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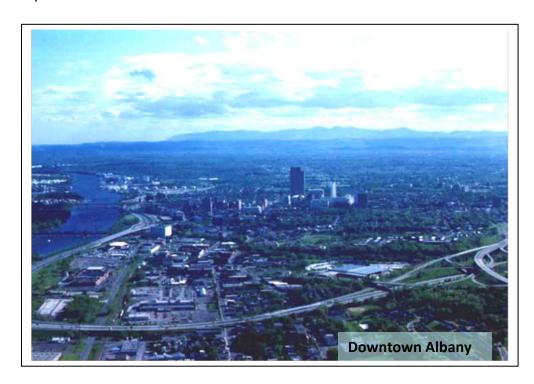
Cover Photo: The Mohawk River looking north to Saratoga County from the old Niskayuna rail station on the Mohawk-Hudson Bike/Hike trail. Photo by CDTC staff.

Other credits: Downtown Albany photo by NYSDOT. Rensselaer Rail Station photo by CDTA. NY 5 visualization produced by Community Design & Architecture for CDTC.

1. The Basics

A basic understanding of the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) can be distilled to the following:

- CDTC is a forum for local elected officials and transportation representatives in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties (excluding the Town of Moreau and the Village of South Glens Falls).
- CDTC is required by federal law and supported with federal funding.
- Federal transportation funding controlled by the consensus decisions of CDTC is substantial -- about \$75 million per year.
- The federal government does not direct or intervene in CDTC's decisions.
- CDTC's priorities are guided by its multi-disciplined, "New Visions 2050" long-range, metropolitan transportation plan.
- CDTC has enjoyed a high degree of local success and national recognition due to a highly-collaborative environment of mutual trust and respect.
- CDTC requires unanimous consent of affected parties, a process that hinges on strong staff work and deliberations by a Planning Committee prior to recommendations for Policy Board action.



2. What is the CDTC?

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is a designated "Metropolitan Planning Organization" (MPO) fulfilling key provisions of federal transportation law. CDTC has its origins in the Federal Highway Act of 1962 that first established a requirement for a cooperative planning process in all urbanized areas over 50,000. Congress was concerned that local elected officials have a say in the major Interstate highway construction program underway at the time. CDTC was formed as the Capital District Transportation Study in 1964 by written agreement between New York State and each county, city, town and village in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties (except the Town of Moreau and the Village of South Glens Falls).

Over the years, Congress has added additional responsibilities and resources to strengthen the MPO concept, allowing each region of the nation to tailor the transportation planning structure, process and products to meet local needs. CDTC has matured over the years while remaining flexible to meet changing circumstances. Today, CDTC's Policy Board of local elected officials and transportation agency representatives guides an annual staff budget of about \$2,000,000 and maintains a five-year implementation program of over \$600,000,000 in federally-aided highway and transit projects. These projects are selected from those submitted by dozens of municipalities and other sponsors, using CDTC's established regional transportation plan for guidance.

To put "teeth" in the MPO process, the federal government will not approve funding for transportation planning, construction or operation anywhere in the Capital District unless the project comes from CDTC's adopted long-range plan or short-range program. The current legal authority for such a significant role lies in federal transportation legislation including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL – also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) in November 2021 as well as previous legislation including Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) in June 2012, and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in 2015.

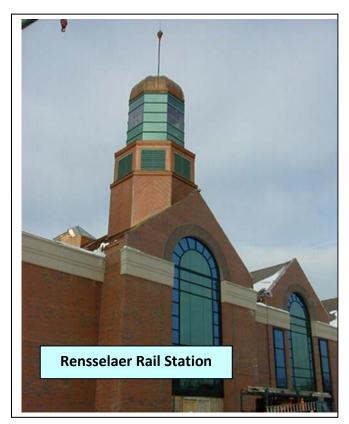
By law CDTC must maintain a long-range regional transportation plan, a short-range Transportation Improvement Program, a Unified Planning Work Program for planning coordination and a Congestion Management Process (CMP).

When the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) repaves the Northway, when the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) purchases buses, when the City of Schenectady reconstructs Erie Boulevard -- odds are that federal transportation funds are involved. If federal funds are involved, then CDTC's action has preceded the project, probably by several years.

