new considerations that have risen since the last Long Range Transportation Plan was updated in 2020.
- The SMTC Policy Committee adopted the 2050 MTP at their September 23, 2025, meeting. The 2050 MTP is focused around 3 central goals of economy, community, and environment. From these 3 central goal themes, the plan identifies 8 specific goals with 19 corresponding objectives and performance measures. The MTP goals and objectives aim to address the existing and future needs of the region by focusing on the impacts of growth and new technologies on the region's economy, community and environment. This approach to establishing the MTP's goals and objectives represents a "clean slate" approach from the previous MTP and is in response to recent developments in the greater Syracuse area, notably from the anticipation of an unprecedented level of projected population and employment growth for the region due to the anticipated build-out of the Micron Technology semiconductor fabrication plants in the Town of Clay in Northern Onondaga County, New York. The Micron chip-fab plant development is planned to occur over the next decade and beyond with groundbreaking having occurred on January 16, 2026.
- The MTP must demonstrate how the region will fund transportation projects that are anticipated to be completed over a 25-year planning horizon. Federal legislation requires the MTP include cost estimates for specific projects within the first 10 years of the plan along with reasonably expected revenue sources to fund the projects. This requirement is known as "fiscal constraint" which ensures that the MTP represents an achievable future scenario. As such, the MTP must contain a fiscally constrained financial plan. The 2050 MTP includes \$5.896 billion in revenue over 25 years, to complete projects totaling \$5.832 billion. This demonstrates that the 2050 MTP is fiscally constrained.
- For the first time in several decades, the greater Syracuse area is anticipating substantial population and employment growth. As new projects are identified, they should be included in the LRTP at the onset of the project, prior to the project's environmental phase, and the project should be listed in the fiscally constrained portion of the LRTP. This practice fully utilizes the planning process and will allow projects and project costs to be identified early in the planning process.
- **Commendation:** The SMTC is commended for continuing production of its Transportation Atlas with the 2025 update to the Atlas that accompanies the 2050 MTP. The Transportation Atlas serves as a

companion document to the MTP and contains a wealth of information on existing transportation related conditions within SMTC's MPA. The Transportation Atlas compiles various existing conditions data and is intended to serve as a reference document for planners, policy makers and interested citizens in Central New York. The Atlas presents data on regional demographics, population density, household characteristics, employment, land use, infrastructure, mobility, and safety. The intent of the Transportation Atlas is to provide a resource that provides information about the current state of the transportation system in the greater Syracuse area. The Transportation Atlas is a great resource document that accompanies the 2050 MTP and has been replicated by other MPOs.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- SMTC's UPWP identifies transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in the greater Syracuse area to further develop the goals and objectives contained in the adopted 2050 MTP. The 2025-2026 UPWP was adopted by SMTC's Policy Committee on February 27, 2025, and covers the State Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2025, and ending March 31, 2026. The current UPWP includes all Federally required elements established by 23 CFR 450.308 and 23 CFR 420.111. The UPWP demonstrates how each planned task supports the regional planning priorities and the goals and objectives put forth in 2050 MTP, and the Federal Planning Factors.
- SMTC issues a call letter for new projects each Fall and solicits regional and local input throughout its MPA via several means including email distribution lists and social media channels. SMTC holds virtual "office hours" for potential applicants to discuss their ideas and help them develop their ideas into a project proposal. Project proposals are evaluated against the MTP's goals and objectives as a guide.
- After ensuring that UPWP development requirements are met, SMTC uses UPWP funds to support municipal transportation planning projects throughout the greater Syracuse area to advance regional and local municipal transportation priorities. Many planning tasks in the UPWP are submitted by the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County. In addition, SMTC noted that it has experienced an uptick in project submittals from non-member agency municipalities. SMTC reported projects that come through the UPWP process are almost always funded. As such, SMTC strives to include as many planning projects as possible in its UPWP, pending budget availability and staff expertise. The majority of the work program is completed in-house by SMTC staff, with minimal consultant assistance.
- As of December 31, 2024, according to SMTC's State Fiscal Year 2023-2024 UPWP Performance and Expenditure Report SMTC programmed a total of \$1,912,500 in FHWA and FTA funding compared to the amount that was expended at \$1,518,771 which equates to approximately 80% of the funding programmed in the UPWP. It should be noted that SMTC is banking up its set-aside funds for the Complete Streets Planning for the Safe and Accessible Transportation Options Metropolitan Planning Set-Aside Funds pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134 Section 11206(b) to complete the Complete Streets Planning project. Based on the analysis of SMTC's UPWP Performance and Expenditure Report, SMTC is quite effective at programming and expending Federal funds to further transportation planning initiatives in the greater Syracuse area.

TIP Development and Project Selection

- The SMTC Policy Committee adopted their most recent TIP on June 13, 2025 during the 2026-2029

STIP development cycle and included all of NYSDOT's Performance Goals in support of the National Performance Goals which meets the regulations for TIP development. The current TIP covers the five-year period from 2026-2030 and includes transportation projects funded with approximately \$840 million of federal-aid, supplemented by other state and local sources of match funds. SMTC's TIP is developed cooperatively by SMTC, NYSDOT, the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CENTRO), and other SMTC member agencies. The TIP is typically updated every three years in a joint effort between SMTC, NYSDOT and CENTRO. The previous TIP was adopted in 2022.

- At the beginning of the 2026-2030 TIP update, SMTC requested that existing project sponsors with projects that would carryover onto the new TIP assess the accuracy of their project's costs and schedules. Review of cost and schedule updates provided baseline information for what funds may be available for new capital projects to be added to the new TIP. SMTC reported that following the review and update process for existing projects, the cost increases were more than the allowable planning targets and therefore, the SMTC did not issue a new call for projects during the development of the 2026-2030 TIP. SMTC cited inflation and cost increases to labor and materials as contributing factors to the new TIP consisting of carryover projects from the prior TIP. It is important to note that the new TIP includes funding for construction phases of projects which was not included in the previous TIP.
- SMTC's goal is to produce a TIP that contributes to the implementation of the 2050 MTP and meets both the letter and spirit of federal regulations. SMTC emphasizes funding for projects that increase efficiency, improve conditions of, and/or safety of the existing transportation system rather than construction of new facilities. This approach is consistent with SMTC's MTP, and NYSDOT and Centro's asset management and infrastructure preservation strategies. As such, the vast majority of projects on the TIP are maintenance projects. SMTC reported that paving existing roads and rehabilitating existing bridges will continue to consume a very large proportion of their transportation funding.
- In developing the TIP, SMTC considers the objectives established in the 2050 MTP, performance based planning and programming national goals, and the IJA planning factors. Overall, 54% of the FHWA and FTA 2026-2030 capital program funding combined, exclusive of the I-81 project, has been programmed to bridge and paving projects. In terms of only FHWA funds, bridge and paving projects comprise 60% of the FHWA programmed dollars. This is consistent with previous capital programs and the goals and objectives outlined in SMTC's MTP where funding is distributed to projects that maintain the existing aging infrastructure.
- *Obligation Rate of Unamended TIP:* Project delivery continues to be an important focus area for FHWA and FTA. FHWA and FTA monitor the S/TIP performance annually. This includes the number of projects programmed for the construction phase for that federal fiscal year compared to the portion that was obligated. This percentage serves as an indicator that the State and MPO have considered the deliverability of projects during the planning process before projects are included in the S/TIP for the year it is programmed. For FFY 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, SMTC obligated 56.3%, 66.7%, 75%, and 56% respectively, of their unamended TIP. The Federal review team notes that performance of the unamended TIP was improving from FFY 2022 through 2024, before declining by 19% in FFY 2025. SMTC attributed the decline in TIP performance to the factors mentioned above which include inflation and cost increases to labor and materials which negatively impact project schedules. The

decline in TIP performance in FFY 2025 was attributed to moving projects to the new TIP which was developed to support the development of the new FFY 2026-2029 STIP.

