Building a Walkable & Accessible Capital Region For All

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Capital District
Transportation Committee

• Established in 1964
• Population: 825,000+
• 77 municipalities
• 2 metropolitan areas
• Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- Federal Highway Act of 1962
  - Urbanized areas of 50,000+
  - Designated by the Governor

- Forum for cooperative multi-modal transportation decision-making

- Federal transportation funding is channeled through MPOs and their planning process

- 3-C’s: continuing, cooperative, comprehensive

There are 14 MPOs in NYS
MPO Products

LRTP
The Long Range Plan establishes investment policies & principles that guide decision-making & activities for a planning horizon of no less than 20 years & updated every 5 years.

TIP
The Transportation Improvement Program is the 5-year capital program of projects.

UPWP
The Unified Planning Work Program is a 2-year plan that contains all MPO activities & task budgets.

National Goals:
- Safety
- Infrastructure condition
- Congestion reduction
- System reliability
- Freight movement & economic vitality
- Environmental sustainability
- Reduced project delivery delays
New Visions Planning & Investment Principles

1. Invest in a Quality Region
2. Support Economic Development
3. Make investments regionally equitable
4. Preserve and manage the transportation system
5. Maintain travel reliability
6. Invest in safety
7. Invest in security
8. Invest in Complete Streets
9. Encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel
10. Move freight efficiently
11. Invest in transit
12. Provide essential mobility for all
13. Prioritize affordable and convenient travel options
14. Preserve the environment
15. Leverage technology
Encourage Bicycle & Pedestrian Travel

Recognize walking & bicycling as socially, economically, & environmentally responsible & health approaches to improving the performance of our transportation system. Bicycle & pedestrian improvements will be considered from the perspective of developing a system & not just based on whether a particular facility is currently used. A regional system of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, & multi-use trails will encourage safe bicycle & pedestrian use.
Planning Documents
Everyone is a Pedestrian

• In a parking lot
• At the bus stop
• In the crosswalk
• On the road
• Hail a cab
• On a trail
• On the sidewalk
Obstacles to Walkability

- Roadway design
- Poor land use planning
- Safety concerns (real & perceived)
- Lack of coordination
Walkability Goals

- Conformity
- Accessibility
- Mobility
- Resiliency
- Connectivity
- Equity
- Opportunity
- Reliability
- Safety
- Livability

Monument Square, Troy
Trends Snapshot

- Development without growth
- Increase in driving
- Changing needs
- Road & bridge network with a replacement value exceeding $30 billion
- All modes rely on roads & bridges

![Graph showing slow growth region]

**Capital Region Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Source**

- 40% Transportation
- 17% Residential
- 15% Industrial
- 14% Commercial

**Capital Region Infrastructure Snapshot**

- 14,289 Lane-Miles
- Over 1,000 Bridges
- 1,200 Sidewalk Miles
- 130 Miles of Trails
- 33 Miles of Bike Facilities

**Moving People & Goods**

- Daily Regional VMT 22.7 million
- Albany International Airport generates $750 mill annually in economic activity
- The Port of Albany generates $813 mill annually in economic activity
Why Build a Walkable Capital Region?

• Reduces congestion
• Improves traffic safety
• Health benefits
• Increases access to transit
• Economic development
• Creates space & comfort for mobility assistance device users
• Reduces parking demand

Source: NYTimes
Why Build a Walkable Capital Region?

• 90,000 Capital District households do not have a vehicle (11%)
• The average annual cost of vehicle ownership is $8,964.25
• Oil & gas is vulnerable to disruption – economic, weather, global conflict, trade & political disputes, & hacking.
• More young adults are delaying getting their drivers license
• Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation
• Mobility freedom – more transportation choices available to more people
Public Support for Walkability

- Public participation in New Visions 2050
- Virtual public meetings
- Surveys
- Funding poll

Funding Poll Results (average)

- Electric Chargers Score 10%
- Bike/Ped Facilities Score 19%
- Goods Movement Score 8%
- Repairs Score 22%
- Public Transit Score 21%
- Safety Score 7%
- Reduce Driving Score 6%
Public Support for Walkability

What do you like about living in the Capital Region?

What does “Quality Region” mean to you?
Growing Demand for Walkability

**Regional Pedestrian Counts**

**Trail Users Per Mile**
COVID Mobility

COVID's Impact on Trail Use in the Capital Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shenantha Creek Park</td>
<td>53,781</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfoot Road</td>
<td>79,677</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coons Crossing</td>
<td>86,001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaker Ridge Country Club</td>
<td>152,685</td>
<td>75,487</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Apple Maps
COVID Mobility

CDTC Planning Area VMT (per Streetlight Data Inc.)

