

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Strategies for Citizen Involvement



Notice of Nondiscrimination Rights and Protections to Beneficiaries

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its metropolitan transportation planning process on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or economic status, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations. You may request additional information by contacting CDTC as described below. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination under Title VI or related statutes or regulations, you may file a complaint to the CDTC by sending your written complaint to Attention: Executive Director, CDTC; 1 Park Place; Albany, New York 12205, or by sending an e-mail to ej@cdtcmpo.org.

Additional Information

If information is needed in another language, contact 518-458-2161.

To request additional information regarding Title VI and related federal and state nondiscrimination obligations, please contact:

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In addition to or instead of the CDTC procedure, complaints may also be filed directly with the Federal Highway Administration, at FHWA Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington DC 20590; the Federal Transit Administration, at Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, Attention Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor –TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, D.C. 20590; or the New York State Department of Transportation, at Office of Civil Rights, New York State Department of Transportation, 50 Wolf Road, 6th Floor, Albany, New York 12232 or email at OCR-TitleVI@dot.ny.gov.



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Introduction

About CDTC

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Albany-Schenectady and Saratoga Springs urbanized areas. CDTC is responsible for fostering regional cooperation and coordination of planning activities in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga (excluding the Town of Moreau and Village of South Glens Falls), and Schenectady counties. This means working not just with municipalities and elected officials, but state and federal agencies and regional organizations, as well as transportation industry experts and citizens to make decisions about major transportation infrastructure investments.

CDTC consists of its members, which include representatives of all 4 Counties, 8 Cities, the New York State Department of Transportation, the Capital District Transportation Authority, other regional transportation agencies, and towns and villages on a rotating basis. CDTC also maintains a permanent staff which supports the members' efforts.

The Federal Highway Act of 1962 established a requirement for a cooperative transportation planning process that set the stage for MPOs. CDTC was formed in 1964 as the Capital District Transportation Study. Over the years, Congress has added additional responsibilities and resources to strengthen the MPO concept, allowing metropolitan regions across the nation to tailor the transportation planning structure, process, and products to meet local needs. The influence of MPOs is demonstrated in federal transportation legislation that requires funding for transportation planning, construction, or operation, and comes from an adopted long-range plan, or regional transportation plan (RTP). CDTC refers to its metropolitan transportation plan as *New Visions*.

What is a MPO?

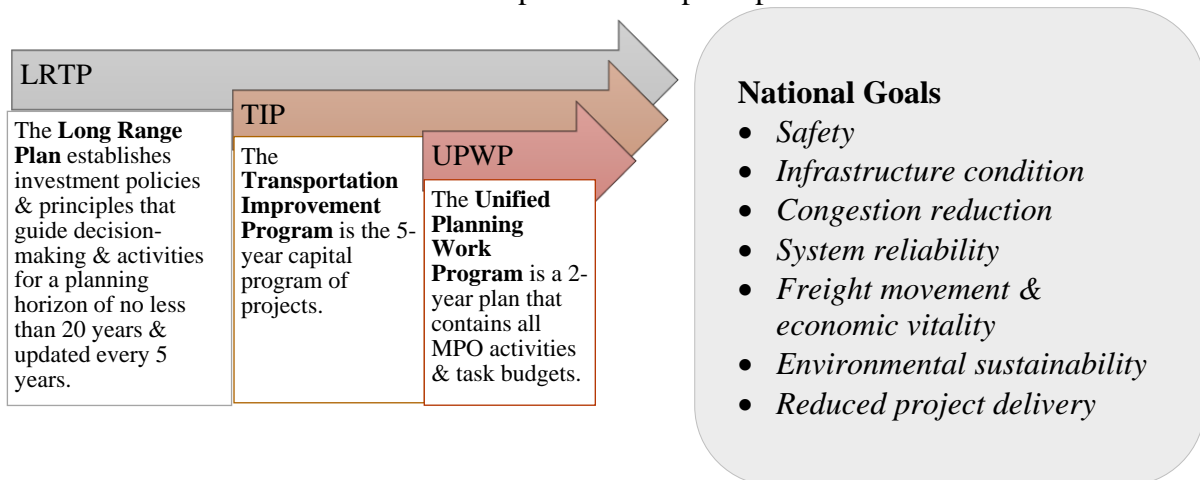
A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is a regional organization responsible for comprehensive transportation planning and programming for urbanized areas. The Federal Highway Act of 1962 created the requirement for urban transportation planning largely in response to the construction of the Interstate Highway System and the planning of routes through and around urban areas. The legislation required that transportation projects in urbanized areas with population of 50,000 or more be based on a continuing, comprehensive, urban transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the states and local governments. Beyond the initial mandate of highway and road construction, transportation planning undertaken by MPOs can include transit, inter-modal and bicycle and pedestrian planning, and continue to serve as a cooperative effort among state agencies and local governments to effectively fulfill a variety of regional planning responsibilities.

Federal Requirements

MPOs are tasked with certain responsibilities in accordance with the most recent federal transportation legislation, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The policy and provisions of this legislation are being carried out by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) through the regulatory process. Federal regulations require CDTC to produce three major products: (1) metropolitan or long-range regional transportation plan (LRTP, *New Visions*); (2) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and (3) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

New Visions is a 30-year plan that outlines investment principles and planning strategies that will guide the region towards developing the transportation network we need. The plan addresses national, state, and regional funding priorities and reflects the needs and concerns of local communities.

New Visions 2050 was developed in coordination with CDTC's partners from the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA), the Albany Port District Commission, Albany County Airport Authority, and representatives from the region's counties, towns, cities, and villages. Additionally, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provided guidance on the construction of the overall plan and adoption process.



Long-Range Planning: *New Visions*

New Visions 2050, which is currently underway is an update to *New Visions 2040*. Since CDTC was created in 1965, it has released at least 7 Long Range Regional Transportation Plans. *New Visions 2050* is the 4th version of *New Visions*. CDTC has prepared and adopted plans with a horizon of 20 and 30 years. A Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan is one of the MPO mandated responsibilities. These plans set the framework and priorities for distribution of federal funds. Plans are adopted through an extensive public outreach effort, technical research, and coordination among other agencies.

New Visions provides a vision of the region's future growth and development; determines regional plan consistency in order to locate and implement future transportation facilities and services;

provides guidance and direction for municipal, county, and state agencies to make infrastructure investments; and serves as the foundation for developing the TIP. The “Planning and Investment Principles” are the centerpiece of *New Visions*.

The Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan is updated every 5 years. Typically, CDTC does a minor update every 5 years and a major update every 10 years. The rapid growth of new technology and shared mobility services increases the urgency for more frequent updates. While these rapid changes create uncertainty within long range planning, they also present opportunities to engage the public in ways not possible in the past and communicate the investment choices presented to the region.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a five-year capital program of transportation projects that implement the Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan. Federal regulations require that transit, highway and other surface transportation improvement projects within the Capital District metropolitan planning area be included in this TIP if these projects are to be eligible for federal or operating funding from the FAST Act. The TIP also includes non-federally funded projects and New York Thruway Authority projects located in the CDTC area.

Federal transportation law requires CDTC to update its TIP no less than four years. The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is developed in consultation with MPOs, which is also updated at least every four years. While CDTC’s practice is to maintain a five-year TIP, the federally required STIP covers only the first four years of the period.

CDTC’s current TIP was adopted in June 2019 to cover the five-year period from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2024. You can find TIP project listings and documents on the TIP section of the CDTC website at www.cdtcmo.org/2019tip.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP identifies the short-range transportation planning activities undertaken by the CDTC staff, its planning partners and its consultants for two federal fiscal years. All federally funded transportation related planning activities in the region are documented in the UPWP. Partner agencies receiving federal planning funds for activities in the UPWP include the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). The UPWP is available in the UPWP section of CDTC’s website at www.cdtcmo.org

Planning & Investment Principles

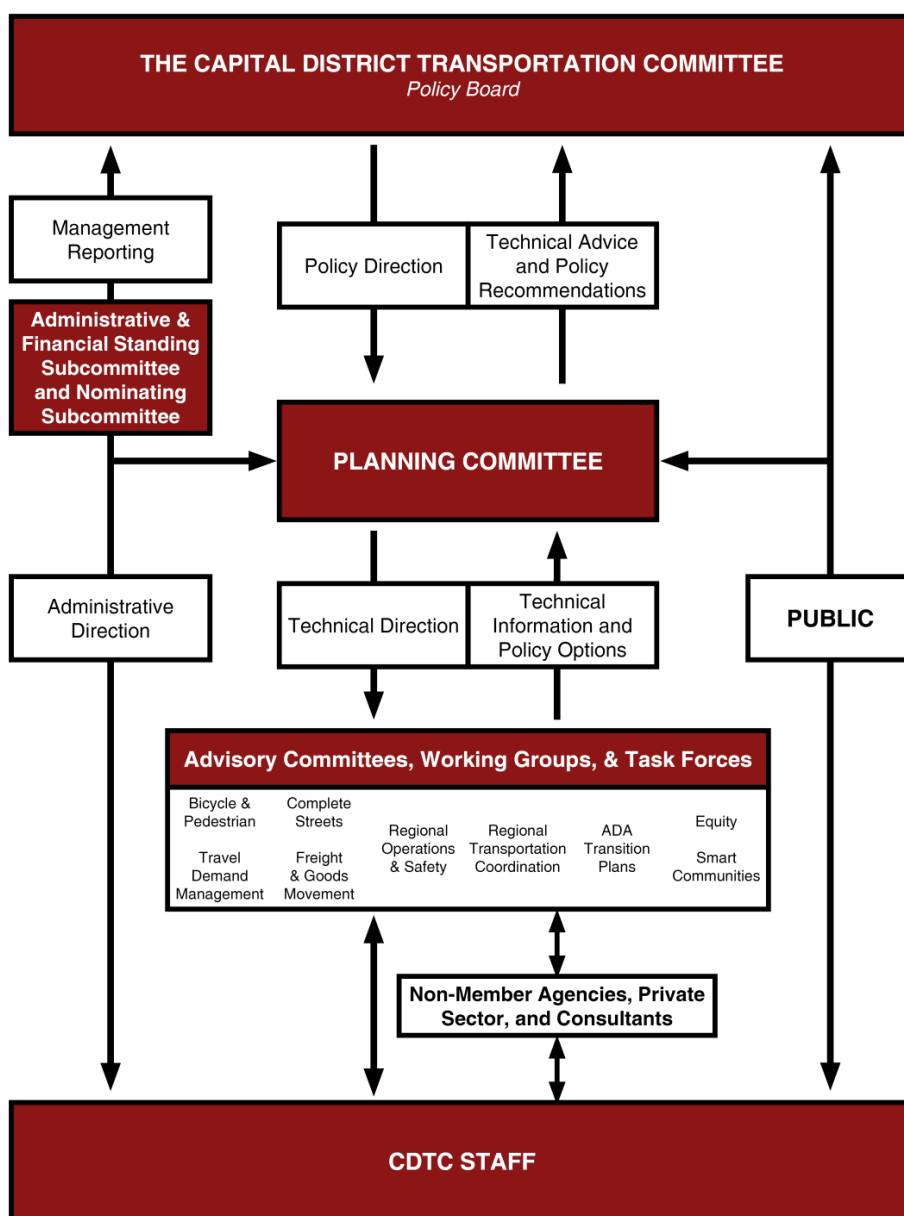
- 1 Invest in a Quality Region
- 2 Support Economic Development
- 3 Make investments regionally equitable
- 4 Preserve and manage the transportation system
- 5 Maintain travel reliability
- 6 Invest in safety
- 7 Invest in security
- 8 Invest in Complete Streets
- 9 Encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel
- 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