3. What Kinds of Subjects Does CDTC Address?

Both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and CDTC's practices encourage discussion of a broad spectrum of transportation, land use and economic development issues. There are very few issues related to transportation in which CDTC is not involved. Safety and complete streets planning, freight issues, bike and pedestrian planning, human service agency transportation, community strategic plans, Generic Environmental Impact Statement traffic reviews, fixed route and bus rapid transit planning, transportation demand management, computerized traffic signal control, airport access, suburban retrofits and downtown redevelopment are representative of the range of CDTC's current planning studies, technical assistance and/or federal-aid construction projects.

CDTC's New Visions 2050 plan elevates consideration of all these issues to the same level as more traditional concerns about traffic and pavement conditions.



It is important to recognize that there is a distinction among these subjects in terms of how CDTC is involved. CDTC staff is available to provide technical assistance in all subject areas, but CDTC's decision-making authority is generally limited to decisions related to federal transportation planning and implementation funds. For instance, CDTC staff can assist a community in updating its comprehensive plan or in reviewing a traffic impact study for a new development, but CDTC does not have the authority to approve or reject the products of such efforts.

CDTC's Policy Board, however, does establish policies, principles and priorities for the use of federal transportation aid. Because federal funding is often critical to implementation of

plans, CDTC can be quite influential in encouraging careful and creative planning at the state and local level.

4. How Does CDTC Work?

The question of how CDTC works can be described two ways -- once in terms of CDTC's "corporate culture" and a second way in terms of structure.

Perhaps the more important description is that of CDTC's corporate culture or personality. Through a conscious effort over many years, the CDTC members and staff have cultivated an MPO environment at CDTC that is often characterized in very favorable terms of collaboration, innovation, technical credibility and mutual trust. It is common for CDTC and its members to discuss and act in ways that are not typical of MPOs nationwide. Shared ownership of major decisions is a characteristic of this culture.

CDTC is also a true collaboration in which the strength of the whole also resides in the responsibilities of the parts. The notion of agencies such as the New York State Department of Transportation, Capital District Transportation Authority, New York State Thruway Authority, Albany County Airport Authority, Albany Port District Commission, and Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) adding their substantial authority in a collaborative fashion to that of county, city, town, and village officials is quite remarkable.

Some part of the reason for the collaborative environment can be found in CDTC's requirement of consensus on all actions. Consensus is defined by CDTC as unanimity of all affected parties. Over the years, the protection afforded all parties by requiring unanimous consent has provided a safe environment within which to create, innovate, compromise, and establish new roles.

Another reason for the collaborative environment is our regional perspective. Projects, studies, and programs with regional impacts receive additional credit, score higher in our evaluations and are more often funded.

As a result, CDTC is often held up as a model of how an MPO should operate -- with the state working collaboratively with local governments to establish collective priorities around the MPO table, with the transit authority using its structure to help implement the MPO's plan, with local governments addressing local issues in a regional fashion. Over the years, CDTC has been honored: by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the American Planning Association (APA) for Transportation Planning Excellence with "Implementing the Regional Plan: The Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program"; and by the national Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization (AMPO) for "Outstanding Achievement in Metropolitan Transportation Planning" for areas over 200,000 population.

CDTC's reputation and past successes challenge members and staff to continue cooperative and technically sound practices into the future. Certainly, it is because of the environment of trust that sensitive issues are brought to the CDTC table, perhaps more frequently than is the case in other metropolitan areas.

5. How is CDTC Structured?

The second way of describing how CDTC works is to describe the CDTC structure. The key elements of CDTC's structure are the Policy Board, the Planning Committee and the staff.

Ultimate authority for all of CDTC's actions rests with the Policy Board. From its origins in 1964, CDTC has maintained the philosophy of direct membership for chief elected officials at the county and city level, together with the New York State Department of Transportation (because these governments own the vast bulk of the highway system eligible for federal aid). Later, the Capital District Transportation Authority, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, New York State Thruway Authority, Albany County Airport Authority and Albany Port District Commission were added as permanent voting members. Towns and villages are represented permanently through the counties, as well as through two additional Policy Board positions that rotate from community to community on an annual basis. In 2003, permanent membership was established for all municipalities with 50,000 or more residents adding the Town of Colonie to the board as the second-largest municipality in the region. Federal agencies and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation participate in an advisory capacity.