Open Streets in Troy

Play Streets in Albany

Dine in the street, Saratoga Springs
COVID Mobility

Lark St., Albany
Building a Walkable Region

• Funding
  – UPWP
  – TIP

• Technical assistance

• Training opportunities
  – Complete Streets
  – NACTO

• Complete Streets Advisory Committee

• Public outreach

• Data collection
  – Infrastructure inventories
  – Pavement conditions
  – Counts
  – Surveys

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![Spot Improvement & Network Set-Aside](chart.png)
Building a Walkable Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trails (Mi.)</th>
<th>Sidewalks (Mi.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Pedestrian Safety Trends

• Fatal & all injury crashes (2015-2019): 6.8%

• Fatal & serious injury crashes (2015-2019): 11.6%

• Fatal crashes (2015-2019): 25.6%
Goal: Zero Deaths

• We must confront the level of death and injury on our roadways as a result of trade-offs: each decision is literally a matter of life and death.

• Setting a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries requires a deep ethical obligation to develop traffic safety solutions that value every life.
Local Road Safety Action Plan

- Crash data evaluation (6 years)
  - Regional vs. statewide emphasis areas
  - Focus by county, roadway, speed, type, etc.
  - Follow the data to develop specific recommendations by emphasis area – E’s of safety

- Tailor recommendations/strategies to the CDTC regional context
  - SHSP: Educate users about new traffic control devices.
  - Regional Plan: Educate users about new traffic control devices by...when, where, how...
The New York State Pedestrian Safety Action Plan will run through 2021 and is being implemented cooperatively by the New York State Department of Transportation focusing on engineering improvements, the State Department of Health conducting public education and awareness campaigns, and the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee coordinating increased law enforcement.

The plan targets improvements in communities outside of New York City. The city has an established pedestrian safety program that receives millions in federal funding administered by NYSDOT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City/Town/Village (by # crashes)</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Crashes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hempstead</td>
<td>Nassau</td>
<td>2,139</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>1,254</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>984</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Syracuse</td>
<td>Onondaga</td>
<td>810</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yonkers</td>
<td>Westchester</td>
<td>727</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Brookhaven</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Islip</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oyster Bay</td>
<td>Nassau</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>N. Hempstead</td>
<td>Nassau</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Babylon</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>White Plains</td>
<td>Westchester</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Schenectady</td>
<td>Schenectady</td>
<td>318</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Huntington</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>New Rochelle</td>
<td>Westchester</td>
<td>243</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Poughkeepsie</td>
<td>Dutchess</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Utica</td>
<td>Oneida</td>
<td>239</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Niagara Falls</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>226</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Freeport</td>
<td>Nassau</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ramapo</td>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CDTC’s Approach to Pedestrian Safety

- Conventional “3Es”
  - Engineering
  - Education
  - Enforcement
- “New Es”
  - Ethics
  - Equity
  - Empathy
Education, Outreach & Enforcement

• Law enforcement training
• Bike safety education
• Capital Coexist mini-grants
Capital Coexist Mini-grants

- Up to $5,000
- 20% match
- Traffic safety education events & campaigns
- Local governments, non-profits, & first responders
- Annual solicitation
Mobility & Inclusion
Capital Region Residents

Number of Residents Reporting a Disability

- Schenectady County, 18,537
- Saratoga County, 21,924
- Rensselaer County, 18,682
- Albany County, 33,861
Americans with Disabilities Act Title II

- Government Services
- Must ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs, services, and activities
- pedestrian facilities are an example of a program
Title II – Basic Requirements

- Designate an ADA Coordinator
- Develop & post ADA Policy Statement
- Develop & post Grievance/Complaint Procedures
- Complete a self-evaluation of current services, policies, and practices
- Develop a Transition Plan*
- Name/position of official responsible for implementing the Transition Plan
Transition Plans

• Required of government entities with greater than 50 employees (combined full and part-time, includes police)

• Under 50 employees, public entities still need to evaluate programs for discrimination...but no Transition Plan

• Title II requirement that provides a tool to address discrimination in access to ALL programs
Transition Plan Elements

• Identify Public Involvement Opportunities
• Develop/Adopt Design Standards
• Identify/list physical obstacles and their location
• Describe in detail the methods the entity will use to make the facilities accessible
• Provide schedule for making the access modifications, and a re-evaluation schedule
• Provide annual schedule if transition plan is over one year long
Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)

• Applicable to new construction and alterations of existing facilities
• (Still) undergoing the rulemaking process
• 2011 Notice of Proposed RuleMaking published
• NYSDOT incorporated into Highway Design Manual
Prioritization

• Government Centers/Transit/Public Services...
• Pedestrian Level of Service
• Citizen requests/complaints regarding inaccessible locations
• Population Density
• Presence of Disabled Community
• Cost...
Monitoring Progress

• Use Transition Plan in Annual Planning Cycle
• Track from Initial Inventory (baseline)
• Transition Plan is a “Living Document”
  – UPDATE Regularly (annually/semi-annually)
• Changes in the pedestrian environment (adding street furniture, landscaping, path of travel) have impacts.
Municipal Surveys