Certification Review

In accordance with federal law, CDTC’s transportation planning process is reviewed at least every four years by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration to assure that the planning process is in accordance with federal regulations. The last certification review was completed in 2016 and the findings are documented in the Certification Review Report which can be found in the UPWP section of the CDTC website at www.cdtempo.org.

CDTC Structure

In order to achieve the MPO objectives and comply with federal requirements, CDTC has the below structure:



CDTC Policy Board

This is the MPO decision-making authority which operates by consensus. The Policy Board delegates authority to the Planning Committee to recommend plans and programs to the Policy Board for action. CDTC's Policy Board members are encouraged to bring forth issues and concerns at any time – they are expected to be active participants in the process. Policy Board meetings are open to the public. The public is welcome to comment on transportation related issues within the Capital District.

Officers:

Chair: *Mayor Kathy Sheehan, City of Albany*

Vice Chair: *Carm Basile, Executive Director, Capital District Transportation Authority*

Secretary: *Patrick Barnes, Regional Director, NYSDOT Region-1*

CDTC Planning Committee

CDTC's Planning Committee has the delegated authority to develop recommendations about transportation plans and programs for the Policy Board. The Planning Committee is composed largely of technical counterparts to the Policy Board members. For example, mayors serve at the policy level while city engineers or planning directors serve on the Planning Committee. The Policy Board has also delegated the Planning Committee authority to approve small-scale changes to the UPWP or the TIP. Planning Committee meetings are open to the public. The public is welcome to comment on transportation related issues within the Capital District.

Officers:

Chair: *Steve Iachetta, Albany County Airport Authority*

Vice Chair: *Steve Feeney, Schenectady County*

Secretary: *Michael V. Franchini, CDTC Executive Director*

Advisory Committees

CDTC maintains several ongoing advisory committees which serve to provide CDTC's Policy Board and Planning Committee with in depth technical information on topics of particular interest or concern. The advisory committees are guided by CDTC's staff and serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas, practices and progress reports about various initiatives taking place at National, State, regional and local levels. Advisory committees are also tasked with providing input to CDTC's Planning Committee and Policy Board on projects being evaluated for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The follow Advisory Committees meet quarterly but can meet monthly:

- ◆ Bicycle and Pedestrian
- ◆ Complete Streets
- ◆ Equity
- ◆ Freight and Goods Movement
- ◆ Regional Operations and Safety
- ◆ Regional Transportation and Coordination Committee

Working Groups and Task Forces

Occasionally, CDTC will establish working groups or task forces to provide a forum for trending or urgent topics that need immediate discussion and coordination. These groups are generally not intended to be long term but can be activated at any time. They may also test the level of interest or need for a permanent advisory committee. Past working groups included the Regional Bike Share Task Force that met and encouraged the launch of CDPHP Cycle!, the regional's bike sharing system.

CDTC currently has two working groups that meet when the need arises:

- ◆ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plans
- ◆ Smart Communities

CDTC Staff

The staff serves as a resource to the Policy Board and Planning Committee, carrying out the assignments of the Policy Board and Planning Committee through the UPWP. The staff also identifies opportunities for additional planning efforts or improved planning techniques. Staff experience and the MPO working environment has produced a culture that encourages initiative and creativity. Staff expertise includes transportation planning, geography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and transportation system engineering. The staff seeks to apply a diverse set of skills to ensure that CDTC's deliberations are founded on solid technical work and broad public access. The staff also represents CDTC at public meetings.



CDTC has enjoyed a high degree of local success and national recognition due to a highly collaborative environment of mutual trust and respect. Staff develops short- and long-range transportation plans, conducts research and provides data as requested by local municipalities on vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, air quality, and population trends. CDTC also has a number of interactive maps available on its website, including the TIP map, trail map, priority networks, and the Linkage map.

CDTC developed the *New Visions* Plan and closely monitors its implementation. Programs and initiatives funded by CDTC are consistent with the plan and support the regional vision outlined within it. Investments in projects that connect or reconnect communities throughout the region

with multimodal improvements are the core of the New Visions vision and rely on extensive public outreach, education, and involvement in the planning and design process.

Purpose of the Public Participation Plan

The purpose of this document is to communicate public participation strategies and policy. A Public Participation Policy invites and facilitates informed public participation in CDTC’s regional transportation planning and programming process. CDTC last updated its Public Participation Plan in 2015. Public participation is integral to good transportation policies, programs and projects. Meaningful and thorough public involvement is central to good decision-making. Since 2015, CDTC has piloted innovative stakeholder engagement strategies to develop local land use and transportation plans – both online and in-person. This Public Participation Plan builds off that momentum. There is also an increasing focus on environmental justice and equity in transportation planning and decision-making. The updated Plan is an opportunity to provide guidance to ensure that all residents benefit from transportation investments, especially those who have been traditionally underserved by the transportation system.

The purpose of CDTC’s Public Participation Plan is multifold. The Plan provides a framework for CDTC staff and member agencies to guide participation processes in transportation planning projects and programs. It identifies ways to continuously improve participation and engagement efforts to better involve a range of stakeholders – particularly residents who have been traditionally underserved and underrepresented, such as minority and low-income populations, and those with limited English proficiency.

The Plan describes to the public how to become involved in transportation planning decisions that affect them and their communities. But it also creates expectations for how CDTC staff, the public, member agencies and other stakeholders collaboratively address transportation issues and concerns. It was developed by reviewing successful engagement methods with particular attention to innovation and outside-the-box strategies for overcoming traditional barriers to participation. The Plan outlines CDTC’s public participation goals and metrics for evaluating their continued success.

The next section describes the laws and policies that MPOs must comply with in relation to public participation. Overall, these requirements call for MPOs to establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities in a variety of formats to a full range of interested parties.

CDTC's Public Participation Strategy

The CDTC believes meaningful and comprehensive public participation is essential to the organization's transportation planning work. Public participation improves decision making by helping to illuminate many of the social, economic, and environmental benefits and drawbacks of transportation decisions.

This plan for public participation should also be used by local governments and consultants in receipt of federal transportation planning funds through one of CDTC's planning initiatives or activities. CDTC encourages consultants to pioneer new and cutting-edge strategies and tools to engage the public. *New Visions 2050* principles demonstrate CDTC's leadership in the development and deployment of innovative practices and technologies that improve the safety and performance of the transportation system while reducing transportation costs and improving efficiency and effectiveness of alternative modes of transportation. Similarly, CDTC utilizes similar innovations to inspire greater, more effective collaboration and public engagement to create successful projects.

Goals of Public Participation

The purpose of public participation varies depending on context. CDTC manages a variety of transportation studies and projects. Meaningful involvement gets the public to become active participants in the democratic process—in this case, the transportation planning process. CDTC provides the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions in local and regional transportation planning and programming. The process of informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering the public is done on a continuous basis.

There are many stages of transportation project development, from planning to maintenance and operations. The Public Participation Plan only applies to the planning stage for transportation projects but CDTC encourages members to utilize the tools and strategies in the plan for all project stages. Public outreach resources, tools, and training opportunities will be made available to cultivate a tradition of transparent and ongoing dialogue between transportation agencies, local governments, and the public. Approaching public outreach in this holistic and ongoing manner will improve communities, develop consensus on transportation projects and programs, and lead to other desired community outcomes.

CDTC's Public Participation Goals:



Establish a thorough, inclusive process that uses creative approaches to offer the public continuous opportunities to shape the region's transportation system.

CDTC’s goal is to implement a public participation program that is:

Thorough: Outreach should be comprehensive, providing many options for how a person can get involved.

Inclusive: everyone is welcome to participate. We want to make sure participants are as diverse as our region, therefore, we make a concerted effort to reach traditionally underserved communities.

Creative: We strive to use cutting-edge tools and techniques to reach the public. Being innovative, means we’re always focused on improving.

Continuous: Members of the public should be able to participate from the comfort of their own homes or in a community they feel comfortable sharing their opinion with, at a time convenient to them, throughout the planning process. This means using tools that enable 24/7 involvement.