Performance Based Planning and Programming

- *Federal PBPP requirements*- The standalone performance-based planning and programming agreement between SMTC, NYSDOT, and Centro continues to function effectively for all parties. SMTC has continued to support the state targets for the applicable required measures. SMTC's 2050 MTP contains a System Performance Report that includes data at the scale of the MPA, which assists with making the Report more relevant and comprehensible to the public. The narrative description of the anticipated effects of the 2026-2030 TIP includes detailed information about number, funding amounts, and types of TIP projects that will aid in the achievement of each state or transit agency performance target. The TIP also contains valuable information about the condition and extent of the transportation network in the SMTC area as it relates to each measure.
- **Commendation - Bridge Prioritization:** SMTC is commended for closely tracking National Highway System (NHS) bridge conditions via its annual Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System Report, which notes the percentage of NHS bridge deck area in good, fair, and poor condition. SMTC's TIP and MTP thoroughly document how bridge conditions in the SMTC area compare with statewide conditions and targets, noting that at the time of this review, the percentage of NHS bridge deck area in poor condition was higher than the statewide figure. SMTC has used this information to guide MPO investment decisions. SMTC has explicitly prioritized improvement in NHS bridge conditions by ensuring full programming of NHPP funds for bridge projects and prioritizing investments on the NHS in its TIP application process.
- *MTP Goals Relationship to Investment Decisions:* SMTC has analyzed how the Federally required performance measures and other data the MPO collects align with the revamped MTP goals related to the theme areas of Economy, Community, and Environment. During the most recent TIP project selection, SMTC did not issue a new Call for Projects. Therefore, the Federal Team looks forward to seeing how future TIP project solicitations use a data-driven selection process where measures of success align with the LRTP goals.

Transit Activities

- *MPO and Transit Agency Collaboration:* The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro) and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have a cooperative relationship where Centro is well represented in all MPO efforts. The MPO and transit agency regularly partner on federally required transit planning products, as well as on transit-focused projects.
- *Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT):* SMTC and Centro are actively working to implement BRT along the two routes recommended in SMTC's 2018 *SMART1* study, eyeing a 2028 launch date. The BRT system will operate in mixed-use traffic with stations that are farther apart, service that is more frequent, and buses that differ from the fixed-route system. The targeted corridors – Eastwood to South Side and Destiny to University Hill – were chosen because they are the most used and have significant ridership growth potential.
- **Notable Practice- Continuous Improvement:** SMTC remains very committed to improving the bus rider experience. This started with the BRT *SMART1* study in 2018, but more recently included:
 - o *Exploring Tomorrow's Transit* 2024 public engagement effort: Over 1,000 survey responses, 2 open houses, and 5 community discussions yielded a great deal of valuable

- data about bettering the transit landscape.
 - *Better Bus Onondaga System Redesign*: Using findings from *Exploring Tomorrow's Transit*, Centro and SMTC are considering how fixed-route bus service and the start of other on-demand services can complement the planned BRT and better fit the community's travel needs. This system redesign of Onondaga County's bus network is scheduled to launch in January 2027.
- Centro remains short about 50 full-time drivers in Syracuse, which forced service reductions. But they are working their way back up to full service using a realistic, phased approach to recruiting and training drivers.
- Centro is currently running around 70% of pre-pandemic service in Onondaga County.
- *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*: SMTC's most recent Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was adopted in December 2022 and will be refreshed later this year in 2026 per FTA's required 4-year update cycle. This document includes all elements governed by FTA C 9070.1H and is guided by public engagement efforts including a transportation providers questionnaire (11 responses received) and a client survey targeting seniors and persons with disabilities (82 responses received).
- *Transit Asset Management (TAM) and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)*: SMTC collaborates with Centro on setting transit asset management and transit safety performance measures and targets, leaning on Centro's expertise in these areas. Centro's TAM Plan was most recently updated in 2023, followed by its PTASP in 2024. In June 2025, SMTC agreed to support Centro's latest transit asset and safety targets, thereby committing to projects that advance transit safety and a state of good repair – such as bus procurements and preventive maintenance. The latest TAM and PTASP targets are also reflected in the System Performance Report of SMTC's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- **Notable- Route 31 Transit Corridor Assessment**: The Federal Review Team recognizes SMTC for its innovative *Route 31 Transit Corridor Assessment*, which creatively ties together transportation and land use. This report uses detailed renderings to illustrate the levels of density that would be required to support the various types of transit improvements desired by the community (enhanced fixed-route bus, BRT, and light rail). This very visual and impactful tool will help decisionmakers take the steps needed to achieve some of the key goals from SMTC's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan – zoning code changes being chief among them.

Native Nations Coordination

- SMTC has been advancing efforts to build a working relationship with the Onondaga Nation. The Onondaga Nation has a territory within SMTC's MPA. In addition, the Oneida Indian Nation and the Tuscarora Nation have interest in projects throughout the SMTC's MPA from a cultural preservation perspective as their Nation land and business enterprises are in close proximity to the boundaries of SMTC.
- SMTC staff also attended the FHWA and Native Nations Summit in 2022.
- **Recommendation**: It is important to note that SMTC has been working to strengthen their working relationship with the Onondaga Nation; however, SMTC must establish formal Tribal Nation planning consultation procedures in consultation with the Nations, consistent with the findings of the previous certification review. This is a requirement per 23 CFR 450.316(c)&(e).

Public Involvement and Public Participation Plan (PPP)

- **Commendation - Public Involvement on MTP 2050:** SMTC recently completed a very successful public involvement campaign for their new LRTP, 2050 MTP. The 2050 MTP is the result of a nearly two-year process that included ten Study Advisory Committee meetings with SMTC member agencies and a very extensive public engagement process. The MPO interacted with over 400 people during the course of conducting the public engagement and outreach activities for the new MTP. Public engagement efforts included development of an introductory video about the MTP, which was viewed by over 200 people and developed in-house by SMTC staff, and a survey that received over 350 responses, in addition to hosting numerous community meetings and pop-up tabling events. MPO staff even attended two High School classes on Participation in Government to learn about the transportation needs of High School seniors. SMTC designed their public involvement campaign to be based on quick interactions. They developed bookmarks and postcards that contained a QR code that links to a survey on the MTP.
- SMTC most recently updated their Public Participation Plan (PPP) in 2021 and periodically updates the PPP based on need.

Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

- **Freight Profile Update:** SMTC is in the process of completing a full update of its Regional Freight Profile, last completed in 2017. The Profile provides a detailed summary of current and forecasted commodity flows throughout the MPA in terms of tonnage and value across all modes. The Profile is meant to provide information to guide investment decisions and ensure that consideration of freight needs throughout the planning process. In addition to the Profile, SMTC's Transportation Atlas contains information about the condition of rail and roadway freight facilities. SMTC staff continue to stay apprised of the latest technology developments impacting freight and to disseminate this information to its members; for example, Syracuse area hospitals are using drones to make deliveries between facilities in the region.
- **Coordination with NYSDOT:** SMTC participated extremely actively in development of NYSDOT's 2024 State Freight Plan. SMTC provided substantial feedback through the regular Working Group meetings for the Plan. Via the regional breakout sessions, SMTC communicated local truck parking capacity concerns and weather-related freight impacts, which helped make sure those two issues were prominently addressed in the Plan. In addition, NYSDOT was able to include two projects in the SMTC area in the Freight Investment Plan because the MPO explicitly prioritized the projects in its planning documents. SMTC has continued to communicate with NYSDOT to incorporate illustrative projects from the State Freight Plan into its MTP update, as appropriate, and to provide input on other State plans and Federal requests for information.
- **Ongoing leadership role in NYSAMPO Freight Working Group:** SMTC staff continues to provide leadership in the NYSAMPO Freight Working Group, sharing news and information on freight developments and organizing educational events and tours that improve the state of the freight planning practice for all MPOs in NY. SMTC, based on recent experience with a local agency implementing a ban on commercial trucks, led development of a draft Truck Routing Resource Guide

that outlines legal provisions governing truck access, effective methods for studying safety and congestion impacts of trucks, and best practices for mitigating potential negative impacts from truck movements while still supporting their essential role in local economic activity.

- **Notable Practice- Freight-Specific Micron Planning:** The Federal Team recognizes SMTC’s pro-active planning regarding possible freight impacts from the proposed Micron chip-fab facility in Liverpool. With minor technical assistance from FHWA, SMTC sought out the experiences of other MPOs throughout the country who have seen large-scale chip-fabs in their areas. SMTC learned about MPO experiences with chip-fab transportation impacts from peers around the country with a range of historical population growth trends. Key freight-related lessons included that goods produced are small in size but high in value, that chip-fabs have not contributed significantly to long-term freight congestion, and that impacts to freight movements have primarily during construction.