CDTC's Policy Board typically meets four times a year, usually at 3:00 PM on the first Thursday of March, June, September and December. (Strict adherence to this schedule is not possible.) Members can be represented by alternates; an alternate has voting privileges and counts toward a quorum if designated in writing by the member. Representation by the member or an alternate is very important; lack of representation may leave CDTC without a quorum.

CDTC's members are encouraged to bring forth issues and concerns at any time -- they are expected to be active participants in the process. Raising concerns during meetings or discussing them with other Policy Board members, Planning Committee members or the CDTC staff between meetings makes CDTC more effective, responsive and relevant.

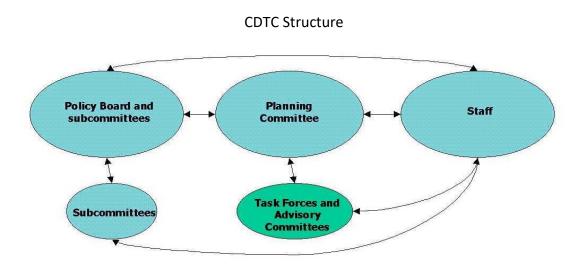
The second major component of CDTC's structure is the Planning Committee. In order for a quarterly calendar of policy meetings and operation by consensus to succeed, much of the work necessary to develop recommendations about plans and programs is delegated to CDTC's Planning Committee. The Planning Committee is composed largely of technical counterparts to the policy members of the CDTC. For example, mayors serve at the policy level while city engineers or planning directors serve on the Planning Committee. (The at-large Planning Committee member may or may not come from the town or village currently serving on the Policy Board.)

The Planning Committee usually meets at 9:30 AM on the first Wednesday of January, February, April, May, July, August, October and November to provide input and direction to planning efforts. The Planning Committee also develops recommendations for action by the Policy Board. Beyond this, it has the delegated authority to approve small-scale changes to CDTC's work program or to the Transportation Improvement Program.

The third element of the CDTC structure is the CDTC staff. CDTA serves as CDTC's "host agency". (This is to accommodate the fact that CDTC is not established as a legal entity separate from its member governments and agencies. It also saves considerable cost since CDTA provides our human resources, payroll, purchasing and other administrative services.) By agreement, however, CDTA defers virtually all of the authority over the staff and contractual activities to CDTC's Policy Board. The Policy Board maintains an Administrative & Financial (A & F) Standing Subcommittee composed of the CDTC Chair and other appointees. This subcommittee handles CDTC personnel and housekeeping issues on behalf of the Policy Board.

Staffing plans are established by the A & F Subcommittee and the work program of the staff is set annually through CDTC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) developed by the Planning Committee and adopted by the Policy Board. The UPWP also describes the federally-assisted transportation planning work by CDTA, NYSDOT, CDRPC, local governments and others as part of the overall CDTC effort.

The CDTC staff members serve as resources to the Policy Board and Planning Committee, both carrying out the assignments given to the staff by the Policy Board and Planning Committee through the UPWP and also identifying opportunities for additional efforts or improved techniques. 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 in public meetings. The trust level that exists in the CDTC environment has produced a very stable staff situation that encourages initiative and creativity.



6. What is the New Visions 2050 Plan?

The New Visions 2050 plan is the adopted long term metropolitan transportation plan for the Capital District. The plan has its origins in the 1997 New Visions for Capital District Transportation plan and has been updated several times. The initial New Visions development effort, spanning nearly four years, represented a significant effort to expand the level of public participation and scope of issues covered in a regional transportation plan.

In September 2020, CDTC adopted the New Visions 2050 plan, reaffirming major regional transportation planning and project programming policies including:

- Preserving the existing transportation system (at least in current condition) is CDTC's top priority.
- Funding available to improve the system must be used to make steady improvements in all subject areas -- pavement condition, safety, bike and pedestrian access, transit access, goods movement, and others, regardless of funding levels.
- The basic purpose of the transportation system is to preserve and enhance community quality of life and economic and environmental health. Economic development, community compatibility and similar objectives are therefore legitimate purposes of the transportation program.
- Transit plays a vital role in the region. The region committed to building 40 miles
 of bus rapid transit but will explore options to determine both merit and support for expansion of transit commitments in the region.
- The Northway will remain the region's most significant congestion issue; management will be the prime focus while alternative long-term strategies that provide alternatives and maintain the road's interstate function are explored.
- Technology will offer significant benefits and CDTC will budget resources for "Intelligent Transportation System" investments.
- Careful facility design is essential to ensure consideration of the needs of all modes and contribute to community plans.
- Modest but steady growth in the level of resources for transportation is required to achieve a modest set of long-range goals.
- Congestion management is dependent upon unprecedented success with both creative site design and urban revitalization. CDTC hopes to reduce travel growth through better planning.