Measuring Public Participation

To ensure that the public participation program at CDTC meets its goals, and continues to evolve and reflect the most current and effective methods, CDTC staff will adopt a regular, frequent, and more rigorous process for gathering data and evaluating the MPO’s outreach practices, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative measures will include tracking events, virtual public participation, and general public comments received throughout the year. Comments received for individual studies will be collected and summarized as part of the public participation section in all final reports.

CDTC will measure and evaluate its public participation efforts on an annual basis by compiling the following information.

Events

- ◆ Event name
- ◆ Location
- ◆ Study/Topic
- ◆ No. of attendees
- ◆ [Demographics of attendees](#)
- ◆ No. of comments received
- ◆ Press release status
- ◆ Media coverage
- ◆ Social media engagement

Virtual Public Involvement

- ◆ Study/Topic
- ◆ Strategy (ex. Poll, Survey, Webinar, etc.)
- ◆ Description
- ◆ No. of responses
- ◆ Response summary

General Comments

- ◆ Topic
- ◆ Contact info (if available)
- ◆ Comment
- ◆ How comment was received (ex. email, written, social media, etc.)
- ◆ CDTC response

Qualitative measures will include:

- ◆ Soliciting feedback from members of the public through surveys (online and at meetings) about their satisfaction with opportunities provided for input, the outcome of the process, and their sense of fair treatment.

Equity in Public Participation

How does CDTC define “equity?”

Equity in public participation exists when resources and opportunities for participation are distributed in a manner that responds to historic and ongoing disadvantages faced by marginalized groups. Equitable public engagement is mindful of power and privilege within engagement processes, institutions and broader systems.

CDTC is committed to ensuring no person is denied benefits of CDTC’s planning process on the basis of minority and/or low income status, and to identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of CDTC’s programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition to minority and people with low incomes, other traditionally underserved populations include people who have a disability, seniors, people who don’t drive their own personal vehicles, those with limited English proficiency, and those experiencing homelessness. To build strong urban, suburban, and rural communities, transportation investments must address all needs fairly and equitably.

As part of CDTC sponsored studies and plans, including the Linkage Program, staff conducts an equity scan prior to scope development and uses that information in developing the project-level participation scope. This includes but is not limited to a scan for Environmental Justice populations. Applying an equity lens ensures a process that analyzes and diagnoses the impacts of engagement decisions on under-served and marginalized groups, so that potential barriers to engagement can be identified and removed. It improves planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more equitable policies and programs. An equity lens is not intended to be a checklist. Instead, it introduces questions into the decision-making process to steer the focus on equity in both process and outcomes.

Questions that should be asked include:

- ◆ What are the structural, procedural, distributional, and/or transgenerational equity issues?
- ◆ Who from the community needs to be part of the conversation but isn’t?
- ◆ Has the project management team used opportunities to co-empower a community leader or advocacy partner that can help promote public participation and project goals?

There are various areas of equity that must be considered in the transportation planning process. These include:

-
- ◆ Demographics
 - Age
 - Household type
 - Race and ethnic group
 - Limited English proficiency
 - ◆ Income class
 - ◆ Ability
 - People with disabilities
 - Licensed drivers
 - ◆ Location
 - Jurisdictions
 - Neighborhood and street
 - Urban/Suburban/Rural
 - ◆ Project impacts
 - Travel time
 - Access
 - Noise
 - Air Pollution
 - ◆ Mode
 - Pedestrians
 - Bicyclists
 - Motorcyclists
 - Motorists
 - Public transit users
 - ◆ Industry
 - Freight
 - Transit / other public transport
 - ◆ Trip Types
 - Emergency
 - Commutes
 - Commercial/freight
 - Recreational/ tourist

Efforts to Reach Traditionally Underserved Populations

CDTC is committed to providing the necessary tools to extend public participation for people who have disabilities, limited English proficiency, and other disadvantages that can create barriers to meaningful public engagement. Examples include:

- ◆ Working with Human Services Agencies to understand their needs and needs of people they serve
- ◆ Holding meetings in accessible locations
- ◆ Providing opportunities to provide input in communities without reliable internet access
- ◆ Focusing on engagement with minority and low income populations
- ◆ Employing translation and interpretation services
- ◆ Special outreach to adults over 65 years old and people with disabilities

Creating Community Connections: The CDTC Public Participation Toolkit

CDTC's vision for public participation in the region is to hear, value, and consider the views of and feedback from all stakeholder groups. These views will be given the opportunity to be expressed throughout the metropolitan planning and programming process and used in the decision-making process. Stakeholder groups include members and residents of the community, government agencies, community organizations, elected officials, law enforcement, media, business owners, and other property owners. The public participation process should be designed to be flexible to adapt to each stakeholder groups' needs. This means different groups may require different engagement tools and strategies.

A **“stakeholder”** refers to “a person with an interest or concern in something.”

Oxford English Dictionary

Stakeholder categories:

- ◆ Residents
- ◆ Affected public agencies
- ◆ Public transportation employees
- ◆ Public ports
- ◆ Freight transporters
- ◆ Private transportation providers
- ◆ Public transportation users
- ◆ Pedestrians and bicyclists
- ◆ People who have disabilities
- ◆ Senior citizens
- ◆ People with Limited English Proficiency
- ◆ Minority groups / people of color
- ◆ Organizations involved in other planning related activities:
 - New York State planned development
 - Local planned growth
 - Local economic development
 - Environmental protection
 - Historic preservation
 - Airports
 - Human services
 - Land management



New Visions 2040 Public Meeting at Schenectady County Community College in 2015

CDTC has always committed to providing “reasonable access” to all technical documents and plans. Reasonable access consist of using a variety of tools and strategies for providing information to the public in a timely, engaging, and comprehensible way.

In addition to reasonable access, CDTC will follow the following guidance in order to expand its reach and include populations and stakeholder groups that are impacted most by decisions that shape the local and regional transportation network.

- ◆ **Apply an equity lens to all plans.** Identify project goals, resources, and accountability measures for inclusive public outreach and engagement. Project budgets should allocate funds that support public outreach and engagement strategies that are consistent with the project scope and purpose. Some examples include budgeting for facilitators and language translations, digital tools or other non-traditional methods, ADA accommodations, and focus groups. The public participation plan will outline how the input gathered in the public participation process will affect decision-making and what the follow-up will be.
- ◆ **Identify who the most vulnerable communities and stakeholder groups are that the project will potentially impact.** Knowing which organizations and institutions to reach out to will help provide important insight into how to best reach vulnerable communities and what tools will be appropriate.
- ◆ **Design outreach and engagement methods around the project’s most vulnerable communities.** This means creating a process that centers and reaches the populations most at risk of experiencing impacts, adverse or otherwise. This will ensure that the employed methods and tools reach the broader community. Tools should be evaluated based on: 1) reach, 2) accessibility, and 3) user-friendliness.
- ◆ **Messaging and tools must be consistent, regardless of the community and the method of engagement, it is important to share the same information and provide the same context.** This is especially true if/when using a mix of methods and tools and reaching out to a variety of stakeholder groups. This will ensure the information you obtain can be weighted and prioritized across different sources and communities.
- ◆ **Make public participation fun.** Employ creative methods to obtain information. Consult with local community groups, leaders, and advocates, including youth and local artists. Culturally relevant ideas will have more community traction. Do not be afraid to forego traditional methods, like surveys.

Strategies for Participation & Engagement

CDTC has employed a broad spectrum of public involvement strategies and continues to test new and innovative ways to engage the public. Different strategies are more effective depending on the study goals, geography, extent of anticipated impact, and the affected populations and stakeholder groups. Specific strategies and the extent of public participation will be customized for each individual plan or program. The following are examples of public engagement that should be considered when developing the public participation component of any plan or program:

Public Meetings

A public meeting, sometimes referred to as a “town hall meeting” is a way for local government officials, CDTC staff, and stakeholders to discuss and debate ideas or design alternatives. Meetings can take different shapes, from a looser “open house” format to a structured presentation followed by questions and answers. All public meetings create an opportunity for consultant teams and CDTC staff to be creative in their approach to engaging the public in the transportation planning process. **Open house** meetings are events held at a public location where the general public is invited to attend at their convenience and look around. A successful open house uses a series of poster boards that display project information, maps, and opportunities for the public to interact with them.

Local government officials, consultant teams, and CDTC staff can facilitate an open house by using “**dot-voting**,” or asking participants to vote with dots stickers or marks with a marker pen on their design and priority preferences. With this technique, participants are given a number of dots that can be assigned to a set of concepts, ideas, or alternatives. Dot-voting is a simple decision-making and prioritization technique that is transparent and democratic.

Another technique is a “**listening session**” or **break-out groups**. A public meeting or open house might include stations that attendees can visit and discuss specific issues. Discussions can be moderated and documented by project management staff or a community volunteer. Smaller groups encourage more people to participate and can feel more comfortable for those who are intimidated by public speaking and cannot always voice their opinions. A moderator or volunteer from the group can report out at the end to share what the group discussed. This helps collect multiple perspectives and encourage others to engage with new ideas.

Cost:	Moderate
Time:	Short
Impact:	Local/Region
Who:	Local government
Obstacles:	Timing & location
Consider:	Make experience engaging & interactive.



*Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study
Open House*



*Albany Education District
Enhancement Study Public
Meeting*

Live polling has also been used to engage audiences at public meetings and transform what is typically a one-sided presentation into a two-way conversation. There are web-based systems that allow presenters to embed interactive activities into their presentations. Audience members can respond on the web or via text messaging on their phones. Presenters should be prepared with alternative ways for those without a phone to participate, but live polling can be a valuable tool for collecting critical feedback. Live polling can also be used outside of a public meeting or complement other public engagement strategies.