Congestion Management Process & Intelligent Transportation Systems

- SMTC staff have developed and adopted a new Congestion Management Process for 2025 using 2023 data from the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) and online tools developed by the University at Albany’s Visualization and Informatics Lab (AVAIL) to generate performance measures of travel time, excessive delay, and reliability. Leveraging pre-existing and new sources of data, vehicle crashes, transit ridership, survey responses, and availability of pedestrian & bicycle facilities were also considered. Identified needs trace to potential strategies for Travel Demand Management (TDM), Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO), Transit, Accessibility, Bicycle and Pedestrian travel, Access Management, Land Use, and Parking, each with specific activities, which in turn inform the development of the UPWP, TIP, and LRTP. Thus, the CMP meets the requirements of 23 CFR Part 450 Section 320.
- **Notable Practice:** The expanded scope of the CMP and ancillary efforts to make it more useful to regional partners are notable, with particular recognition of the ongoing efforts by SMTC staff to use new data as it becomes available to inform various planning deliverables throughout the region, including traffic studies, corridor studies, project-level analyses, modeling for infrastructure projects of national significance, and strategic plans for use during events at Syracuse University’s JMA Wireless Dome. SMTC staff are recognized statewide for their analytics expertise and serve as the Chair of the NYSAMPO Modeling Working Group.
- **Recommendation:** RITSA/ITS Strategic Plan: Ensure that planning deliverables are consistent with and projects with ITS elements are informed by a Regional ITS Architecture. Evaluate the extent to which the Statewide ITS Architecture may be leveraged to meet requirements for state and locally-administered federal-aid projects. In this vein, it is recommended that the Regional ITS Strategic Plan be updated.
- **Recommendation:** Consider opportunities to use available data, including from the Traffic Management Centers, to develop Traffic Incident Management (TIM) performance measures that can help inform efforts to improve responder and motorist safety.

Transportation Safety

- SMTC is meeting or exceeding federal requirements when it comes to safety planning. Their project prioritization processes for their TIP includes safety criteria and data analyses, and the MTP includes a discussion of transportation safety needs.
- As discussed in the TIP section, no new projects were programmed on SMTC’s new FFY 26-29 TIP. SMTC is encouraged to clear their backlog of “legacy projects” in order to fund the safety projects identified in the fiscally constrained MTP as well as any additional projects identified in Onondaga County’s Safety Action Plan, once completed.
- **Notable:** SMTC staff are very proactive in promoting safety both regionally and statewide. SMTC is a major stakeholder in the Onondaga County Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan grant and has been critical in moving this planning effort forward. The SS4A grant will develop a countywide strategy to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on the roadway network. In addition, SMTC staff serve as the chair the NYSAMPO Safety Working Group, which is an invaluable resource for safety practitioners in New York as it facilitates interagency discussion, the exchange of information on best practices, and critical training on new technologies. This working group played an important role in the roll-out of NYSDOT’s Crash Location & Engineering Analysis Repository (CLEAR) system, which has been instrumental in supporting safety planning efforts across New York.
- **Recommendation:** The Federal Team recommends that NYSDOT (both Main Office & Region 3) and SMTC continue to explore different ways to advance the regional safety program and program HSIP funds where they would have the biggest impact on safety, particularly on the local road system. Strategies would include early scheduling coordination for any statewide funding solicitation application cycles and evaluating the opportunity for more NYSDOT technical assistance with development of HSIP-funded local safety projects.
- **Recommendation:** The Federal Team recommends that SMTC explore incorporating the following two topics into their existing safety planning efforts, as discussed in more detail above:
 - Post-Crash Care and coordination with post-crash emergency services.
 - Nighttime visibility/lighting for all roadway users.

Regionally Significant Projects (RSP)/Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL)

- Currently, the greater Syracuse area is in the midst of construction of the I-81 project which includes converting the existing I-481 into I-81 and associated capacity projects, removal of the downtown I-81 viaduct, completion of Business Loop 81 through the City of Syracuse, and the new I-690 exit. The I-81 project is currently under construction and is being delivered with a total of 9 construction contracts. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2029. The I-81 project is the largest capital project in New York State.
- The 2050 MTP identifies 4 regional priority funding initiatives: the I-81 Community Grid, access to the Micron Technology semiconductor fabrication plant site, build out of the regional trail network, and implementation of bus rapid transit. Each of the 4 regional priority funding initiatives will create numerous spin-off projects that will be advanced to implement the 4 main priority funding initiatives. Overall, the MTP identifies about \$5.8 billion of transportation projects to support regional growth over the next 25 years.

- According to the 2050 MTP, the Micron development is expected to create approximately 9,000 on-site jobs when fully operational. The chip-fab plants are planned to be built in phases with full build-out planned for the year 2041. This development is expected to result in about 76,000 new residents in the greater Syracuse area, with the majority expected to locate in Onondaga County. Development of this magnitude will create significant economic and demographic shifts that the region has not experienced in decades. A substantial investment in housing will be necessary to accommodate this growth. The form and development patterns that the housing growth ultimately takes will have a considerable impact on the region's transportation system.
- SMTC is involved in planning efforts for the Micron Technology semiconductor fabrication plant development. The MPO recently completed the Clay-Cicero Route 31 corridor study which examined development trends that have and may continue to lead to increasing travel demand along and adjacent to the Route 31 corridor, the corridor on which the Micron development is planned to be sited. The study explored the relationships between land use patterns and transportation alternatives as a framework for decision making. In addition, SMTC added the Central New York Forward project (formerly known as the Onondaga County Transportation Improvements project) to the fiscally constrained portion of its LRTP. The Central New York Forward project is examining ways to improve traffic flow at key access points and facilitate growth from Micron.
- During the certification review meeting, SMTC informed the Federal Review Team that besides the I-81 project and the Central New York Forward project, the region does not have any additional projects in the planning pipeline that would rise to the level of being classified as a Regionally Significant Project. SMTC reported that the Region focuses on system preservation which places an emphasis on maintaining and improving the existing transportation infrastructure.
- The topic of Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) was discussed during the certification review. PEL is a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process, and uses the information analysis, and products developed during the planning phase to inform the environmental review process. At present, PEL is not a widely utilized approach in SMTC's MPA or in NYSDOT Region 3. SMTC reported that the regionally significant projects that are currently underway in the region are past the point of PEL.
- **Recommendation:** While current opportunities for utilizing PEL were not identified during the certification review, the Federal Review Team encourages SMTC to continue to explore opportunities to utilize PEL in the transportation planning process such as in the development of purpose and need statements and the evaluation of potential concepts for corridor studies and any future identified Regionally Significant Projects. In addition, projects that will be classified as an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are good candidates for utilizing PEL early on in the planning process as a means to help meet the required completion timeframes of one year for an EA and two years for an EIS.

List of Appendices

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Appendix A – Overview of the Certification Process

Background

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required to review, evaluate, and certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in each Transportation Management Area (TMA), an urbanized area with a population of 200,000 people or more, at least every four years.

As a result, FHWA and FTA have jointly undertaken the review of the metropolitan transportation planning process of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC). The intent of the statutory and regulatory requirements is to develop a transportation system that serves the mobility interests of people and freight through a multifaceted metropolitan planning process.

The primary purpose of a certification review is to formalize the continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process. The FHWA and the FTA work cooperatively with the TMA planning staff on a regular basis. By reviewing and approving planning products, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices, the formal assessment involved in a certification review provides an external review of the TMA's transportation planning process.

A certification review generally consists of four primary activities. These activities include: 1) a desk review, which is a review of the TMA's planning documents (e.g. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and more); 2) a site visit with TMA leadership and staff as well as staff from the TMA's various transportation planning partners; 3) a public engagement process to solicit feedback on the TMA's planning process; and 4) a Certification Report, which the Federal Review Team prepares, to document the results of the review process.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in metropolitan areas. The certification review also helps ensure that the major issues facing a metropolitan area are being addressed.

Federal Finding Actions

The Federal certification review evaluates a Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) transportation planning process, identifies strengths and weaknesses (as appropriate), and makes recommendations for improvements. Following the review and evaluation, FHWA and FTA can take one of four certification actions:

- Full certification of the transportation planning process: this allows federally funded programs and projects of any type to be approved in the TIP over the next three years in accordance with the continuing planning process.
- Certification subject to specified corrective actions being taken: this allows all projects to move forward in the process while corrective actions are taken; this option may take the form of a temporary certification for a certain number of months rather than the full three years.

- Limited certification: this allows only certain specified categories of program and project funding to move forward while corrective actions are being taken.
- Certification withheld: approval of funding to the metropolitan area from FHWA and FTA in whole or in part is stopped until the deficiencies in the planning process are corrected.

Within the context of the certification review, the following terms may be used: Corrective Actions, Recommendations, and Commendations.

- Corrective Actions include those items that fail to meet the requirements of the transportation statute and regulations, thus seriously impacting the outcome of the overall process. The expected change and timeline for accomplishing it are clearly defined.
- Recommendations are those items that, while somewhat less substantial and not regulatory, are still significant enough that FHWA and FTA are hopeful that State and local officials will consider taking some action. Typically, recommendations involve the state of the practice or technical improvements instead of regulatory requirements.
- Commendations and notable practices are those elements that demonstrate innovative, highly effective, well-thought-out procedures for implementing the planning requirements. Elements addressing items that have frequently posed problems nationwide could be cited as noteworthy practices.

A summary of the 2021-2022 certification review recommendations and their status is in Appendix B.

