

Chapter 7. Implementation

Overview

This report presents and describes a wide variety of strategies and programs that can be used to improve linkages and connections between the four campus facilities – the University at Albany’s Uptown and NanoTech Campuses, the Harriman Research and Technology Park, and the Patroon Creek Corporate Park. Implementation of these strategies and programs will be challenging for a variety of reasons. While three of the four sites are affiliated with the State of New York and all sites are responding to market conditions and circumstances, each campus makes its own decisions about how and when to grow or change. As a result, projects at some campuses will move faster than others and the relative importance of certain strategies proposed in this report will vary at each campus and over time.

Despite the multitude of stakeholders involved with the Study Area, the Study Advisory Committee and Study Team also recognize the importance of implementing many of the recommendations as a coordinated package of tools. Accordingly, because the precise timing of events in this dynamic area is difficult to predict, establishing a mechanism for the ongoing coordination of transportation decisions and investments is the most important, highest priority implementation action recommended in this study. Building from the dialogue and cooperation already established through this process, the first task will be to formalize a structure for advancing the many strategies and programs recommended in this report.

Establish Area Transportation Management Association (TMA)

As described earlier in this report, Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) are active across the country and have been successful in coordinating capital investments and transportation demand management strategies over diverse settings. The presence in this area of four major institutions, as well as significant interest from state, regional, and local governments, suggests that this type of organizational structure could have considerable financial and technical support.

The TMA should have a Board that includes at a minimum a representative from each of the four campuses as well as a representative from the City of Albany, the Town of Guilderland, Albany County, NYSDOT Region 1, the CDTA, the CDTC, and the neighborhoods adjoining the Harriman and University at Albany campuses. Additional representation from area businesses, the Town of Colonie, or other interested parties could also be considered.

CDTA and CDTC may be able to allocate seed money to the TMA with federal funds from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program. This

would allow the TMA to get started and to hire a strong and energetic staff person to move projects forward and to communicate with the many diverse stakeholders in this area. A staff person, working under the guidance of the TMA Board, will be critical to the success of this effort.

Priority activities for the TMA in its early days would fall under three categories: Programmatic, Educational, and Organizational.

Programmatic – There are several items recommended in this plan that will require *immediate* action to ensure that opportunities for the future are not lost. They include:

- Reserving a right-of-way on the University at Albany’s NanoTech Campus from Tricentennial Drive to Washington Avenue Extension. This right-of-way must be reserved now before rapid development of the NanoTech Campus forecloses the opportunity to establish a multi-modal transportation spine linking the various campuses.
- Identifying a preferred alignment on the Harriman Research and Technology Park campus for the future transportation spine and reserving right-of-way before redevelopment of the campus progresses.
- Working with Albany County to incorporate recommendations from this study into the design of the Fuller Road improvement project. Preliminary engineering for Fuller Road is expected to begin this year (2007).

Educational - The TMA must continue to reach out to the community as developments in the area move forward. Just as this study has become a forum for stakeholders to discuss transportation issues related to the multi-campus area, the TMA must establish an on-going process for including the public in future decisions as projects evolve.

Organizational – The TMA will need to develop a strategy for becoming self-sustaining within a few years. Among the critical issues to be resolved in the short-term is participation of the Master Developer selected for the Harriman Research and Technology Park. Any agreement with the selected Master Developer should require participation (time and funding) in the TMA. Longer-term, all of the campuses might be asked to contribute to support operation of the TMA.

Alternative sources of funding could also be considered as necessary. For example, some portion of parking revenue generated through parking management activities, should they be undertaken through the TMA, could be returned to support its activities. The establishment of a Transportation Development District (special improvement district) could also help support TMA operations. However, these potential sources of funding might be better utilized to support the costs of capital improvements initiated by the TMA.

Funding for specific projects initiated or supported by the TMA must come from a variety of sources. The TMA should be represented at the regional table as the Capital

District Transportation Committee (CDTC) allocates federal transportation dollars throughout the region. In addition, the TMA would have representation from NYSDOT, Albany County and local governments; all of whom might be able to provide funding to assist with specific capital projects. As described above, dedicated revenue sources from user fees (such as parking) or special taxing districts could be considered if there is support for such measures. And finally, competitive grant programs from public or foundation sources might provide additional sources of funds for particular types of projects or initiatives.

Priority Projects

In addition to the immediate programmatic actions identified above, the other recommendations from this study have been prioritized in **Figure 7-1**. Short-term actions should be initiated within the next five years. Longer-term actions should be initiated within 10 years. Primary responsibility for each project is assigned to one or more entities; however all of these initiatives should be shared and reviewed through the TMA as they move forward to ensure coordination. An order-of-magnitude cost category (low, medium, or high) for each project is also provided.

As the transportation infrastructure is updated and developed to include multimodal links, wayfinding and signage will be an essential element to bring these individual pieces together visually for people accessing and using the campuses. Wayfinding can also be used to create a broader image and sense of community. By viewing the four campuses and surrounding communities as complementary parts of a unified whole, and ensuring that multi-modal connections address user needs and link them to facilities, open space/recreational opportunities, and public transportation, a strong and vital future can emerge.

Funding and Financing

In addition to the various public sources of funding available for transportation infrastructure, there are other potential sources of revenue that should be considered given the magnitude of improvements that will ultimately take place as the Harriman Campus redevelops and NanoTech, UAlbany and Patroon Creek build out. Public-private partnerships should be pursued whenever feasible to leverage public funding sources to the greatest degree possible.

The Harriman Research & Technology Development Corporation is a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation which has the ability to issue bonds for improvements to support economic development. In addition, should changes in local zoning be required for the Harriman redevelopment plan to be fully implemented, it may be possible for the City of Albany to prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed zoning which could evaluate mitigation costs associated with transportation related impacts. However, this

approach would need to be carefully weighed against concerns related to the timing of local land use approvals.

Environmental Justice

Throughout the planning process, recommendations were crafted to be sensitive to all adjacent residences and other surrounding land uses. However, special attention will need to be paid to households in the areas of special concern identified on page 2-13 as the planning concepts evolve into specific projects. The Harriman Research and Technology Development Corporation, the University at Albany, Capital District Transportation Authority and other potential implementing entities will need to ensure that these environmental justice population groups are engaged in the process and that appropriate outreach is undertaken to adequately address their concerns and any potential adverse impacts of projects.