Design Charrette

A design charrette is a short, collaborative meeting during which members of a team quickly collaborate and sketch designs to explore and share a broad diversity of design ideas. In a charrette, participants are given paper and/or maps and writing tools like markers or felt tip pens. They give people the opportunity to influence design decisions to make sure early decisions avoid missteps or unintentional controversy. Charrettes also promote “collective enthusiasm” for a project with early realistic goals and directions. They are an engaging and productive public participation strategy which can be a low-tech complement or substitute to crowdsourcing.

Cost:	Moderate
Time:	Short
Impact:	Local/Region
Who:	Consultant Team
Obstacles:	Time management of meeting.
Consider:	Make sure you have enough materials/ supplies for all participants.



On left: Annotated map from a 787/Hudson River Corridor meeting in 2015 and on right: marked up map and boards presenting design alternatives for Albany’s South End Bikeway Link.



Public Comment Period

The public comment period is typically between 30 and 60 days, depending on the type of study or project. The specific public review policy for each major plan or program is in the table below. Typically, a draft or final report is released and public comments are accepted by USPS mail, email, or phone. Online comment forms or surveys may also be developed to collect feedback. CDTC can create an email address specific to a plan or program to receive comments by email. Online platforms frequently used by CDTC to collect public comments include SurveyMonkey, JotForm, and Google Forms.

Cost:	Minimal to Moderate
Time:	Long (30-60+ days)
Impact:	Local/Region
Who:	Consultant Team or CDTC staff
Obstacles:	Internet access
Consider:	Press release with directions on how to submit written comments.

At the beginning of a public comment period, information on how to provide input should be posted to the CDTC or project website. It should also be distributed via email to stakeholder and other contact lists generated throughout the planning process. Comments received should be summarized and included in the final planning document, along with a response and description of how comments were addressed, if possible. This summary and response should be completed no more than 30 days after the end of the comment period. Individual comments should be made available to the public by request, without identifying information included.

Plan / Program	Minimum Review Period (days)
Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan (LRTP) & LRTP Amendments	60
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) & TIP Amendments	60
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) & UPWP Amendments	30
Public Participation Policy (PPP)	45
Linkage and other CDTC sponsored studies	30
Public meeting announcements	10

Demonstration Projects

For the purposes of public participation, a “demonstration project” is a short-term, low-cost, temporary roadway project used to pilot or *demonstrate* a potential long-term design solution to improve walking, bicycling, and public spaces. These are sometimes referred to as “pop-ups” or “tactical urbanism.” CDTC has supported a number of successful demonstration projects throughout the Capital Region. Some examples include, but are not limited to, bicycle lanes, crosswalk markings, curb extensions, and even lane reductions.

Cost:	Moderate to High
Time:	Short to Long
Impact:	Local
Who:	Consultant Team / Local government / Subcontractor (ex. Capital Roots)
Obstacles:	Right-of-way permits.
Consider:	Stakeholder involvement

While demonstration projects are considered “low-cost” engineering solutions, they are a high cost public engagement strategy. Materials costs can range from \$100 to \$10,000 per installation, but many public works departments and other local government offices have materials that can be used, like traffic cones, moveable metal barricades, or variable message signs. Some

communities may be able to borrow materials or coordinate with other organizations to plan and implement a demonstration project. For example, the Albany County Department of Health has purchased a “Complete Streets Lending Library” (see Appendix C) that makes materials available to Albany County municipalities.

Demonstration projects are effective because they allow public agencies, community partners, and people walking, bicycling, taking transit, and driving to evaluate potential infrastructure improvements before potentially investing in permanent changes. This public participation strategy can:

- ◆ Increase public engagement by inviting stakeholders to try demonstration projects for active transportation.
- ◆ Develop further public awareness of the potential issues and conceptual options.
- ◆ Build support for project/study implementation.
- ◆ Encourage continued collaboration and strong relationships between government agencies, local businesses, and residents, even when a study is completed.
- ◆ Gather data from real-world use of streets and public spaces.

Length of a demonstration project depends on what data is being collected and how it relates to the scope of a study or project. If the objective and scope of a study is to evaluate pedestrian and driver behavior or the impact to traffic, a longer project may be required. A one- or two-day project may be more about community engagement and attracting the public to an event or activity in order to collect input on a new idea. Coordinating the scheduling of a demonstration project with a public meeting or other event can increase public engagement and community support for new design alternatives. Collecting data, surveys, and other information is essential to a successful demonstration project. Another key to a successful demonstration project is outreach to stakeholders and nearby residents before the demonstration begins to explain what is being done, why, and for how long it will impact them.



Left: An intersection enhancement project at Jay and Liberty Streets in Schenectady; Middle: Henry Street Bike Lane Demonstration in Saratoga Springs; Right: Protected bike lane demonstration at Parking Day in Albany

Focus Groups

This strategy refers to guided small group discussions about a particular project, program, or topic area. Focus groups are often used in market research and political analysis about a new product or something else to determine the reactions that can be expected from a larger population. A key to a successful focus group is group diversity and size.

In 2018, CDTC worked with a consultant team to do focus groups as part of the *Disadvantaged Transit Users' Experiences of Micro-Navigation in New York State's Capital Region* report. The consultant team facilitated 11 focus groups to discuss gaps people experience in the region's transportation system. The focus was on those transit users often not represented in the transportation planning process. The focus groups positioned the experiences, positive or negative, of the transportation user-consumers as central to understanding gaps in connectivity. Free transit passes were used as incentives for participation. The consultant team used conversational prompts and audience response devices to foster interactivity.

Cost:	High
Time:	Long
Impact:	Local/Regional
Who:	Consultant Team
Obstacles:	Keeping discussion on-topic
Consider:	Incentives for participation

Meeting-in-a-Box

A “meeting-in-a-box” can be explained as a toolkit to assist individuals in organizing their own meetings with a small neighborhood or other community group. CDTC staff and/or a consultant team develop meeting materials, such as maps or other visuals, surveys or workbooks, slides, or other activities for individuals to use in a meeting that they host in their home, place of worship, or other comfortable location they identify. This is a cost-efficient strategy to reach more people because it doesn't require staff to schedule and travel to a number of meetings presenting and collecting feedback. Stakeholders and individuals are the presenters and tailor their meetings to meet the needs of their group and community. The meeting host then collects all the materials and returns them to CDTC or the consultant staff.

Cost:	Moderate
Time:	Short to Long
Impact:	Local / Regional
Who:	Stakeholders /
Obstacles:	Distributing materials
Consider:	A script or dialogue guide for meeting hosts

Conversation Cafes or Curbside Conversations

This public participation strategy requires a designated indoor or outdoor space where people gather and can spend some time to discuss a study or project. A “conversation café” should be in a comfortable setting where people can easily hear each other and groups are small enough to let everyone speak. The discussion can be informal or formal, depending upon the comfort of the conversation starter and participants.

Cost:	Moderate to High
Time:	Short
Impact:	Local
Who:	Consultant Team
Obstacles:	Identifying an ideal location
Consider:	Refreshments

CDTC used the Curbside Conversation strategy in the Craig and Main Connection Study. The purpose of the study was to work with the Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods to identify a Complete Streets design that better served the neighborhood. The consultant team used a variety of strategies to attempt to connect with different segments of the community. There were events held at different locations, at different times of day, all aimed at empowering the community and building excitement around the project.

Curbside Conversations

Although meetings and events were located within the neighborhoods to make involvement accessible to as many people as possible, the design team believed there needed to be an additional layer of connecting with the community. With the help of Habitat for Humanity, an outdoor 'living room' was displayed at the corner of Education Drive and Main Avenue and again in front of the Carver Community Center. These sessions provided opportunities for authentic and passive interaction with community members to gather input and share information about the project.



The image is above is clipped from the Craig and Main Connection Study and shows the Curbside Conversation and the props used to engage the public on their way to work or school.

Community Liaison

Make local experts part of the project team. Hiring residents from the community can help increase participation and project success. Local experts can help projects with flexible input processes adapt as circumstances require in order to achieve a project's participation goals. In the Schenectady Craig and Main Connection Study, the consultant team designed a resident-led community involvement initiative by hiring residents of the community to serve as the community liaison(s). Their role within the project team included reviewing material, identifying methods of outreach and engagement, advertising the project, leading discussion, assisting in website development, and conducting face-to-face discussion through focus groups and individual encounters.

Cost:	Moderate to High
Time:	Moderate to Long
Impact:	Local
Who:	Consultant Team
Obstacles:	Oversight and reliability of liaisons
Consider:	Consult community groups for potential liaisons.

Walkshop

A “Walkshop” refers to a mobile workshop. This strategy requires a planned route that a group of planners and residents can walk together, with planned stops, to better understand a community’s assets and/or needs. This strategy explores how policies, planning, and development decisions have shaped street design, housing, and mobility, and allow for discussion of what can be changed to make desired improvements. There is a lot of opportunity to be creative – integrate transit, sidewalk theater, public art, etc.

Cost:	Moderate
Time:	Short
Impact:	Local
Who:	Consultant Team
Obstacles:	Weather
Consider:	Route & walk length manageable & accessible to a wide range of participants.



In the development of the Municipal Smart City Street Light Conversion & Evolving Technology Guidebook, the consultant team led a small group of stakeholders on a route through downtown Saratoga Springs to identify lighting and safety issues at night.

Public Comment Hotline

A phone number that can receive voice messages and/or text messages can be set up to collect public comments. This is a good option for people who may not feel comfortable with email, social media, or online surveys. It also expands public participation to people who may not have reliable internet access because voice comments can be left with any type of phone and text messages can be sent with any type of mobile phone. CDTC utilized this strategy for *New Visions 2050* outreach when a global pandemic disrupted public participation plans. See Appendix D for guidance on how to use the CDTC Google Voice account.

Cost:	Minimal
Time:	Short
Impact:	Local/Region
Who:	CDTC staff
Consider:	Provide information about the relevant project and what types of comments are expected in the recorded message.