Description of the Planning Area

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requires every metropolitan area with a population greater than 50,000 to have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to qualify for the receipt of federal highway and transit funds. In metropolitan areas with a population more than 200,000, a Transportation Management Area (TMA) is designated to serve the transportation planning needs of the region. The SMTC serves as the TMA for the Greater Syracuse area of New York State. SMTC's defined Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) includes Onondaga County, the Town of Sullivan in Madison County, and the Towns of Hastings, Schroepfel, and West Monroe in Oswego County.

Certification Review Coordination

The 2025 certification review of the planning process within the Greater Syracuse area began with a joint FHWA/FTA letter to Ms. Corey Dunham, MPO Policy Board Chair and to the NYSDOT Main Office and NYSDOT Region 3 Regional Director to inform SMTC and NYSDOT about the upcoming review, setting the dates for the review as December 9-11, 2025, and identifying the primary topics for the review. The dates of the certification review meeting were coordinated with James D'Agostino, the Executive Director of the SMTC. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CENTRO) were notified by receiving individual copies of the letter. The SMTC

also informed their member agencies and the general public of this review. A copy of the announcement letter is included in Appendix C.

During the certification review meeting, the Federal Review Team met with the staff of the SMTC, NYSDOT, and CENTRO. See Appendix D for the TMA Certification Review Agenda and Appendix E for a list of review team members and review participants. FHWA NY Division and FTA Region 2 held the 2025 SMTC TMA Certification Review in a hybrid in-person and virtual format.

Public Engagement

The purpose of the public engagement process during the review is to inform the public of the Federal transportation planning requirements and allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the transportation planning process to the Federal Review Team. Public feedback and engagement on the SMTC's planning process included an opportunity to provide feedback via a public survey, and information about the review was shared through the SMTC's website and email listservs. Both the members of the SMTC and the public had an opportunity to provide comments to the Federal Team during the public comment period which was open for more than 30-days. The online survey was anonymous, and the public comment period was open from November 17, 2025 through December 22, 2025. During the public comment period, no public comments were submitted on SMTC's transportation planning process. Copies of the public engagement notice and the public survey can be found in Appendix F.

Certification Topics

The Federal Team selected the topics to discuss with the MPO during the certification review, which relate to the federal regulations governing MPO operations. Topics are typically chosen if it is considered an area of emphasis, a high risk, a new initiative in transportation legislation, or a reoccurring challenge. They can also be selected to highlight a best practice. Information on the federal basic requirements on these topics is in Appendix G. According to the Federal Team's review of the transportation planning process in the greater Syracuse area, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC), meets the basic federal requirements with no corrective actions. A list of commonly used planning acronyms is provided in Appendix H.

SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

This section includes the compiled list of Recommendations and Commendations from the Federal Team's review of work products and processes that are the result of the MPO transportation planning process. Each of these comments correlate to the respective Certification topics in the next section. There are 6 recommendations and 3 commendations for the SMTC as a result of this review.

Recommendations (6)

Native Nation Coordination

Recommendation: SMTC must establish written Tribal Nation planning consultation procedures in consultation with the tribal governments located within its MPA, consistent with the findings of the previous certification review. This recommendation is required per 23 CFR 450.316(c)&(e).

Intelligent Transportation Systems

Recommendation: Identify how the new Statewide ITS Architecture developed by NYSDOT might integrate with or otherwise influence future updates to the Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture (RITSA); and consider how first responders may be better engaged in Traffic Incident Management (TIM) planning activities, as through the Transportation Operations Control Center (TOCC) or a stand-alone regional TIM working group.

Recommendation: Consider opportunities to use available data, including from the Traffic Management Centers, to develop Traffic Incident Management (TIM) performance measures that can help inform efforts to improve responder and motorist safety.

Transportation Safety

Recommendation: The Federal Team recommends that NYSDOT (both Main Office & Region 3) and SMTC continue to explore different ways to advance the regional safety program and program HSIP funds where they would have the biggest impact on safety, particularly on the local road system. Strategies could include early scheduling coordination for any statewide funding solicitation application cycles and evaluating the opportunity for more NYSDOT technical assistance with development of HSIP-funded local safety projects.

Recommendation: The Federal Team recommends that SMTC explore incorporating the following two topics into their existing safety planning efforts:

- Post-Crash Care and coordination with post-crash emergency services.
- Nighttime visibility/lighting for all roadway users.

Regionally Significant Projects/Planning and Environmental Linkages

Recommendation: While current opportunities for utilizing PEL were not identified during the certification review, the Federal Review Team encourages SMTC to continue to explore

opportunities to utilize PEL in the transportation planning process for any Regionally Significant Projects identified in the future. PEL can assist in the development of purpose and need statements and the evaluation of potential concepts for corridor studies. In addition, projects that will be classified as an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are good candidates for utilizing PEL early in the planning process as a means to help meet the required completion timeframes of one year for an EA and two years for an EIS.

Commendations (3)

Long Range Transportation Plan – Transportation Atlas Update

The SMTC is commended for continuing production of its Transportation Atlas with the 2025 update to the Atlas that accompanies the 2050 MTP. The Transportation Atlas serves as a companion document to the MTP and contains a wealth of information on existing transportation related conditions within SMTC's MPA. The Transportation Atlas compiles various existing conditions data and is intended to serve as a reference document for planners, policy makers and interested citizens in Central New York. The Atlas presents data on regional demographics, population density, household characteristics, employment, land use, infrastructure, mobility, and safety. The intent of the Transportation Atlas is to provide a resource that provides information about the current state of the transportation system in the greater Syracuse area.

Performance Based Planning and Programming – Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System

The Federal Team commends SMTC for its leadership in the area of Performance Based Planning and Programming as it relates to compiling, analyzing and reporting on bridge and pavement conditions within the SMTC Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). SMTC has closely tracked National Highway System (NHS) bridge conditions via its annual Bridge and Pavement Condition Management System Report, which notes the percentage of NHS bridge deck area in good, fair, and poor condition. SMTC has used this information to guide MPO investment decisions. SMTC has explicitly prioritized improvement in NHS bridge conditions by ensuring full programming of NHPP funds for bridge projects and prioritizing investments on the NHS in its TIP application process.

Public Involvement and Public Engagement Plan for 2050 MTP

The Federal Team commends SMTC for its proactive and sustained efforts in recently completing a very successful public involvement campaign for their new LRTP, 2050 MTP. The 2050 MTP is the result of a nearly two-year process that included ten Study Advisory Committee meetings with SMTC member agencies and a very extensive public engagement process. The MPO interacted with over 400 people while conducting public engagement and outreach activities for the new MTP. Public engagement efforts included development of an introductory video about the MTP, which was

viewed by over 200 people and developed in-house by SMTC staff, and a survey that received over 350 responses, in addition to hosting numerous community meetings and pop-up tabling events.

Appendix B: Status of 2021 Certification Review Findings

At the request of the Federal Team, in October 2025 the SMTC confirmed the materials for the desk review and provided an update on the status of the *Recommendations* from the 2021-2022 Certification Review.

There were *0 Corrective Actions* and *10 Recommendations* which are listed below. FHWA and FTA reviewed the responses and have found them satisfactory. The status of these recommendations was also discussed during the certification review.

The following is the status of the **Recommendations**:

Recommendations

1. The Federal Team encourages SMTC to explore TIPs from other MPOs for examples on providing details on state and local funds in demonstrating fiscal constraint and ideas on providing more clarity to the system level operations and maintenance discussion per 23 CFR 450.326(j). The Federal Team recommends reviewing the Rochester-Olmstead Council of Governments (ROCOG) and the Metropolitan Council. ROCOG is the designated MPO for the Rochester, Minnesota urbanized area, and the Metropolitan Council is the designated MPO for the Minneapolis- St. Paul, Minnesota urbanized area. Weblinks to their LRTP and TIP are embedded in the 2022 Certification Topics section of this report.

SMTC response: *During development of the 2023-2027 TIP (adopted 2022) and the 2026-2030 TIP (adopted 2025), the financial/funding sections were written to include expansive discussion on applicable state and local funds. The recommended Minnesota examples were reviewed. At the local municipal level (County, City, Town, Village) where funds are generally derived from bonding or borrowing, as allowed, New York State provides a significant amount of roadway funding annually for local use through the “CHIPs+” programs (e.g., Consolidated Local Highway Improvement Program [CHIPs], PAVE-NY, Extreme Winter Recovery, State Touring Route, Pave our Potholes). Relative to transit, non-federal sources of funds are mentioned as well, which include Statewide Transit Operating Assistance (STOA), Local Share of STOA, Accelerated Transit Capital Program, and Modernization and Enhancement Program. Additional information is available in the [2023-2027](#) and [2026-2030](#) TIP documents.*

2. Transit Activities - Human Services Transportation Plan

- 2.a. The Federal Review Team recommends that SMTC continues its discussion with the Onondaga Nation to ascertain whether the Nation could benefit from expanded transit service.