New Visions 2050 contains 15 planning and investment principles which guide decision-making at CDTC.

New Visions 2050 Planning & Investment Principles



Since 1997, substantial or complete implementation has been achieved in a wide variety of the recommended actions in the "New Visions" plans. Among the recommended items already completed or advanced are:

- Built I-87 Exit 3
- Supported CDTA in developing a transit system that was named Best Mid-Size Public Transportation System in North America by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in 2017
- Completed regional plans for Trails, Freight and Goods Movement and Local Road Safety
- Created an Equity Advisory Committee
- Completed a Local Bridge Preservation Study
- Built the regional trail network at a rate of 7 miles per year
- Developed a Local Road Safety Action Plan
- Incorporation of a project "merit score" in the Transportation Improvement Program prioritization process
- Evaluated alternatives for I-787 in the I-787/ Hudson Waterfront Corridor Study
- Developed a Zero Emission Vehicle Plan (EV Charging Plugs Plan)
- Completed regional sidewalk and on-street bike facility inventories
- Launched interactive public involvement features through the redesigned CDTC website
- Constructed 17 miles of Bus Rapid Transit
- Trained communities on implementing Complete Streets
- Supported the launch of a regional bike share system
- Funded 95 Community and Transportation Linkage studies since 2000
- Developed a Technical Assistance Program in collaboration with CDRPC

7. What is Expected of Members?

Because of the reliance upon standing advisory committees, working groups, task forces and the continuing work of the Planning Committee, it is imperative that Policy Board members and Planning Committee members maintain good, continuing communication with each other. Each policy maker needs to keep in touch with his or her Planning Committee representative to be sure that their community's or agency's perspective is being fairly represented in the discussions and consensus-building that takes place at Planning Committee meetings. At-large town and village members on the Policy Board should freely contact the CDTC staff, county Planning Committee members or the at large town and village Planning Committee members to be briefed on key issues. CDTC Policy Board members receive notices and agendas for Planning Committee meetings so that items of importance can be flagged and the jurisdiction's views properly represented.

It is also important that CDTC's Policy Board and Planning Committee members recognize their responsibilities to the whole region. Members are ultimately responsible to the residents of the Capital District for the quality of transportation service (and for the impact of transportation on the overall quality of life) that they will enjoy in five, ten and twenty year's time. This means that CDTC members jointly share the responsibility for making sure that CDTC considers the major transportation issues of today and tomorrow.

Members also need to remember that the federal government does not hold any approval authority over the decisions made locally by CDTC nor does it dictate CDTC's priorities. The choices facing the Capital District over issues ranging from the future of the Northway to the role of public infrastructure investment in urban revitalization, from treatment of suburban congestion to the use of funds to make the highway system compatible with neighborhoods, from prospects for Light Rail to the need for better sidewalks -- all are judgments that must be made locally.

8. How Does CDTC's Funding Work?

Regarding *planning* items, CDTC commits its available federal transportation planning funds to needed work through its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) which covers CDTC's fiscal year of April 1st through March 31st. CDTC receives federal planning funds both from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration over nearly two million dollars.

Federal funds are provided to ensure that CDTC's decisions are technically sound and comprehensive. Under the federal law, CDTC must assure that its planning process considers ten subjects, roughly summarized as: economic competitiveness, safety, security, accessibility, environmental protection, intermodal connectivity, system management, system preservation, resiliency and reliability, and travel and tourism. CDTC must also base its planning and programming on performance measures identified in federal law for safety, bridge and pavement condition, system reliability, and asset management.