Virtual Public Involvement (VPI)

VPI means using online platforms to inform the public and receive feedback. This strategy is a cost-efficient way to disseminate information and collect input. VPI can include live or recorded presentations (such as webinars or livestreams), online surveys, comment forms, interactive maps and webpages with project information and key documents. It is an effective strategy for engaging with the public because it meets stakeholders and other individuals where they are, at their convenience, and where they feel most comfortable.

Cost:	Minimal to High
Time:	Indefinite
Impact:	Local/Region
Who:	Consultant Team or CDTC staff
Obstacles:	Lack of web-expertise or graphic design; Populations without reliable internet access
Consider:	Internet & ADA accessibility; Integrate with Web 2.0 tools

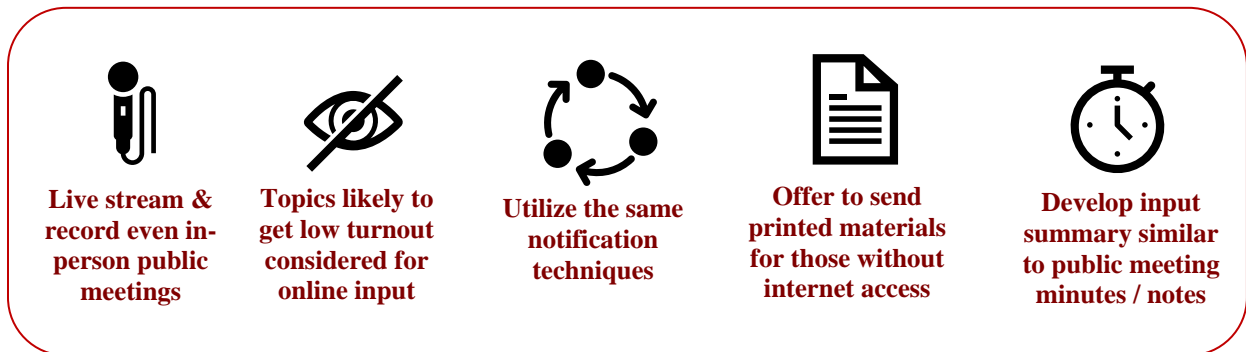
All CDTC supported studies and projects are required to have a project website or webpage. Websites may be limited to a description of the project and draft documents or include polls, surveys, crowdsourcing tools, photo galleries, project schedules, and other information. When using a third-party platform to develop a site, the address should be related to the study or project and as simple as possible (ex. www.787waterfrontstudy.blogspot.com). Studies and their project websites should be listed and linked to the CDTC website.

Crowdsourcing is an innovative approach used to engage the public in the decision-making process. It is a collaborative model that allows many individuals to act as information collectors and broadcasters to others in the crowd. CDTC successfully used an online crowdsourcing map tool to collect information on multi-use trail opportunities, barriers, and connections. The information received was used to develop the Capital District Trails Plan. Like other web-based tools, crowdsourcing encourages participation because it provides anonymity for individuals. Participating does not necessarily require individuals to leave their home and they can do it at their leisure.

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Committee used crowdsourcing to collect photos of important landmarks and sights throughout their region as a way of engaging residents in their region to participate in the One Region Forward initiative, a long-term plan for the Buffalo metropolitan area. Pittsburgh’s Allegheny County Port Authority used a crowdsourcing application to track bus locations and occupancy levels. Users could report late or crowded busses. While reporting this information provided vital data for planning purposes, users felt validation from having somewhere to voice their frustrations.

Web 2.0 refers to websites that rely on user-generated content and a participatory culture. These include social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. Web 2.0 tools should be integrated into any VPI strategy to help amplify program or project information and collect public input. CDTC utilizes multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

Additionally, conference call or web-call/conference platforms, like Zoom, can be integrated with Facebook Live and YouTube to increase the number of participants in a live, virtual presentation. Presentations can also be recorded and uploaded to YouTube where they can be easily accessed. As organizations struggle to attract many attendees to public meetings, it is vital for all public participation strategies to include VPI.



Other Strategies to Consider

There are a number of other strategies that have demonstrated success elsewhere and can enhance or supplement other activities. CDTC staff use innovative, out-of-the-box methods and select strategies that expand public outreach and feedback on programs and projects. Below are additional strategies that could be explored and used as part of CDTC-supported studies or programs:

- ◆ **Project brochures and fact sheets:** Hardcopy that provide a project overview and key information to educate the public about ongoing programs or study
- ◆ **Videos:** create short videos and upload to the CDTC YouTube Channel
- ◆ **Public presentations:** Attended education, community, or other events to speak or give a presentation
- ◆ **Bus Stop Theater:** audience moves from scene to scene using transit, engaging with the environment, and community the subject matter is addressing
- ◆ **Mobile transit lab:** Use a bus as a mobile educational center and gather input about transit needs
- ◆ **Street Teams:** attend events to gather input through interactive activities or surveys
- ◆ **Mobility Monopoly:** Similar to the New Visions funding poll, participants are given a budget and asked to prioritize spending on transportation improvements in their community
- ◆ **Text message:** input and feedback submitted via text
- ◆ **Happy hour engagement:** Residents write on coasters; text, tweet, or email at their convenience

Community Events & Partner Opportunities

There are ongoing and regularly scheduled events in the region that can be opportunities for public outreach and engagement. Additionally, there are organizations that have relationships with CDTC and have been instrumental in distributing and promoting public engagement opportunities. Below is a list of partners and events that CDTC has integrated into its public participation process in the past:

- ◆ Capital Roots Veggie Mobile
- ◆ Farmers Markets
- ◆ Saratoga County Planning & Zoning Conference
- ◆ CDRPC Planning & Zoning Conference / Webinar Series
- ◆ Coworking spaces (Ex. Bull Moose Club Albany, Troy Innovation Garage, etc.)
- ◆ Albany County Traffic Safety Awareness Show
- ◆ CDTA
- ◆ Colleges & Universities



The photo above is of the “Veggie Mobile” managed by Capital Roots. The Veggie Mobile visits senior and low-income housing developments to provide access to affordable, fresh, local fruits and vegetables.

Continuous Participation Opportunities

To ensure an inclusive and continuous public participation process, CDTC regularly offers opportunities for the public to provide feedback, information, and engagement in regional transportation planning. The valuable public input gathered through continuous outreach helps ensure that policy decisions, funding, and planning recommendations are fair and local priorities or concerns are considered.

CDTC designs outreach and engagement methods that can reach all stakeholder groups, are accessible, and user-friendly. Creating a process that centers and reaches the most vulnerable populations and stakeholder groups will ensure that the methods and tools employed work well for the broader community. The following is an array of techniques and methods used by CDTC to provide information and educate the public about the regional transportation planning process, and collect public feedback and opinions on proposed plans, programs, policies, and projects.

CDTC Committee Activities

The authority for all of CDTC's actions rests with the Policy Board, which operates by consensus. This Board consists of representatives from local governments, transportation agencies, authorities, and other organizations. The Policy Board meets quarterly (March, June, September, and December) on the first Thursday of the month at 3:00pm at the CDTC office and all meetings are open to the public. The public is welcome to comment on transportation related issues within the region at the beginning of every meeting.

CDTC welcomes the public to attend and comment on transportation related issues in the region. CDTC encourages those who are interested in attending and speaking to register to speak by calling (518) 458-2161 or emailing cdtc@cdtempo.org. Requests for auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations must be made at least seven business days prior to a meeting.

The Planning Committee provides technical expertise in the preparation and analysis of transportation plans and programs. Members are responsible for expressing the viewpoints of their own municipality or agency as well as the perspective of municipalities or agencies that are not current members. They are also responsible for keeping their Policy Board member and other elected officials and decision-makers aware of current transportation planning activities. Recommendations of the Policy Board are preceded by recommendations of the Planning Committee. In addition to its members, Planning Committee meetings are attended by other interested parties, including consulting firms, and members of the public. The meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month that the Policy Board does not meet, typically resulting in 8 meetings per year, at 9:30am at the CDTC office. Occasionally the meeting schedule may be adjusted to allow for public comment periods to expire prior to Planning committee action and additional meetings are scheduled as necessary as workload and/or program deadlines require.

There are various ongoing advisory committees which serve to provide CDTC's Policy Board and Planning Committees with in depth technical information on topics of particular interest or concern. These Committees are guided by CDTC staff and serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas, practices, and progress reports about various initiatives taking place at National, State, regional and local levels. There are 6 Advisory Committees, 4 of which are open to the public. Advisory committees open to the public:

- ◆ Bicycle and Pedestrian
- ◆ Freight and Goods Movement
- ◆ Regional Operations and Safety
- ◆ Regional Transportation and Coordination Committee

The Complete Streets and Equity Advisory Committee meetings are not open to the public due to the sensitivity of some of the topics discussed. However, reports and plans developed through these committees are reported to Planning Committee and Policy Board and made available to the public.

In addition to Committees, CDTC manages “working groups” or “task forces” as topics that need immediate discussion and coordination arise. These groups are generally not intended to be long term but can be activated at any time.

If the level of interest in a topic warrants the need for a permanent advisory committee, CDTC can designate one. CDTC currently has two working groups: ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plans and Smart Communities. There are also task forces related to various New Visions topics (ex. Infrastructure, Transit, etc.). Reports and notes from these meetings are made available to the public and are posted on CDTC’s website.

How Does CDTC Notify the Public About Public Input Opportunities?

-  Email
-  CDTC website
-  Facebook
-  Twitter
-  Press release

Scheduling and Reporting Committee Activities

While some Committee meetings, such as Planning Committee and Policy Board, are scheduled in the beginning of each year, additional meetings and other CDTC Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled as needed. CDTC advertises and publicizes meeting announcements in a timely manner with reasonable access to meeting information. Notices are published at least 10 calendar days prior to a scheduled public participation activity, and include information such as date, time, location, and description of the activity. Meeting announcements are posted to the CDTC website and promote via email list(s), social media, and media coverage, on occasion.