SMTC response: *SMTC completed the [US 11 Nedrow & Onondaga Nation Mobility Study](#) in 2024. Representatives from the Onondaga Nation and Centro participated in the Study Advisory Committee throughout the planning process. Transit services were discussed with the Onondaga Nation in the context of that study, but to the best of our knowledge, Onondaga Nation has not pursued additional conversations with Centro on this topic.*

- 2.b. The Federal Review Team recommends that SMTC and Centro review New York State’s clean energy transition policies that relate to transit and assess whether Centro’s fleet replacement plan complies with these policies. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team recommends that SMTC and Centro keep abreast of upcoming FTA funding opportunities for the purchase of low or no emissions vehicles and related support equipment.

SMTC response: *As a state authority, Centro’s fleet replacement plan is in line with the State’s clean energy policy. In October 2025, New York State awarded Centro approximately \$17.5 million to assist towards a zero-emission transition. In the proceeding years following the above recommendation, Centro was awarded CMAQ and Low/No funds for the procurement of hydrogen fuel cell electric buses and facility supportive upgrades. Though funding was awarded for hydrogen fuel cell purposes, shifts within the vehicle manufacturing industry have necessitated the transit authority to re-examine the expenditure of funds. Centro consistently reviews their fleet procurement process and considers a fleet mix that can best meet their operational needs.*

3. Tribal Consultation

3.a. The Federal Team recommends the following on connecting, communicating, and engaging with the Onondaga Nation, the Oneida Nation, and the Tuscarora Nation:

- SMTC should develop a Nation consultation plan to better work with the Nations. Since a lack of response does not necessarily equate to a lack of interest, the consultation plan should also indicate what steps SMTC will take if SMTC's communication appears ineffective. These steps should include contacting the federal agencies.
- SMTC should utilize the appropriate contact information and contact method provided by FHWA and FTA.
- SMTC has many tools available online that could be helpful to the Nations and had offered to create other tools that could assist in understanding the segments of the transportation planning process. SMTC should engage in a small working group session with each of the Nations to walk through the products that are readily available. These working sessions may be opportunities to gain a better understanding of information "needs" that may lead to the creation of new tools.
- SMTC offered to assist the Onondaga Nation with any needed planning studies within the Nation boundary. SMTC should work with FHWA, FTA, and NYSDOT Region 3 to set up a meeting with the Nation to discuss.

SMTC response: *The Onondaga Nation continues to hold non-voting status on the SMTC Planning and Policy Committees. Since 2021, SMTC staff have worked to actively engage with Onondaga Nation on multiple efforts. We have updated contact information for Onondaga Nation representatives through these efforts as well. Onondaga Nation representatives attended two Planning Committee and four Policy Committee meetings between 2022 and 2025.*

In July 2022, SMTC and NYSDOT Region 3 staff participated in the FHWA and Native Nations Summit in Ellicottville, NY.

In fall 2022, SMTC kicked-off the US 11 Nedrow & Onondaga Nation Mobility Study. The final report for that study was completed in May 2024. Onondaga Nation participated as a Study Advisory Committee (SAC) member, attending multiple SAC and public meetings. The SAC for that study also included representatives from Centro and the NYSDOT (Onondaga Nation liaison and others). Following this study, Onondaga Nation representatives have occasionally reached out to SMTC staff regarding transportation planning concerns.

Building on this working relationship, Onondaga Nation participated in the 2023 NYSAMPO Conference that SMTC hosted. SMTC staff facilitated a session titled "Building Collaboration with Native Nations" that included Onondaga Nation, Shinnecock Nation, NYMTC, and SMTC.

Onondaga Nation members participated on the Study Advisory Committee for the SMTC's recently-adopted [2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#), attending five of the 10 MTP SAC meetings held between October 2023 and June 2025.

In June 2025, SMTC staff attended a training hosted by NYSDOT Region 3 for the NYSDOT Landscape Architecture/Environmental "new hires" held on-site to examine traffic issues on Route 11 within Onondaga Nation.

4. Title VI

4.a. The following recommendation is from the last review in 2017 and applies still:

- We recommend for the next iteration of the Title VI Plan, the Federal Review Team recommends SMTC document existing processes used to ensure planning decisions do not have unintended discriminatory effects, enhance those practices, and capture them as procedures.

SMTC response: *Recommendation noted. The latest draft Title VI Plan covers essential elements of a Title VI Plan as specified on the FHWA's Office of Civil Rights Title VI website.*

4.b. We recommend SMTC revise its Title VI Plan and website information as needed to reflect the new guidance on processing Title VI complaints by copying the following guidance provided by FHWA Headquarters Office of Civil Rights since the time of the last review:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/title_vi/titleviqa.cfm At this time, FHWA Headquarters Office of Civil Rights will handle the processing of all Title VI complaints filed.

We heard that a major component of revising these plans includes an update to the Census data used, which we agree with and recommend be included in the updated plans.

SMTC response: *Title VI demographic variables for the SMTC Metropolitan Planning Area were pulled from the 2020 Census and various American Community Survey datasets. The updated data have been included in the new Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Atlas, interactive map(s) on the SMTC website, and most other planning studies outlined in the past several Unified Planning Work Programs. The relevant SMTC [Title VI/Nondiscrimination webpage](#) has been revised to reflect FHWA's current Title VI complaint process. An updated Title VI Plan remains in process and is nearly complete.*

5. Freight Planning

5.a. The Federal Team recommends that SMTC update its 2017 Regional Freight Profile to account for changes to regional supply chains and goods movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, technological advances, and changes in types of deliveries. The Federal Team recognizes that recurring freight-related congestion is not a significant observed or perceived issue to the MPO area at the time of this report. As part of this update, however, the Federal Team recommends that the MPO consider observed or anticipated issues related to access, last-mile deliveries, and technological transformations especially considering the new Amazon facility in the MPA.

SMTC response: *An update to the Freight Profile remains in process. At this time, the latest TranSearch commodity data for the area has been summarized and visualized. The commodity data accounts for the bulk of the freight profile, along with other applicable datasets. New in the freight profile update is the inclusion of high-level fleet parking and stop metrics provided by a "big data" platform. Though not a Regional Freight Plan, anecdotal observations have been included relative to the 2 Amazon facilities, truck access, last-mile deliveries, and technological transformations. The draft profile also refers to the Micron semiconductor chip manufacturing facility, which will have a significant freight and economic impact on the area. Most of the freight moving through our area is carried by truck, although it is likely that other modes will increase with the coming industrial development.*

In September 2025, the SMTC Policy Committee adopted the MPO's new Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Regional growth and technological advancements were the primary influences in developing new goals and objectives for the MTP. As noted in the 2050 MTP, we are now preparing for significant economic change and growth with the build-out of the White Pine Commerce Park, which will be

occupied by multiple semiconductor fabrication plants built by Micron, as well as associated suppliers on and adjacent to this site and throughout the Central New York region.

5.b. The Federal Team recommends that SMTC ensure its programmatic and project priorities are up to date in its LRTP in order to be prepared for the next State Freight Planning process.

SMTC response: *The State’s latest Freight Plan was finalized in August 2024, of which staff participated throughout the update process. The SMTC’s adopted MTP supports the State’s freight priorities. In the SMTC planning area, two capital projects were programmed on the TIP with National Highway Freight Program funds: PIN 380773 (Freeway Incident Management System, Phases V And VI) and PIN 310417 (Route 298 over I-90 bridge replacement). Both projects are included in the State Freight Plan (PIN 310417 is included as an “illustrative project”).*

During the new 2050 MTP development process, SMTC staff reviewed the State Freight Plan and consulted with NYSDOT Region 3 staff to determine if any additional illustrative projects from the State Freight Plan should be included in the MTP. One project – I-690 over I-90 deck replacement – was added to the mid-term projects list in the new 2050 MTP.

6. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

6.a. The Federal Team recommends the following with modal shift goals and micromobility:

- SMTC identify additional strategies and objectives to accomplish its modal shift goal. SMTC’s Congestion Management Process 2019 Update sets a goal of increasing the percentage of commuting trips made by bicycling or walking by 5% in the next 10 years. One consideration may include prioritizing first/last-mile connections to transit (mode linking) and transit-oriented development planning efforts.
- SMTC incorporate micromobility into its bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts. With the City of Syracuse’s new program for electric scooter and electric bike-share, opportunities may arise to help with mode shift goals. This could include partnering with the City of Syracuse and the bikeshare and scooter provider to incorporate their data into SMTC planning products and assessing how to make this mode more resilient to private market forces.