To carry this out, the staff and Planning Committee develop a comprehensive planning program that still leaves room for additional, locally-generated planning initiatives. CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program (Linkage Program) and Technical Assistance Programs are the primary means of assisting local efforts. Proposals for such planning efforts can be received at any time, but typically will be considered during the development of the UPWP. Since 2000, over 90 Linkage studies have been approved for funding in 42 local communities.

Federal planning funds are used for staff work by CDTC and member agencies such as NYSDOT and CDTA, consultants under contract to CDTC and for consultants under contract to local governments or member agencies. In addition, CDTC is available to perform supplemental work under contract to members and others. For example, CDTC has a small annual agreement with the town of Colonie to review development proposals in the Albany International Airport area and suggest traffic mitigation actions.

On the *capital* side, CDTC maintains a rolling five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), normally adopting a new program every three years. CDTC adopted its 2019-24 TIP in June 2019. The development of the TIP includes an assessment of expected resources and updates from project implementers regarding the costs and schedules of existing commitments. Using this information, CDTC solicits proposals from members and all other municipalities in the four counties.

CDTC uses its New Visions budgetary guidelines to assign available funds to various project categories and selects projects within categories largely based on technical merit, including benefit/cost ratio and other criteria. CDTC's process of screening to eliminate unrealistic or non-compatible projects, scoring to find the best projects in each category, and developing a program that reflects its long-range plan has received national attention as a constructive model for other MPOs.

The federal funds that are programmed through this process include National Highway Performance Program, Surface Transportation Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program and Transit Capital funds. In total, these amount to over \$600,000,000 when matched over five years. In addition, federal discretionary fund projects, projects selected through federally funded state transportation programs and even Congressional earmarks must be included in the TIP before funds can be released to project implementers.

As much as possible, CDTC 's participants seek to identify the strongest candidate projects to implement the New Visions plan and work to assign project fund source labels second. The flexibility in federal law to tailor the region's program to meet local needs allows this type of approach.

Federal-Aid Projects with Total Funding Over \$7.0M During the 2019-24 TIP Period

(Amounts are in millions of dollars and exclude any expenses expected to occur prior to October 2019 or past September 2024)

RG15	Durable Pavement Markings Set-Aside	10.500
RG131	Bus Rapid Transit	18.429
RG134	State Bridge Miscellaneous Preservation	31.000
RG135	State Culvert Replacements Set-Aside	10.500
RG136	State Miscellaneous Pavement Maintenance	30.050
RG142	Overhead Sign Structure Replacement	13.900
T14B	Transit Operations Support for Saratoga	9.312
T17	Transit Bus Replacement/Expansion	13.861
T57	Preventive Maintenance	73.633
T122	Hudson River Corridor BRT: Final Phase	42.513
T124	Hudson River Corridor BRT Operations	12.180
A572	I-787 NB Ramp over the SME to SME WB: Element Repairs	10.639
A584	Menands Bike/Ped Connector & NY 32	7.740
A588	Albany Skyway	8.650
A595	Dunn Bridge WB to I-787 SB: Element Repairs	26.426
A596	Everett Road Bridge over I-90: Element Repairs	10.654
A598	US 9W Over CSX/CP Rail: Replacement	12.147
R315	US 9 Bridge over I-90 (Exit 11): Replacement	10.917
R341	I-90 Exit 10 to NYS Thruway	7.641
R342	I-90 Hudson River to Exit 10	7.868
S264	I-890 over Erie Blvd and Broadway: Element Repairs	13.317

9. What Additional Documentation is Available?

Additional detail about CDTC operations and current plans, programs and procedures is available in the following documents. Much of CDTC's current documentation is found at www.cdtcmpo.org.

Transportation Improvement Program, 2019-24. Lists the current adopted five-year program of projects and describes CDTC's TIP development and project evaluation process. An online version of the TIP is kept current, reflecting amendments that have been made since the adoption of the program.

New Visions 2050 Plan documents. Material includes an Executive Summary documents and numerous chapters on subjects ranging from infrastructure to public participation.

Unified Planning Work Program, 2020-22. Describes in detail current and upcoming federally funded transportation planning initiatives.

Linkage Reports. Summaries and full reports for completed Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program studies are available at CDTC's web site.