CDTC designates a note-taker at all Advisory Committee meetings. Advisory Committee notes are posted to the corresponding webpage on the CDTC website within 60 days of meetings. Advisory Committee and Task Force Meetings that are not open to the public do not post meeting notes but regularly provide reports or bulletins on their activities.





Committee	Description	Schedule
Policy Board	Meetings are held quarterly on the 1 st Thursday of the month at 3:00 pm at the CDTC Office.	March June September December
Planning Committee	Meetings are held at 9:30 am on the first Wednesday of the month at the CDTC Office.	January February April May July August October November
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Meetings are held the 2 nd Tuesday of the month at 9:00 am at the CDTC Office	January February March April May June July August September October November December
Freight Advisory Committee	This committee meets regularly and includes representatives of the freight & logistics industry & public agencies and is open to the public.	As needed

Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program

CDTC’s Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program, referred to as “The Linkage Program,” provides consultant or CDTC staff technical assistance for joint regional-local planning initiatives that link transportation and land use. It is a key implementation activity of *New Visions*. Federal Planning (PL) funds for the Linkage Program are set aside in the UPWP to support planning studies chosen through an annual, competitive solicitation. As of March 2020, CDTC has funded 92 collaborative, jointly-funded studies since the program was launched twenty years ago. Study sponsors have included 41 separate urban, suburban, and rural municipalities and counties as well as non-profits and other public entities and an investment of roughly \$6.5 million in federal, state, and local funds.

This program is the cornerstone of CDTC’s local planning assistance and public outreach efforts. Each Linkage study requires a comprehensive and meaningful public participation process which is documented in all final reports. Each study is managed by CDTC staff, in partnership with the municipality. A “Study Advisory Committee” (SAC) is assembled for each study, consisting of state, regional and local government representatives, residents, and other stakeholders. The SAC acts as a community liaison and helps identify, develop, and promote public outreach and engagement opportunities. This helps CDTC reach critical populations and stakeholder groups.

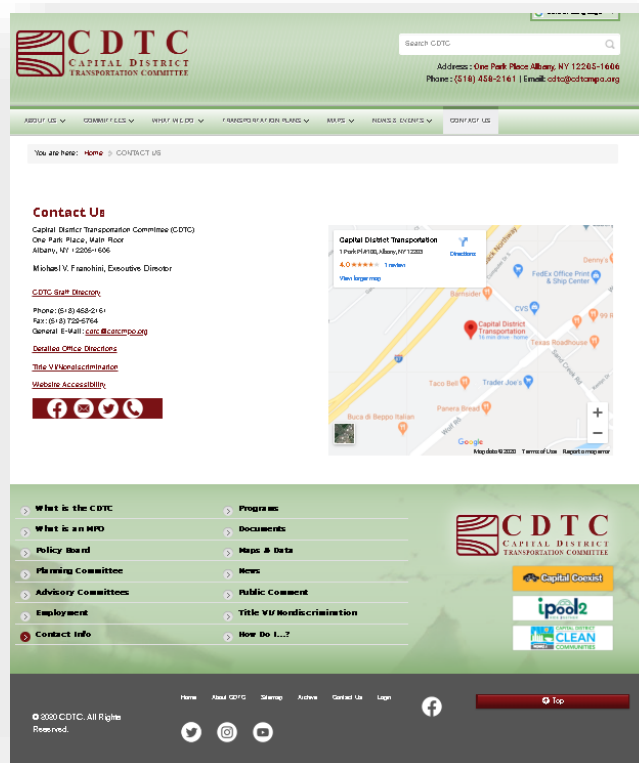
As communities change and technology and public outreach strategies have evolved, CDTC has expanded its public participation requirements for Linkage studies. Every study is required to include a public participation plan within the scope of work. Staff conducts an Environmental Justice and equity scan prior to scope development which is used in developing the public participation requirements. Consultants are encouraged to build and expand on the minimum requirements, based on the study area’s demographics, structure, and issues and will develop a final public participation plan for use throughout the study process. At a minimum, every study is required to have at least one public meeting and a 30-day public comment period following the release of the final draft document. However, study public participation plans typically go beyond the minimum and include tools such as use of project websites, demonstration projects or design charrettes, surveys and attendance at community-based events to collect public feedback.

Every Linkage Program study is required to comply with CDTC’s Public Participation Policy. All final products and documents related to Linkage Program studies are posted on the CDTC website in a user-friendly and accessible format. Hardcopies of documents are also available upon request.

On the Web

As technology has evolved and the internet has become an essential tool for communication, CDTC has created and maintained multiple online platforms. CDTC's central online tool is its website, www.cdtcmpo.org. To the greatest extent possible, the CDTC website is organized and formatted to be comprehensive, user-friendly, up-to-date, and accessible. The website clearly displays important planning programs and documents, as well as news and announcements.

CDTC has integrated other web-based tools into its website and public participation process. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other software provide visually-engaging and interactive ways for the public to explore maps, graphs, and tables, and get relevant information. In addition to these software tools, CDTC collaborates with the NYSDOT's 511 statewide commuter information website (www.511ny.org) to promote Capital Moves, a web-based carpool matching software, and maintains a separate website for the Capital District Clean Communities Coalition, www.capitalcleancommunities.org. As mentioned earlier, many Linkage Program studies have their own project website which is typically maintained by the contracted consultant team, in collaboration with CDTC and municipal staff.



The public is encouraged to submit comments or contact CDTC staff via email. The general email address, cdtc@cdtcmpo.org, goes to the Executive Director and then is forwarded to other staff, depending upon the topic of the comment. The "Contact Us" page on the website also includes information about where the CDTC office is located, a link to Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act information, website accessibility guidance, social media information, and other methods for contacting staff.

Social media, or Web 2.0, are sites that allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community. CDTC maintains several social media accounts including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Social media has

allowed CDTC to expand its public outreach and participation opportunities and create an atmosphere where Capital Region residents and stakeholders feel invested in CDTC's initiatives and on a greater scale, the region's success. An advantage of social media over traditional communication tools is its ability to communicate urgent alerts and other information and solicit feedback in seconds. It also helps CDTC communicate a relatable voice and make authentic connections with the public by being smart and knowledgeable but also down to earth and a little bit goofy.

CDTC regularly shares information about meetings, transportation-related events, and news items to Facebook and Twitter. It develops content based on current events, transportation planning trends, research, local context, and CDTC's major products, programs, and tasks. CDTC adheres to the following social media policy/guidelines:

Websites maintained by CDTC:

www.cdtempo.org

www.capitalcleancommunities.org

CDTC on social media:



CapitalDistrictMPO



MPOCDTC



MPOCDTC

- ◆ Social media posts and content development will be the responsibility of the staff person(s) assigned by the Executive Director. The Executive Director will make a final determination on any items that may be questionable as related to this policy.
- ◆ The most appropriate use of CDTC social media is to provide relevant, timely, and informative content to the public.
- ◆ CDTC will develop a social media schedule that provides guidance on content development, safety campaigns, and cross-promotion with its primary partners/stakeholders.
- ◆ Information received by social media users in the form of comments, replies, direct messages, tags, or mentions will not be considered official public comment. This information will be treated as feedback and discussion and summarized, when necessary, for CDTC's Policy Board, Planning Committee, or other advisory committees.
- ◆ CDTC will moderate conversation on CDTC social media and delete comments that violate the CDTC stated terms for appropriate use to the extent practicable. Comments received containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:
 - Violent, obscene, profane, hateful, or racist comments
 - Comments that threaten or defame any person or organization
 - Solicitations, advertisements, or endorsements of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency
 - Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity
 - Multiple off-topic posts by a single user

- Repetitive posts copied and pasted by multiple users
- ◆ All use of social media will comply with federal, state, and CDTC related laws and/or policies regarding the sharing of information, collection of data, and archiving.
- ◆ CDTC will not collect or store the personal information (name, email, location, gender, etc.) of social media users except when required by law.
- ◆ When appropriate, content posted to CDTC social media sites will also be available on the CDTC website.
- ◆ Whenever possible, content posted to CDTC social media sites should contain links directing users back to the CDTC main websites for in-depth information, forms, documents, mechanisms to submit official comment, or any other services necessary.
- ◆ There may be instances where sharing articles, websites, or online information produced by other sources is appropriate and related to CDTC’s projects and tasks. CDTC may share these items as “information only” and does not endorse, support or have responsibility for the accuracy for these items.

Public Meetings, Presentations, and Community Events

Members of the CDTC, its committees and staff regularly agree to requests to speak before community or business groups on any transportation related topic. Members and staff also have been invited to present different CDTC projects or processes at state, national, and international conferences as well as to staff display tables at state and regional events to promote CDTC’s activities. These presentations and display tables are very informative and invite interested people or groups to contact CDTC for further information and comment allowing a wider audience to become familiar with CDTC programs, policies, and principles. CDTC will continue to fulfill requests to speak and participate in events as schedules and budget allow.



Electric Vehicle Ride & Drive Event at the Honest Weight Food Coop in Albany

CDTC Newsletter and Bulletins

CDTC launched a newsletter, *In Motion*, in the Spring of 2008. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide information about transportation planning initiatives and projects throughout the Capital Region. The newsletter features articles on CDTC’s major products but also provides some insight into other tasks and local programs and projects. The newsletter is printed and distributed to an extensive mailing list via USPS. It is also posted to the CDTC website where it can be easily viewed and/or downloaded. In addition to *InMotion*, CDTC maintains an Environmental Justice Project Bulletin. This bulletin is a regularly updated list of construction and

planning projects in Environmental Justice Areas. It can be found on the Equity Advisory Committee page on the CDTC website.