• 2015 and 2018
• Assess existence of Self-Analysis and Transition Plan elements
• Assess what data they had
• Most did not have a comprehensive dataset of sidewalk locations
• Useful tool to start conversations
Presence/Absence of Sidewalks

- Existing data was sparse
- MPO staff/intern effort
- About 3.5 years, 77 municipalities, 1,225 miles
- Mostly online/ortho images, in person in few small villages
- Route number, road name, side of road, start & end points, surface type, length (mi.; ft)
- Transmitted data with letter explaining Transition Plan req’ts
Sidewalk Locations
Transition Plans Contract

• Hired Consulting firm early 2020
• Municipal solicitation April 2020 and 2021
• Requires:
  – In-kind match, cash match optional
  – Muni arrange public input, provide list of stakeholders
  – Letter of support from chief elected official
• 2020 – worked with one town, one city
Municipal Process

• Confirm non data collection components
• “Stakeholder” Meetings
  – Invite groups focusing on seniors, people who have disabilities
• Technical Training
  – Whoever collecting data
• Public Meetings
  – Agenda item
Data Collection Hardware/Software

- Device(s) with internet/data plan and GPS
- ArcGIS Online credentials
- Two apps
  - ArcGIS Collector
  - Survey 123
Data Collection Points

- Sidewalks – simple 1 to 4
- Curb Ramps – detectable warning dimensions/contrast
- Pedestrian signals – type, visual/audible/both, access
- Transit stops – access dimensions
- Crosswalks - surface
In-Progress Overview
In-Progress Results

679

The total number of curb ramps inventoried during the current year.

ADA Compliant Summary

- Yes: 351 (50.9%)
- No: 328 (49.1%)

Evaluation of the overall compliance with ADA requirements.

Detectable Warning Condition

- 65% (Unsatisfactory)
- 29% (Satisfactory)
- 1% (Null)

Evaluation of the detectable warning strips, null values represent curb ramps without DW strips.
NYSDOT Engineering Bulletin

• EB 20-053 Local Projects Manual, Chapter 13, Civil Rights Requirements, Section 13.3.3, ADA Transition Plan and Section 13.3.4, Design and Construction

• “A Sponsor’s ADA Transition Plan shall include a list of locations ..., including those identified alongside State highways.”
New Challenges

• Connected & automated vehicles
• New electric mobility
• Rapidly evolving technology
• Long-term impacts of COVID

Jay St., Schenectady
Planning Assistance

• Complete Streets Workshops
• CDTC Transportation & Community Linkage Program
• CDTC / CDRPC Technical Assistance Program
  – Data Collection
  – Data Analysis & Mapping
  – Transportation Safety & Operations Planning
  – General Community / Neighborhood Planning
  – Recreation Trail Planning
Data Collection

• GIS Resources
  – Sidewalk inventory
  – Bike infrastructure inventory
  – Trail database & mapping
• Bike, Ped & Trail Counts
• Survey templates & data
• Safety data & mapping
Funding Resources

• Capital Coexist Mini-grants
• Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
• Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)
• Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ)
• Recreational Trails Program
Other Resources

- Bicycle Level of Service Analysis: How to Measure Bike-Friendliness of Capital District Roadways
- New Visions 2050 Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Prioritization Tool
- Capital Coexist
- Trail Mapping
- Capital District Trails Plan
- Regional Trail Perspectives: A Survey of Capital District Trails
- 2016 Trail Count Report
- Regional Sidewalk Inventory Report Walk & Roll to School Toolkit
New Visions Virtual Learning Series

What is New Visions?
New Visions is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Capital Region. The MTP is also known as the long-range regional transportation plan (LRTP). New Visions is a blueprint for regional transportation that reflects a shared vision for the future. It is developed collaboratively with communities throughout the Capital Region and with other local, state, and federal agencies. This plan is a statement of principles, strategies, and budgetary emphases to guide more detailed project decisions as the region invests in a next-generation transportation system. CDTC’s approach to transportation planning is comprehensive and holistic — a structured balance between actions that reduce congestion and improve safety, increase access to transportation choices like transit, walking, or bicycling, and benefit economic development efforts.

Virtual Training & Learning Opportunities
The New Visions Learning Series includes local government training and webinars focused towards planners, engineers, and other transportation professionals. Webinars are scheduled for the third Tuesday afternoon of every month. These webinars are virtual and you must register in advance (see the schedule below). There is a topic or issue you know by...
Questions?

Email: newvisions@cdtcmpo.org

Text or leave voicemail at (518) 618-2498

Or by mail to 1 Park Pl, Albany, NY 12205

To request paper copies of the New Visions 2050 Plan and related documents, call (518) 458-2161.

Learn more at www.cdtcmpo.org