SMTC response: *The SMTC created a new CMP in 2025 that speaks in general to transit, TOD, and micro-mobility. Electric scooter and electric bike-share data, as available, are summarized in the CMP. In addition, other efforts (SMTC and agency specific) refer to emerging bikeshare opportunities. For example, Centro has a contract with the same private company as the City to expand the scooter share program beyond the City of Syracuse. Centro notes they are working with local municipalities to determine the best locations for this type of program. According to Veo (scooter share vendor), in 2024 Syracuse had the most people using Veos to get to work of any city in the country that Veo operates in. Veo has been in the Syracuse market for four years, and ridership has increased every year. Currently, Veo operates a fleet of 1,000 scooters and provided over 500,000 rides last year.*

While we fully recognize the importance of first mile/last mile connections, local community engagement strongly indicates that the lack of frequency on existing bus routes is the most significant deterrent to increasing transit usage.

Between 2022 and 2024, SMTC conducted the [Exploring Tomorrow’s Transit](#) (ETT) public engagement effort on behalf of Centro, to gather information about the community’s wants and needs related to public transportation services. This involved a community engagement survey with over 1,000 responses,

numerous pop-up/tabling events, and two rounds of community meetings. A key takeaway from ETT was that frequency is the highest priority improvement for both current transit riders and non-riders. This sentiment has been reiterated in the more recent 2050 MTP public engagement, as well as through Centro's own Better Bus project.

Centro's [Better Bus](#) project was initiated in Winter 2025 and is examining "how fixed-route bus service and the introduction of other on-demand services could complement BRT and better fit the community's travel needs." Centro is committed to implementing BRT on three lines in the Syracuse region. A draft modified route network for the remainder of the bus system was recently released for public review, and Centro expects to have final approval of a modified bus network by Spring 2026.

7. Intelligent Transportation Systems – Congestion Management Process

7.a. The Federal Team recommends the following activities for the ITS and CMP:

- Complete a full update of the regional ITS Strategic Plan, last updated on an interim basis in 2015. This would be in keeping with its Maintenance Plan and logical given the 5-year range for short term identified projects.
- Consider adoption of performance measures that may better enable partner agencies to identify and address sources of non-recurring congestion (e.g., incident clearance times).
- If the co-location of multiple agencies' transportation operations at a joint TMC is determined to be feasible and has the support of the partner agencies, consider bringing in additional training and technical support to assess capabilities and conduct systems engineering analyses.
- Evaluate if additional layers to the online ITS devices map should be added to provide greater utility.
- Aid local agency planning and implementation of strategies that support the safe, efficient, and equitable deployment of emerging technologies.

SMTC response: *A full update to the [Regional ITS Strategic Plan](#) has not occurred. In September 2023, SMTC staff attended a USDOT ITS Architecture & Systems Engineering Workshop. SMTC is aware that NYSDOT (Main Office Albany) is looking to update ITS plans statewide. As opportunities arise, staff will look to participate in the statewide process and/or locally should a NYSDOT Region 3 focused effort advance.*

The [2025 CMP](#) includes an incident detection/management performance measure. Information on incidents occurring along the interstate system is gathered via the NYSDOT Transportation Management Center. Information gathered includes, but is not limited to, the facility upon which the incident occurred, the type of event (e.g., crash, disabled vehicle), the direction of travel, a brief description of the event and its overall duration. NYSDOT has indicated that currently, incident clearance time is not collected. As mentioned in the 2025 CMP, staff completed some micro-analysis on identified CMP specific congested locations (i.e., before and after implementation analyses). To further evaluate strategy effectiveness, future planning funds will be programmed to complete more micro-level transportation operations analyses.

Currently, no co-location of a joint TMC has advanced. See the [2022 co-location whitepaper](#) for additional information. The 2050 MTP includes the operation of a joint TMC as a long-term project. Should member agencies desire to advance such activity in the future, bringing in additional training and technical support to assess capabilities and conduct systems engineering analyses would be a useful endeavor.

The online ITS devices map displays a robust number of applicable devices that currently include beacons, cameras, variable message signs, portable message signs, signal cameras, and traffic signals (categorized as 3-color, beacon, flasher, or navigation). The device listing is routinely updated as new devices are installed. For example, the Onondaga County Department of Transportation continues its inclusion of traffic signal cameras, which are useful for system management and operations purposes.

Relative to traffic signal cameras, New York State Department of Transportation and Onondaga County have provided SMTC staff with access to their Miovision data platforms, which has been extremely useful in various SMTC planning applications. For example, the [Greater Liverpool Traffic Study Technical Memorandum](#) leveraged volume data from the Miovision cameras in its analyses. The City of Syracuse has implemented the rollout of school bus stop-arm cameras, red light and speed cameras in and around school zones as part of the City's [School Zone Traffic Enforcement Program](#). Onondaga County has also implemented a [school bus safety program](#), where funding has been provided to install school bus stop-arm cameras on over 500 school buses in the county.

In 2024, SMTC completed the Dome Traffic Management and Events Strategic Plan that consisted of four separate work products, the [Operations Plan](#) being the last component. The overall purpose of the project is to provide detailed, site-specific traffic management and operations plans in a format that can be used by personnel (City of Syracuse, Syracuse University) during events at the JMA Wireless Dome.

8. Bridge & Pavement

8.a. SMTC members are encouraged to adopt an Asset Management approach to the preservation and maintenance of their transportation networks and consider potential opportunities to leverage this approach for funding efficiencies.

SMTC response: *The [Onondaga County Department of Transportation](#) has been using Pavement Preservation Techniques for several years, including lower cost initiatives to prolong the life cycle of highways. At the state level, the NYS Department of Transportation lists its strategies in its Transportation Asset Management (TAM) Plan. Per the State's [TAM Plan](#), four guiding principles are preservation first; system not projects; maximize return on investment; and make it sustainable.*

SMTC staff have assisted the City of Syracuse in moving towards an asset management-based approach to infrastructure. SMTC staff worked with City staff to develop a priority score for use in pavement maintenance planning. The score incorporates pavement conditions along with several other variables, such as traffic volumes and functional classification. SMTC conducts an analysis of the Syracuse road network each year and provides top candidates for pavement maintenance. SMTC staff also assisted the City of Syracuse in completing a sidewalk inventory over the course of four years. City staff now have access to parcel-level data on sidewalks across the city, with 27 associated attributes, including condition, material, encroaching features, width, and others. City staff utilize this inventory to make informed decisions on sidewalk replacement as part of its Municipal Sidewalk Program.

9. Safety and Security Planning

9.a. While most of the current resiliency issues relate to winter weather related events in the Syracuse MPA, the Federal Team recommends that SMTC incorporate resiliency in its planning efforts and consider conducting a regional resiliency plan to review the potential impacts due to climate change and potential impacts due to security issues such as ITS technology or cyber related disruptions. Additionally, this may be useful in proactively mitigating climate impacts through the new federal funding programs related to resiliency.

SMTC response: *The 2050 MTP considers climate change and resiliency. For example, the Environment goals & objectives category includes a goal of “Ensure communities are well-equipped to mitigate/adapt to the effects of climate change and support resiliency of transportation facilities.” Similarly, through discussions with NYSDOT, SMTC provided a list of bridges to include in the State’s Resiliency Improvement Plan, which are potentially eligible for federal PROTECT funding (formula or discretionary).*

9.b. Given that New York State has initiated policies that support the transition to electric vehicle fleets and alternative energies and the new IIJA legislation also supports alternative fuel corridors, we recommend that SMTC incorporate EV charging needs as an element of their future planning products.

SMTC response: *The 2050 MTP includes a discussion on the potential transition to electric and zero emissions vehicles and incorporates various goals and objectives related to changing technologies and resiliency. For example, in the Economy goals & objectives category there’s a goal of “Address new and rapidly changing technologies” with a related objective of “ Strategically plan for publicly available electric vehicle charging stations” and desired performance of “Increase the number of EV charging stations along NEVI corridors and within the community.”*

10. Performance-Based Planning

10.a. To better tailor the performance-based planning and programming process to the Syracuse metropolitan area, the Federal Team encourages SMTC to explore usage of federal resources related to multi-operational decisional analysis. This may help the MPO to prioritize its LRTP goals. Resources and tools are continuing to evolve, but one useful resource on this topic is NCHRP Report 921: <http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/180176.aspx>.

SMTC response: *The MTP incorporates a System Performance Report that describes the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to required performance targets, and reports on progress achieved in meeting the targets compared to baseline data and previous system performance reports. The MTP goals, objectives, and performance measures are essential components in the capital project evaluation and selection process of the TIP. With the adoption of the new MTP in September 2025, discussions will be held with SMTC member agencies on how the new MTP will be used for capital programming evaluation and selection.*

With an expectation of growth in Central New York, a [Financing Local Mobility](#) resource was finalized in 2024 to educate localities about the value of quality multi-modal facility networks, ways to plan for multi-modal facilities, and how to close funding gaps.