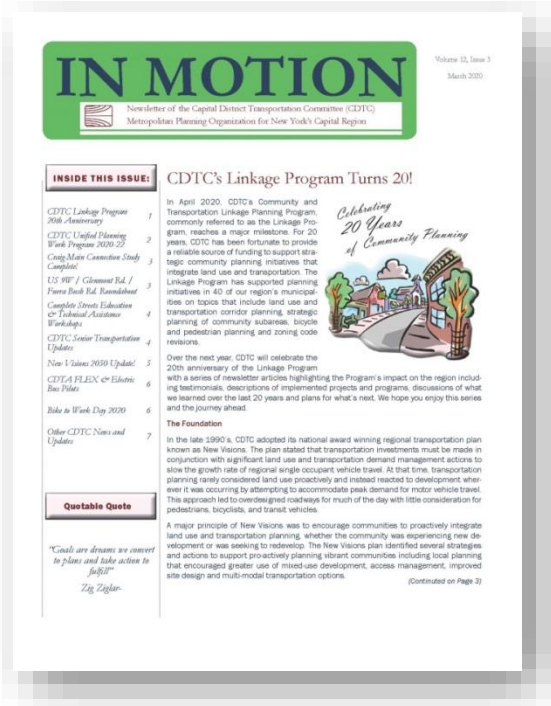
Accessing CDTC

The CDTC office is located on Park Place, a small side road off Wolf Road in the Town of Colonie, a regionally-central location. The building is setback over 400 feet from Wolf Road but accessible by a vehicle and/or transit. Ample parking is available for visitors, including designated handicap parking. Visitors accessing the office by transit have 4 CDTA bus route (#1, #117, #125, and #190) options that stop at or near 80 Wolf Road, the building directly in front of the CDTC office. There are two other routes, including an express route (#355 and #905), that stop at or near Colonie Center and then connect via the previous mentioned routes, or are a 1-mile walk.

Upon request of at least 7-days, CDTC staff is available to meet visitors arriving by transit at the nearest transit stop and accompany them to the office. Additionally, there is a bike rack located at the rear entrance of the building for those arriving by bicycle. Electric vehicle charging is also available. Office directions can be found at:

https://www.cdcmpo.org/images/cdtcstaff/Directions_to_CDTC.pdf.

Within the CDTC office, staff has taken actions to ensure all visitors can access offices and the conference room comfortably. Ample space is available in the office waiting area and there can be space reserved in the front of the conference room, at all meetings open to the public, for accessible seating. Bathrooms are located on the first floor and visitors who need an accessible toilet will be directed to the second floor, via an accessible elevator. Additionally, staff is conscious of maintaining space around closets, doorways, and near light switches to maintain an accessible office.



Resiliency: Preparation & Adaptation

In the case that the CDTC Office must close due to unforeseen events, such as a pandemic, extreme weather, or other threat, CDTC will continue to pursue its public participation goals. CDTC is resilient and can shift to remote operations seamlessly.

In the case that CDTC staff is working remotely and it is unsafe to have an in-person meeting, all scheduled meetings that are open to the public, will be conducted virtually (ex. Zoom). These meetings will either be live streamed to the CDTC YouTube channel and/or Facebook page, or recorded and uploaded to YouTube afterwards. Virtual meetings allow the public to continue to attend meetings and engage in the planning process. Members of the public that wish to speak at Planning Committee and Policy Board meetings will be required to contact CDTC and register for the virtual meeting in advance.

Ongoing planning initiatives and studies will shift to virtual public involvement. CDTC staff is encouraged to include at least one online or virtual public involvement strategy in project scopes to reduce disruptions to the process in the case of unforeseen events.

CDTC staff will coordinate with partner organizations to promote virtual events and distribute information to communities about ongoing initiatives and how to comment or contact CDTC. Partner organizations can use their own communication channels to amplify CDTC's message and/or distribute or deliver flyers, brochures, or other media to community members.

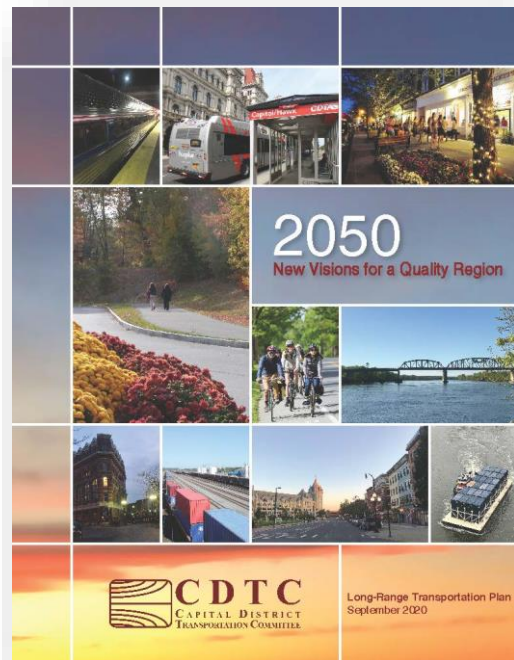
CDTC Products & Public Participation

There are three key products developed by the MPO, led by CDTC staff. The “MPO” refers to all of CDTC’s planning partners in the Capital Region. These include NYS Department of Transportation, NYS Thruway Authority, County Governments, and Representatives from local towns, cities, and villages, the Albany County Airport Authority, Albany Port District Commission, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Capital District Transportation Authority, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, CDTC Committees and Task Forces.

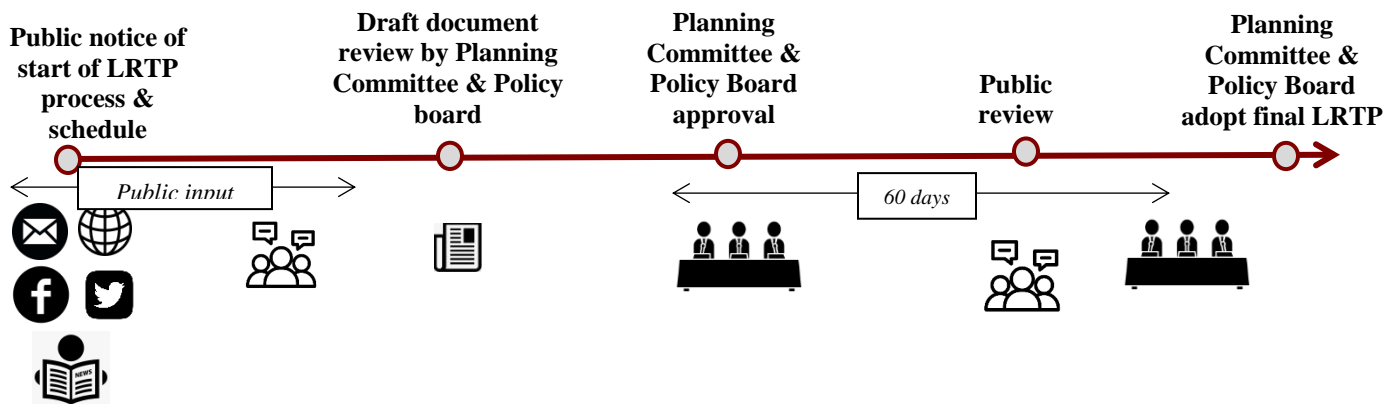
	Who Develops?	Planning Committee & Policy Board Approval	Time / Horizon	Contents	Update Requirements	Public Review Period
MTP	MPO	✓	20 years	Future goals, strategies, & projects	Every 5 years	25-days
TIP	MPO	✓	5 years	Transportation investments	Every 4 years	25-days
STIP	NYSDOT	-	4 years	Transportation investments	Every 4 years	45-days
UPWP	MPO	✓	1 or 2 years	Planning studies & tasks	Every 2 years	25-days
PPP	MPO	✓	Periodic review & update	Public engagement strategies & goals for incorporating public input and comments into the planning process	With LRTP	45-days*
Planning Studies	MPO	If being incorporated into the LRTP	-	Transportation & land use planning recommendations	-	25-days
Title VI Plan	MPO	✓	Periodic review	Strategies for compliance with Civil Rights Act	After LRTP adoption	25-days
Congestion Management Plan	MPO	✓	20-years	Goals & objectives for mitigating regional congestion	Every 4 years	25-days
Conformity Analysis	MPO	✓	20-years	Regional emissions analysis	After LRTP draft released	30-days
Continuing Operations Plan	MPO	✓		Policy & guidance for critical MPO functions		
ADA Self-Analysis	MPO	✓	Periodic review & update	Program access issues related to CDTC’s building and facilities	With LRTP	25-days

Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan

CDTC refers to its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as *New Visions*. The 15 planning and investment principles are the core of *New Visions* and lay the groundwork for the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and other CDTC planning documents. A RTP must have at least a 20-year planning horizon that reflects the application of programmatic transportation goals to project prioritization.



Development of the RTP calls for multiple points for public input, starting with initial proposal, process and schedule for RTP development. After that, at key “milestones” that are defined at the inception of the process, the “reasonable access” provisions outlined above are followed. Mechanisms for ongoing input focus on the Planning Committee. Public participation strategies reviewed and described in this document should also be used. Other public participation opportunities listed above can be, and often are, used. **Draft action documents are subject to a 60-day public review period.** Policy action is considered after the Planning Committee makes its recommendations.