10. Who are the Key Contacts for Information?

For general information on CDTC operations, current or proposed transportation planning projects, Transportation Improvement Program development, and short and long-range community and transportation planning questions or concerns.	Sandy Misiewicz, AICP, Executive Director See following page for staff contacts Capital District Transportation Committee One Park Place, Albany, NY 12205 (518) 458-2161 (518) 729-5764 (fax) email: smisiewicz@cdtcmpo.org	
For information on the status of current highway projects, state funding sources, federal bridge and safety programs, design standards and project implementation procedures.	Robert Rice New York State Department of Transportation, Region 1 328 State Street Schenectady, NY 12305 (518) 388-0456	
For information about the Transportation Alternatives/Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Programs. For information about transit funding, transit planning	Carrie Ward, CDTC (see or Brian Kirch, NYSDOT above) Region 1 (see above) Ross Farrell, Director of Planning	
activities, transit service or bus rapid transit implementation status.	Capital District Transportation Authority 110 Watervliet Avenue Albany, NY 12206 (518) 437-6841	
For information about Medicaid transportation service and other human service transportation brokering.	Manager Access Transit 110 Watervliet Ave. Albany, NY 12206 (518) 453-8377	
For information about population projections, economic development activity, sustainability programs or regional aviation system planning.	Mark Castiglione, Executive Director Capital District Regional Planning Commission One Park Place Albany, NY 12205 (518) 453-0850	
For information about New York State Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation programs and projects.	Phil Serafino New York State Thruway Authority Interchange 23, Route 9W Albany, NY 12209 (518) 436-3184	
For information about the Albany International Airport development plans and projects.	Steve lachetta, Airport Planner Albany County Airport Authority ARFF Building, 2 nd floor Albany NY 12111 (518) 464-5010	
For information about the Port of Albany's plans and projects.	Richard J. Hendrick, General Manager Albany Port District Commission Port of Albany Albany, NY (518) 463-8763	
For information about United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) oversight of CDTC and information about specific federal programs	Richard J. Marquis, Federal Highway Administration Istration Leo W. O'Brien Building, 11A Clinton Ave. Rm.719 Albany, NY 12207 (518) 431-4124 Stephen Goodman, Regional Administrator Federal Transit Administration 1 Bowling Green, Rm. 429 New York, NY 10004 (212) 264-8162	

CDTC Staff Contacts as of January 2022

ADA Compliance	Carrie Ward
Air Quality Conformity	Chris Bauer
Bike and Pedestrian Planning	Jennifer Ceponis
Clean Communities Program	Jacob Beeman
Climate Change/Resiliency	Jennifer Ceponis
Community Planning Assistance	Sandra Misiewicz
Complete Streets	Carrie Ward
Congestion Management Process/Operations	Andrew Tracy
Data Collection/Highway Condition Inventory	Teresa LaSalle
Environmental Justice/Title VI/Equity	Carrie Ward
Freight Planning	Chris Bauer
General Information/Administration	Latanya Sellie
Geographic Information Systems	Teresa LaSalle
Human Service Agency Transportation	Carrie Ward
Infrastructure	Andrew Tracy
Linkage Planning Program	Jennifer Ceponis
Long-Range Plan Development	Jennifer Ceponis
Performance Based Planning	Jacob Beeman
Project Development Support	Chris Bauer
Project Tracking	Jacob Beeman
Public Participation	Jennifer Ceponis
Safety Planning	Carrie Ward
Security Planning	Jennifer Ceponis
Signal Timing Program/ITS	Andrew Tracy
Smart Communities	Jennifer Ceponis
TIP Development and Maintenance	Jacob Beeman
Technical Assistance Program	Chris Bauer
Traffic Volume Data	Chris Bauer
Transit Planning	Chris Bauer
Transportation Reviews for GEIS	Andrew Tracy
Travel Demand Management	Rima Shamieh
Travel Demand Model (STEP Model)	Chris Bauer
UPWP Development	Sandra Misiewicz
Website Management	Jacob Beeman

General e-mail address for CDTC is cdtc@cdtcmpo.org. Individual e-mail addresses follow the convention of first initial, last name (example: Isellie@cdtcmpo.org)

CDTC Policy Board as of January 2022

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Vice-Chairman
Carm Basile, CDTA

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Town of Colonie Peter Crummey

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Capital District Regional Planning Commission Craig M. Warner

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Carm Basile

New York State Department of

Transportation Region 1

Patrick Barnes

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