Appendix C: FHWA/FTA Announcement Letter for SMTC Certification Review



**United States
Department of Transportation**

Federal Transit Administration – Region 2

One Bowling Green, Suite 429
New York, NY 10004-1452

Federal Highway Administration – NY Division

Leo O'Brien Federal Building,
11 A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

October 21, 2025

In Reply Refer To:
TRO-02
HEP-NY

Corey Dunham
SMTC Policy Chairperson
Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
100 Clinton Square, 126 N. Salina Street, Suite 100
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Ms. Dunham,

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be conducting a Certification Review of the transportation planning process for your metropolitan area on December 9th thru December 11th, 2025. These dates were selected in consultation with Mr. James D'Agostino, the staff director of the MPO (SMTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Syracuse Metropolitan area.

Titles 23 and 49 of The United States Code require the Secretary of Transportation to designate urbanized areas over 200,000 in population as Transportation Management Areas (TMA). As a result of the 2020 Census, the Syracuse Urbanized Area continues to be a TMA. Designated TMAs are subject to special planning and programming requirements. In accordance with 23 USC 134(i) (5), the Secretary must certify compliance of the MPO in each TMA with the metropolitan planning regulations not less than once every four years. This is a joint responsibility of the FHWA and FTA. The four-year cycle runs from the date of the previously jointly signed Certification Letter, which was March 30th, 2021.

The primary purpose of the Certification Review is to ensure that the planning requirements of 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303 are being satisfactorily implemented. As in past reviews, we intend to highlight good practices, exchange information, and identify opportunities for improvements. We anticipate that the review in December will take place in a hybrid format, with a virtual option and the possibility of a site visit to the MPO's office. The review will primarily include discussion with the MPO staff; local member agencies may also be present to offer comments and their insights.

Some of the focal points we are proposing for the Certification Review meeting may include the following:

- Status of recommendations from previous certification
- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Transportation Improvement Program and Project Selection (TIP)
- Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP)
- Regional Transit Planning - Human Services Transportation Plan
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Transportation Safety
- Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
- Regionally Significant/Major Project Planning

By November 14th, 2025, we request that SMTC provide us with a description of the status of recommendations from the previous 2021 certification and a description of what SMTC does to incorporate those recommendations in the planning process. Please provide any documentation that supports your efforts to date.

Further details, including a draft agenda for the virtual/on-site discussion, will follow separately. The Federal contacts for the review are Ben Fischer of FHWA, (518) 431-8863 and James Goveia of FTA, (212) 668-2325. The review is a positive means to advance our mutual goals to maximize the effectiveness of the planning process. We look forward to our virtual/on-site visit.

Sincerely,

/Original Signed by/

RICHARD JOSEPH Digitally signed by RICHARD JOSEPH MARQUIS
MARQUIS Date: 2025.10.21 15:01:15 -0400

Richard J. Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
New York Division

/Original Signed by/



Michael Culotta
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
Region II

cc: James D'Agostino, *Director*, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
Deb Nelson, *Director, Office of Planning, Policy, and Performance*, NYSDOT
Lisa Cataldo, *Transportation Analyst*, NYSDOT
David Smith, *Regional Director*, NYSDOT Region 3
David Roth, *Regional Planning and Program Manager*, NYSDOT Region 3
Christopher Tuff, *CEO*, CNY Regional Transportation Authority
Anna Price, *Director, Office of Program Management*, FHWA NY Division
Benjamin Fischer, *Senior Community Planner*, FHWA NY Division
Donald Burns, *Deputy Regional Administrator*, FTA Region 2
James Goveia, *Senior Community Planner - Team Lead*, FTA Region 2
Ayla Schermer, *Community Planner*, FTA Region 2

Appendix D: Certification Review Agenda

SMTC 2025 Certification Review – Schedule

2025 SMTC On-Site Certification Review Schedule

All sessions will include virtual accessibility

Tuesday, December 9, 2025	Day 1 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87122088564?pwd=VL6uMeufNMI1Pa88yldioQPf9kCPQf.1 Meeting ID: 871 2208 8564 Passcode: 438979	
	Session Topic	Session Leads
AM: 9:00 - 9:15	Welcome & Introductions	FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino
9:15 - 10:00	Overview of MPO / MPO Highlights / Regional Issues SMTC to provide highlights on transportation planning activities and challenges in the region, including any particularly noteworthy accomplishments since the last Certification Review	SMTC: Jim D’Agostino
10:00 - 10:45	Status of Items from the Previous Certification Review	FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino
10:45 -12:00	Core Transportation Planning Process (LRTP, UPWP, TIP)	FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino
PM: 12:00 - 1:00	Lunch Break	
1:00 - 2:00	Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP)	FHWA: Gautam Mani FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino
2:00 - 3:00	Safety	FHWA: Nicole McGrath FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino CENTRO:
3:00 - 3:15	Break	
3:15 - 4:30	Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan	FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino CENTRO:
4:30 - 4:45	Day 1 Wrap Up and Overview of Day 2	FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino

SMTC 2025 Certification Review – Schedule

Wednesday December 10, 2025	Day 2 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82638745554?pwd=zgGgxujr4NVf2RkKcCwB3aaCvjzFeD.1 Meeting ID: 826 3874 5554 Passcode: 998942																		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: black; color: white;"> <th style="width: 15%;">Session Topic</th> <th style="width: 65%;">Session Leads</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> AM: 9:00 - 10:00 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)/Congestion Management Plan (CMP) </td> <td> FHWA: Tim Crothers FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino </td> </tr> <tr> <td> AM: 10:00 - 11:00 Public Involvement & Public Participation Plan (PPP) </td> <td> FHWA: Nicole McGrath FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino </td> </tr> <tr> <td> 11:00 – 12:00 Freight </td> <td> FHWA: Gautam Mani FTA: James Goveia SMTC: </td> </tr> <tr> <td> 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch break </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> 1:00 - 2:00 Regionally Significant Projects/Major Projects Planning </td> <td> FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino </td> </tr> <tr> <td> 2:00 – 2:15 Break </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> 2:15 - 2:30 Day 2 Wrap Up with SMTC and Overview of Day 3 </td> <td> FHWA: All FTA: All SMTC: Jim D’Agostino </td> </tr> <tr> <td> 2:45 - 4:30 Federal Review Team Caucus (Session limited to Federal Review Team) </td> <td> FHWA: Review Team FTA: Review Team </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Session Topic	Session Leads	AM: 9:00 - 10:00 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)/Congestion Management Plan (CMP)	FHWA: Tim Crothers FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino	AM: 10:00 - 11:00 Public Involvement & Public Participation Plan (PPP)	FHWA: Nicole McGrath FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino	11:00 – 12:00 Freight	FHWA: Gautam Mani FTA: James Goveia SMTC:	12:00 - 1:00 Lunch break		1:00 - 2:00 Regionally Significant Projects/Major Projects Planning	FHWA: Ben Fischer FTA: James Goveia SMTC: Jim D’Agostino	2:00 – 2:15 Break		2:15 - 2:30 Day 2 Wrap Up with SMTC and Overview of Day 3	FHWA: All FTA: All SMTC: Jim D’Agostino	2:45 - 4:30 Federal Review Team Caucus (Session limited to Federal Review Team)	FHWA: Review Team FTA: Review Team
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	<p>Join the meeting now</p> <p>Meeting ID: 222 786 264 301</p> <p>Passcode: WA6Yh68R</p>																		

SMTC 2025 Certification Review – Schedule

**Thursday,
December 11,
2025**

Day 3

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83684294678?pwd=pCYyLaiHVnzbxkxjLtAwrOHPUEu8M.1>

Meeting ID: 836 8429 4678

Passcode: 928191

Session Topic

Session Leads

AM: **Close-out Session with SMTC**
9:00 – 10:30

FHWA: Review Team
FTA: James Goveia
SMTC: Jim D’Agostino

Appendix E: Certification Review Participants

Federal Highway Administration, NY Division

Benjamin Fischer
Nicole McGrath
Gautam Mani
Timothy Crothers

Federal Transit Administration, Region 2

James Goveia
Ayla Schermer

SMTC Staff

James D'Agostino
Mario Colone
Megan Vitale
Kevin Kosakawski
Andrew Frasier
Michael Alexander
Jason Deshaies

New York State Department of Transportation

Elizabeth Parmley
David Roth
Julie Baldwin
Katrina Bergan
Valerie Kaiser
Ryan Meagher
Tim Talbot

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CENTRO)

Christopher Tuff
Tara Spraker
Bren Daiss

SMTC 2025-2026 Certification Review Hybrid Session- 12/9/25-12/11/25

SMTC Offices- 126 N Salina Street Suite 100- Syracuse, NY 13202 (and Online)

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Janes DiGostino	SMTC	JDA.GOSTINO@SMTANPA.ORG	315-422-5716
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Appendix F – Public Survey



- About Us
- Public Participation
- Publications
- Planning Activities
- Data
- News/Announcements
- Studies/Plans
- Q



Public comment survey

As part of the SMTC's federal certification review, FHWA and FTA are gathering comments on the transportation planning process. Comments will be accepted until December 22, 2025.