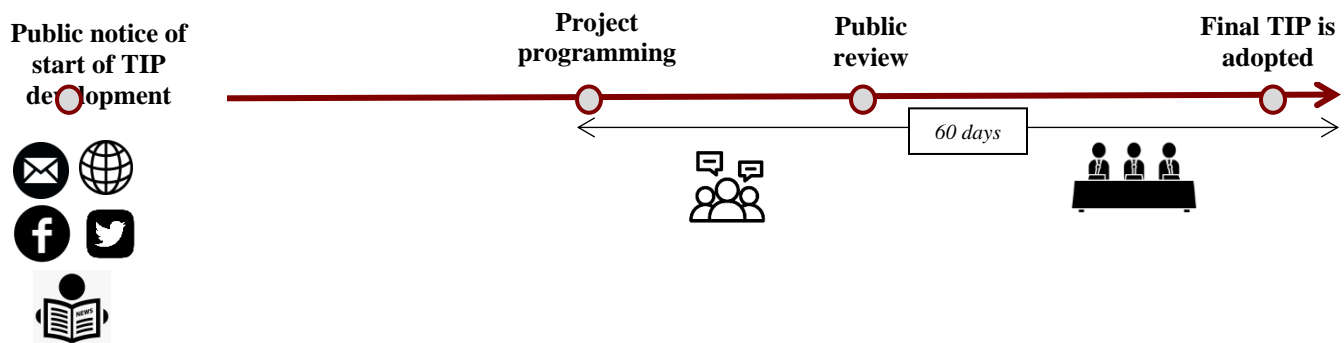
Transportation Improvement Program and its Amendments

In the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development, public involvement begins at the start of the TIP process. CDTC must release a public notice announcing:

- ◆ Timeline
- ◆ Amount of money available for new programming
- ◆ Project eligibility limitations
- ◆ Project screening & evaluation criteria

The second major point of public review is the result of the project evaluations, usually accompanied by a preliminary recommended program of projects. This is a formal 60-day public review period following the “reasonable access” guidelines above. A summary document is used to disseminate the information widely, with the full document containing detailed project listings available upon request, available at local libraries (see <https://www.cdcmpo.org/images/upwp/Libraries.pdf>) and posted on the CDTC’s website. CDTC will issue a press release, distribute postcards to its mailing list, and post information online and on social media to notify the public of their opportunity to provide comment.

Lastly, notice of availability of the final adopted program is given and the adopted TIP is made readily available to interested parties. The final TIP includes disposition of comments received during the public comment period. A brief article describing the process and outlining the highlights of the TIP will be included in an *InMotion* Newsletter immediately following adoption.



Amendments to the TIP are made regularly and handled by CDTC. An amendment is required when the project’s fund source, cost, and/or scope need to be changed based on unforeseen circumstances. Requirements for minor and major TIP amendments can be found on the next page.

Guidelines for TIP Changes (as of July 2020)

Type of Change	Responsibility		
	CDTA or NYSDOT	Planning Committee ¹	Policy Board ²
(1) Addition or Deletion			
(a) Addition of project from regional set-asides	-	Approve	-
(b) Addition/deletion of project under or equal to \$0.500M	-	Approve	-
(c) Addition/deletion of project over \$0.500	-	Recommend	Approve
(d) Addition/deletion of project element less than or equal to \$0.250M ³	Approve	-	-
(e) Addition/deletion of project element over \$0.250M ³	-	Approve	-
(f) Addition of STP Enhancement Project after approval by state advisory committee	-	Approve	-
(g) Combining 2 or more existing projects	-	Approve	-
(h) Other	-	Recommend	Approve

Type of Change	Responsibility		
	CDTA or NYSDOT	Planning Committee ¹	Policy Board ²
(2) Scope and Cost			
(a) Over 25% (minimum \$250k) or over \$500k ⁴	-	Approve	-
(b) Over 50% (minimum \$1M) or over \$3M ⁴	-	Recommend	Approve
(c) Scope change necessitating recalculation of system-level air quality	-	Recommend	Approve
(d) Other significant scope change ⁵	-	Approve	-
(e) Other	Approve	-	-

Type of Change	Responsibility		
	CDTA or NYSDOT	Planning Committee ¹	Policy Board ²
(3) Fund Source Change			
(a) Change from any federal fund source to NHPP	Approve	-	-
(b) Change from one STP fund source to another	Approve	-	-
(c) Change between any other Title I federal fund sources ⁶	-	Approve	-
(d) Change from federal to non-federal fund source	-	Recommend	Approve
(e) Change from non-federal to federal fund source	-	Recommend	Approve
(f) Change between Title III federal fund sources	-	Recommend	Approve
(g) any other federal fund source change	-	Recommend	Approve



Type of Change	Responsibility		
	CDTA or NYSDOT	Planning Committee ¹	Policy Board ²
(4) Schedule Change			
(a) All affected project elements are contained in the first 4 years of the TIP before and after the schedule change ⁷	Approve	-	-
(b) Any other schedule change	-	Approve	-

¹Changes requiring Planning Committee action are minor TIP amendments. The Planning Committee may defer approval to Policy Board, if desired.

² Changes requiring Policy Board action are major TIP amendments.

³ A project element is a phase of the project, such as construction or right-of-way acquisition.

⁴ Percentages are of total project 5-year plus committed column federal cost. Use of toll credits increases the percentage.

⁵ A significant scope change is a significant change to the project limits, type or scope.

⁶ Change from a capital fund source to Metropolitan Planning Funds (PL) requires UPWP action by CDTC.

⁷ This includes funds programmed in the “Committed” column of the TIP that are not obligated by September 30 of the committed fiscal year.

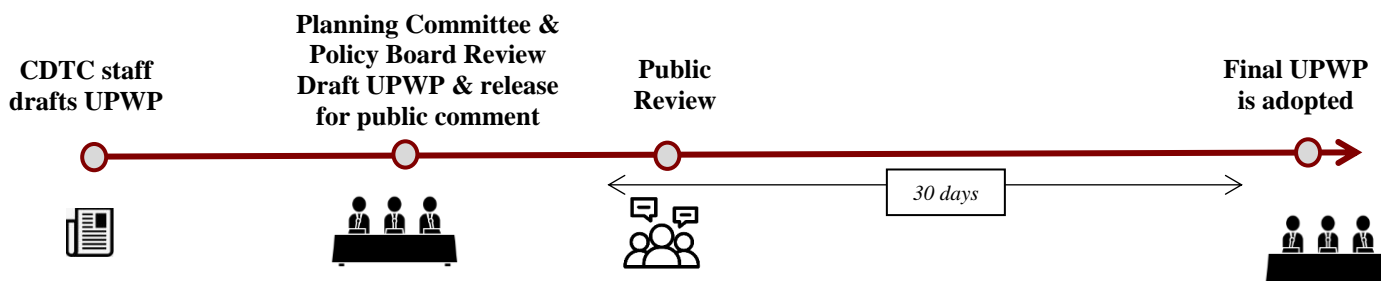
Unified Planning Work Program and its Amendments

CDTC’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) documents the transportation planning tasks to be undertaken for a 2-year period. Each task listed in the UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completion, costs and the source(s) of funding. The UPWP planning activities are driven by the 15 New Visions Planning and Investment Principles. The UPWP describes the MPO funded (and in-kind service matching) activities of the CDTC staff, CDTA, NYSDOT, and CDRPC staffs, and staffs of other participating agencies and local governments.

Inclusion on the UPWP is required for all tasks for which the FHWA PL and Statewide Planning and Research (SPR), and FTA, or Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) systems planning funds are to be used. Additional CDTC staff funds (state, county, local) are also detailed in the work program. The UPWP, the off-year addendum and all amendments over \$100,000 require a formal 30-day public review process that complies with “reasonable access” guidelines.

The UPWP is adopted every two years. To assure funding is available for the beginning of the fiscal year (April 1), the UPWP development process should begin in the fall of the previous year and be adopted by the Policy Board in March. The CDTC staff leads the development of the UPWP. Staff collects input from participating agencies and the Policy Board adopts the UPWP at the recommendation of the Planning Committee. The adopted UPWP includes task and auditable budgets, identification of agency responsibilities, and preliminary grant budgets. NYSDOT submits the requests for federal funding to FHWA and FTA on behalf of CDTC.

Routine updates are made to the UPWP. These include changes in project scope, timing, or priority and create the need to update the UPWP throughout the year. For tasks carried over from the previous Program, the UPWP is often based on rough estimates of how much work will be carried over. These estimates may have been made several months before the end of the year, and may prove to be inaccurate, as unforeseen circumstances and events can impact tasks. Also, verification of fringe and indirect rates may warrant change to the adopted auditable budget.



UPWP changes can be classified into 5 types and the guidelines for approval of these changes are in the following table.

Type of Change	Planning Committee	Policy Board
1. New contracts	--	All
2. Addition or deletion of a task		All
3. Budget shift within one contract & task category	--	--
4. Budget shift within one contractor & across task category	All	--
5. Budget shift within one contract & across auditable budget categories	All	--

Continuing Assessment

Evaluation is a valuable component of any successful plan or project. During staff meetings and project debriefs, strategies are discussed for improving progress toward public participation goals. The CDTC public participation strategies will be evaluated on a continuing basis and the Public Participation Plan will be updated as needed.

CDTC staff will prepare a Public Participation Report each year that highlights public outreach events, initiatives, and strategies. The report will also summarize input received from the public and measure CDTC's reach and effectiveness in communicating with the public. This report will be presented to and reviewed by the CDTC Planning Committee and Policy Board. CDTC also publishes a UPWP Progress Report on a quarterly basis that outlines progress made on each CDTC program, including public participation.

CONTACT US



Online at www.cdtcmpo.org

Learn more about how long range planning works, take surveys, & sign up for our newsletter & email list to get updates on planning initiatives in the Capital Region & comment opportunities.



In person

Invite us to attend an event or meeting in your community by contacting our community outreach staff.



Become a citizen planner

Participate in CDTC's Citizen Planner training, plan & hold your own *New Visions 2050* meeting with your friends, family, or other community in the Capital Region. For more information on how to host your own "meeting-in-a-box" email newvision@cdtcmpo.org or call (518) 458-2161.



On social media

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram to learn about transportation news & when we'll be out in the community (@MPOCDTC).



Request Printed Material

If you don't have digital access & prefer information in paper form, you can make that request by calling the number below.



Questions?

Contact our community outreach staff at cdtc@CDTCMPO.org or (518) 458-2161.