[See survey](#)

Provide your comments on the transportation planning process in the Greater Syracuse Area

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are conducting a required, quadrennial Certification Review of the transportation planning process in the Greater Syracuse Metropolitan planning area. The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for conducting transportation planning for the Greater Syracuse area. As part of the Certification Review process, FHWA and FTA are gathering comments from the public and other stakeholders on successes of the planning process, as well as opportunities for improvement. Please respond to the questions below. Comments will be accepted until December 22, 2025.

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

1. From your perspective, and knowing the extent of its authority, how well do you understand SMTC's role in the Region's transportation planning process?

2. Were you aware of, and if so, did you take advantage of opportunities to provide input on transportation issues and plans, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and other studies and issues?

Enter your answer

3. From your perspective, how well is the SMTC transportation planning process working to effectively improve transportation in the Region?

Enter your answer

4. What are some things that work well with the transportation planning process in the SMTC area?

Enter your answer

5. What aspects of the transportation planning process in the SMTC area do you think can be improved?

Enter your answer

Submit

Appendix G: Regulatory Basis of Planning Topics

Metropolitan Planning Organization Administration

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it includes both long- and short-range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every 5 years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

I/JA/BIL added housing coordination to the scope of the planning process to better connect transportation, housing, and economic development during the transportation planning process (23 USC 134(a)(1)).

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

23 CFR 450.308 sets the requirement that planning activities performed under Titles 23 and 49 U.S.C. be documented in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator, shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA and the work proposed for the next one- or two-year period by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate the agency that will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding, and sources of funds.

Section 11206(b) of IJJA/BIL requires MPOs to use not less than 2.5 percent of FHWA's metropolitan planning (PL) funds on planning activities that increase safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for people of all ages and abilities.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development and Project Selection

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

23 U.S.C. 134(j)(7) and 23 CFR 450.334 requires that the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 have been obligated in the previous year. The listing must include all federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year and, at a minimum, the following for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP
- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years
- Sufficient description to identify the project
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project

Performance Based planning and Programming (PBPP)

23 U.S.C. 150(b) identifies the following national goals for the focus of the Federal-aid highway program: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability, and Reduced Project Delivery Delays. Under 23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2), the metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the national goals, including the establishment of performance targets.

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs integrated into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions PBPP, which can either be documented as part of the metropolitan planning agreements or in some other means.

23 CFR 450.324(f) states that MTPs shall include descriptions of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system, a system performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets, and progress achieved in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports.

23 CFR 450.326(d) states that the TIP shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the programmed investments with respect to the performance targets established in the MTP, the anticipated future performance target achievement of the programmed investments, and a written narrative linking investment priorities to those performance targets and how the other PBPP.

documents are being implemented to develop the program of projects.

23 CFR 450.340 states that MPOs have two years from the effective dates of the planning and performance measures rule to comply with the requirements.

Public Participation, Consultation, and Coordination

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and a periodically reviewing of the effectiveness of the participation plan.

23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i)(5)-(6) and 23 CFR 450.316(b-e) set forth requirements for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation is also addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.324(g)(1-2) and in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) related to environmental mitigation.

In developing the MTP and TIP, the MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies as described below:

- Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State, local, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight)
- Other providers of transportation services
- Indian Tribal Government(s)
- Federal land management agencies

Additional considerations related to meaningful public involvement and equity, which are relevant to the development of the MTP, can be found in the following Executive Orders:

- EO 13985 on “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities”
- E.O. 14091 on “Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”

Transit Activities

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

Intelligent Transportation Systems

The FHWA Final Rule and FTA Policy on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture and Standards, issued on January 8, 2001, and codified under 23 CFR Part 940 ITS Architecture and Standards, requires that all ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund and the Mass Transit Account conform to the national ITS architecture, as well as to U.S. DOT-adopted ITS standards. 23 CFR 940 states that:

- At the issuance date (January 8, 2001) of the Final Rule/Policy, regions and MPOs implementing ITS projects that have not advanced to final design by April 8, 2005, must have a regional ITS architecture in place. All other regions and MPOs not currently implementing ITS projects must develop a regional ITS architecture within four years from the date their first ITS project advances to final design.
- All ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund (including the Mass Transit Account), whether they are stand-alone projects or combined with non-ITS projects, must be consistent with the provisions laid out in 23 CFR 940.
- Major ITS projects should move forward based on a project-level architecture that clearly reflects consistency with the national ITS architecture.
- All projects shall be developed using a system engineering process.
- Projects must use U.S. DOT-adopted ITS standards as appropriate.
- Compliance with the regional ITS architecture will be in accordance with U.S. DOT oversight and Federal-aid procedures, similar to non-ITS projects.

Congestion Management Process

23 U.S.C. 134(k)(3) and 23 CFR 450.322 set forth requirements for the congestion management process (CMP) in TMAs. The CMP is a systematic approach for managing congestion through a process that provides for a safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system. TMAs designated as non-attainment for ozone must also provide an analysis of the need for additional capacity for a proposed improvement over travel demand reduction, and operational management strategies.

23 CFR 450.324(f)(5) requires the MTP include Management and Operations (M&O) of the transportation network as an integrated, multimodal approach to optimize the performance of the existing transportation infrastructure. Effective M&O strategies include measurable regional operations goals and objectives and specific performance measures to optimize system performance.

Freight Planning

The MAP-21 established in 23 U.S.C. 167 a policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency;

congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Transportation Safety Planning

23 U.S.C. 134(h)(1)(B) and (h)(2) require MPOs to consider safety as one of ten planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306(b)(2), the planning process needs to consider and implement projects, strategies, and services that will increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.

In addition, SAFETEA-LU established a core safety program called the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (23 U.S.C. 148), which introduced a mandate for states to have Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSPs). 23 CFR 450.306(d) requires the metropolitan transportation planning process to be consistent with the SHSP, and other transit safety and security planning.

Planning and Environment Linkages

23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D) and 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) requires environmental mitigation be set forth in connection with the MTP. The MTP is required to include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities for the transportation improvements and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan.

23 U.S.C. 168 and Appendix A to 23 CFR Part 450 provide for linking the transportation planning and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes. A Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study can incorporate the initial phases of NEPA through the consideration of natural, physical, and social effects, coordination with environmental resource agencies, and public involvement. This will allow the analysis in the PEL study to be referenced in the subsequent NEPA document once the project is initiated, saving time and money with project implementation.

Appendix H: Planning Acronyms

3C	The Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive planning process
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATMS	Advanced Traffic Management System
ATR	Automatic Traffic Recorder
BIL/IIJA	The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, aka Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
ATAC	Active Transportation Advisory Committee
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAA	Clean Air Act
CBD	Central Business District
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations – the regulations of federal agencies
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Improvement Program
CMP	Congestion Management Process
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
FAC	Freight Advisory Committee
FAF	Freight Analysis Framework
FAST Act	Fix America Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GTSC	Governor’s Traffic Safety Council
HAWK	High-intensity Activated CrossWalk
HELP	Highway Emergency Local Patrol
HIA	Health Impact Assessments
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
HSTP	Human Services Transportation Plan
ICM	Integrated Corridor Management
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committees
LRP/LRTP	Long Range Plan or Long-Range Transportation Plan
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan (or “Plan”)
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFTA	Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
NHS	National Highway System
NITTEC	Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rule Making
NYSAMPO	New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSDOT	New York State Department of Transportation
NYSTA	New York State Thruway Authority
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PBPP	Performance-Based Planning and Programming
PM	Performance Measure

PPP	Public Private Partnership
RITSA	Regional ITS Architecture
RRFB	Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon
SS4A	Safe Streets and Roads for All Discretionary Grant Program
SHRP	Strategic Highway Research Program
SHSP	State Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SOGR	State of Good Repair
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TIM	Traffic Incident Management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TMC	Traffic Management Center
TSP	Transit Signal Priority
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
USC	United States Code – the codified laws of Congress
USDOE	U.S. Department of Energy
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency