

### **Draft Materials for the New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

CDTC staff has begun the update of the New Visions Plan which will be needed by the October 2011. This short time frame will not allow an in-depth, comprehensive update to the plan. The updated plan will be a maintenance update that will extend the planning horizon to 2035, reaffirm the New Visions Plan and meet federal requirements. It will also draft the game plan for the next phase, which will be a more in-depth update with a 2040 horizon; that update could be completed as late as 2015. The timing of the 2040 Plan update will allow for more comprehensive analysis and more extensive discussions with regional stakeholders.

The attached draft document includes brief status reports on major subject areas of the New Visions 2030 Plan, including conclusions for the 2035 Plan update and potential topics for the 2040 Plan update. This draft document represents material which is expected to form the basic content of the New Visions 2035 Plan update. Two more chapters, on performance measures and air quality, are forthcoming.

CDTC staff requests that the Planning Committee members review this material and bring any comments to the February 2 Planning Committee for discussion. Planning Committee members are also asked to identify any gaps or items that were missed in this draft. It is anticipated that after receiving Planning Committee comments, staff can refine this document and prepare an executive summary suitable for public distribution and review. Final release of a draft New Visions 2035 Plan is planned for June, after Planning Committee and Policy Board approval. After addressing public comments, the Policy Board would be asked to approve the final Plan in September 2011.

Subjects covered on the following pages include:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Finance plan – page 2                       | 9. Elderly and Disabled – page 36                  |
| 2. Quality Region/Integrated Design – page 7   | 10. Environmental Impacts/Sustainability – page 42 |
| 3. Infrastructure – page 13                    | 11. Public Participation – page 46                 |
| 4. Transit – page 18                           | 12. Freight – page 49                              |
| 5. Congestion Management/Expressways – page 21 | 13. Equitable Treatment – page 51                  |
| 6. Bicycle/Pedestrian – page 25                | 14. Security – page 53                             |
| 7. Safety – page 29                            | 15. Big Ticket Initiatives – page 55               |
| 8. Travel Demand Management – TDM – page 32    | 16. Transportation Improvement Program – page 58   |

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Financial Plan**

#### **Background**

CDTC's New Visions plan is unique among metropolitan plans in comprehensively assessing annual funding requirement for seventeen capital, operating, maintenance and planning budget categories. Additionally, the plan's strength draws from CDTC's commitment to achieve "steady progress" across all categories even if funding levels fall short of those needed for *full* implementation of all New Visions recommendations. The plan includes well-constructed, reasonable and modest annual budgets for the following categories:

- Intermodal facilities
- Transit capital
- Transit operations
- Priority highway rehab
- Other highway rehab
- Bridge rehab
- Highway and bridge operations
- ITS/ traffic infrastructure
- ITS operations
- CMS Strategic projects
- Community / Economic projects
- Supplemental bike/pedestrian actions
- Supplemental goods movement actions
- Supplemental arterial mgt actions
- Supplemental safety actions
- Demand management
- Integrated planning & outreach

#### **Reasonably Anticipated Revenues**

The New Visions plan must be fiscally constrained. That is, CDTC may not identify actions or projects as "committed" if it is not reasonable to anticipate that revenues will be available to advance the actions or projects at the intended time.

In the New Visions 2030 plan, CDTC and its members committed to the necessary and appropriate rehabilitation of the entire transportation system over time, along with modest upgrades and improvements. Increases in the cost of materials coupled with the need to rebuild a nearly 50-year-old Interstate system pushed the cost of the plan up 40% over the previous plan – more than eating up funding increases provided in that period.

Even with these cost increases, CDTC asserted that the 2030 plan was fiscally balanced over time – *but only if public funding increases regularly over the following decades as it has in the past*. An essentially "flat" level of revenues would lead to serious, unacceptable declines in physical and service conditions and make even the most modest improvements difficult to accomplish.

## What Has Transpired Since Adopting New Visions 2030

Financial circumstances and future prospects have experienced significant – and mixed – changes over the past three years.

### Negative Factors

- State funding issues have placed a double squeeze on NYSDOT program – first seeing flat funding levels due to state fiscal problems and second, witnessing a steady decline in the percentage of dedicated transportation funds available to spend. The vast majority of the dedicated state funding stream now goes strictly to debt service for previous bonds.
- Efforts to establish a multi-modal five-year state funding program for transportation failed last year. The SAFETEA-LU federal legislation expired in September 2010 without a successor. Short term extensions are the rule.
- Operating funds for CDTA have been reduced in the past two years for the first time in memory. CDTA's ability to fully implement its carefully-constructed new service plan (including BRT) is being jeopardized by fiscal issues and compounded by the economic recession that reduced ridership.
- Improvements to pavement and bridge conditions have not kept pace with needs and the need established in 2007 for reconstruction of the aging Interstate system has gone unmet to date.

### Positive Factors

- The rapid escalation of construction costs experienced for several years has abated; particularly since the global economic slowdown of 2008-09, project bid openings have ceased to routinely exceed engineers' estimates, reducing the size of inflation-related financial gaps.
- The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided an unanticipated “shot in the arm” to transportation capital finances, pumping approximately \$80 M of federal funding into CDTC highway, transit and rail projects above and beyond anticipated TIP funding. For the first time, this allowed significant funding of “4R” (simple resurfacing) projects with federal aid on state and local roads. The ARRA projects also demonstrated the collective ability of NYSDOT, CDTA, municipalities and others to deliver needed projects in a timely basis.
- Necessity has proven to be the mother of engineering invention, as evidenced by current NYSDOT plans for the Patroon Island Bridge (I-90 over the Hudson River). What could have been a \$300 M project was reduced to a \$100 M rehab with a 30+year life due to innovative design driven by budget considerations.
- Budget concerns have not led to the abandonment of multi-modalism in the Capital District. While delayed, CDTA remains committed to rollout of the NY 5 BRT system in 2011; high speed rail initiatives progress; and NYSDOT and other implementers continue to expand the pedestrian network, build roundabouts for safety and air quality benefits; and communities continue to refine integrated local plans and ordinances.
- The New Visions method of framing discussions of “big ticket” initiatives has succeeded; the distinction between what the base budget should support and what would require supplemental funding is well understood in the Capital District.

- Transportation legislation remains a hot topic at both the state and federal levels. Neither legislative leaders nor administrative officials at either level have surrendered in the battle to secure adequate public funding for transportation; leaders have chosen to enact short-term bills in lieu of long-term legislation that is under-scaled. The desire to avoid tax increases during a recession is the primary reason cited for the delay in enacting multi-year legislation.
- Further, transportation enjoys a unique and elevated status in the report of the Commission on Deficit Reduction in December 2010. While reduced federal discretionary and defense spending overall is a cornerstone of the report's recommendations, trust fund increases – including a near-doubling of the federal gas tax – is recommended to underpin federal highway and transit funding.

## Conclusions

Events since adoption of the New Visions 2030 plan are consistent with the range of funding scenarios anticipated for the 2005-2030 period. Nothing that has occurred is sufficient cause for abandoning the reasonable, modest, balanced New Vision plan or the assumption that – through peaks and valleys, fits and starts – federal, state and local legislation will help meet the financial requirements of the plan. State funding is tight; stimulus funding was a windfall. Legislation has not been passed, but the desire to find adequate funding is real. This story is consistent with the budget assumptions of the New Visions 2030 plan. The New Visions 2035 plan thus does not require a revision to the long-term budget plan, nor an adjustment to estimates of budget requirements for each project category.

The current situation, however, does call for two clear areas of thought and activity for CDTC and its members over the coming year or two:

1. Reaffirming the steady progress precept. Discussions may need to portray current fiscal challenges as a call for a diet, rather than a call for a retreat. A diet brings to mind a healthy concern for balance, smaller portions and the elimination of excess. This image is helpful in preserving the steady progress approach and achieving necessary cost savings. In contrast, retreat brings to mind abandonment of goals and cutting of losses. In large institutions, retreat is more easily embraced than a diet. It may be a role for the CDTC forum in the near future to champion the diet image to decision-makers.
2. Providing information in response to funding initiatives. The New Visions 2030 plan states, *“While it is reasonable to anticipate that funding will be available over coming decades to carry out all elements of the New Visions plan, it is imperative that CDTC and its members work with all interested parties at the federal, state and local level to explore prudent and timely actions to secure these funds. Discussion of “big ticket initiatives” must occur simultaneously with discussion of budget gaps for the basics. It may be necessary to link the “urgent” with the “desired” to elicit sufficient public support for legislative action to provide the necessary resources.”* This critical effort remains unfinished and more urgent than when first stated.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

As CDTC pursues the New Visions 2040 plan, it will be appropriate to fully revisit its financial plan. In addition to confirming or adjusting the basic structure of the financial plan and CDTC's adopted finance-related principles, estimates for the annual average financial budget and anticipated resources will require new values. By the time of the 2040 update, CDTC will have had over fifteen years' experience with its unique approach to defining system preservation and prioritizing (a steady progress of) system improvements. National and state-level climate action plans will also help shape CDTC's fundamental review of budget requirements. The following areas will require a particularly greater level of attention than that given since development of the original plan:

1. Transit system scale – the New Visions plan commits to preservation of existing services with only modest incremental improvement. The 2040 plan update will be an appropriate forum to review CDTA's successes in implementing New Visions service concept and the obstacles faced and to consider the fundamental role of continued – and possibly, more significantly expanded – transit services in the region.
2. Bicycle and pedestrian network – similarly, the New Visions plan represents a strong commitment to begin to address deficiencies in treating bicyclists and pedestrians with the same expectation of service quality as the motorist. After fifteen years' track record, the scale of commitment and pace of improvements can be thoroughly re-examined.
3. Operations – the original New Visions plan made a bold leap into the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and operations arena. Looking forward to 2040, the plan update will present an opportunity for CDTC to reassess and redefine the role – and budget commitment toward – system-wide, real-time, reliable travel information and operations.
4. Pavement and Bridge approach – the original New Visions plan committed to a steady practice of reconstructing the federal aid system to new (that is, multi-modal, ADA-compliant, community-compatible) facilities consistent with CDTC's congestion management principles. The pace of major highway projects has been slower than anticipated at the time. The New Visions 2030 plan further upped the ante by also committing to a thirty-year plan for reconstruction the majority of the major highway system and its bridges. While the New Visions 2035 plan's budget is arguably sufficient to achieve these goals, CDTC will need to seriously explore contingency plans for alternative treatments if funding continues to lag behind the budget requirements for major work. Contingency plans would include stretching out reconstruction plans by additional decades, trimming some of the system (as in closing low-volume bridges), and revising congestion management principles further to be even more conservative regarding capacity investments.
5. Funding alternatives – Depending upon the progress in Albany and Washington regarding adequate long-term financing options, CDTC may need to engage in a region-wide dialogue with community leaders and the public regarding local options for additional funding mechanisms for highway, transit and other needs

such as public private partnerships, user fees, gas tax and sales tax add-ons, etc. as have been adopted in other regions throughout the country.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Quality Region, Land Use/Transportation, and Integrated Design**

#### **Background**

The New Visions Plan recognizes the critical importance of land use and development. CDTC has sponsored the Linkage Planning Program which provides funding for cities, towns and villages to prepare community-based transportation and land use plans consistent with New Visions principles. Where and how the region's communities plan and design the places we work, live, and shop can have a real and direct impact on the region's arterial and collector street system. A comprehensive arterial management program that promotes properly located and spaced driveways and signalized intersections, use of raised medians, and emphasizes connected streets, sidewalks, and transit access, in the end, will provide a safe and efficient arterial street system and quality communities. At the regional level, CDTC has evaluated regional growth patterns and concluded that development which is transit-oriented and concentrated around centers holds the best hope for regional quality of life and a sustainable transportation system.

The ability of cities to play a regionally-optimal role in the future is challenged significantly by circumstances and by larger-than-regional policies that provide an uneven playing field. Significant efforts are required on the part of many parties to improve the ability of cities to participate in the future economy of the region and prepare suburban and rural communities to leverage development pressures to achieve community sustainability, livability and identity. The outcome is not likely to be successful without altering practices of the past.

The New Visions 2030 Plan calls for urban reinvestment, concentrated development patterns, and smart economic growth. The Plan provides clear evidence for supporting efforts to address the mismatch between highway function and financial responsibility within the region's cities. Such an effort would build on both CDTC's long-standing principle of access to resources based on need and function, not ownership and CDTC's long-standing objectives for urban revitalization and economic health.

The New Visions 2030 Plan responds to regional voices who have described the desirability of planning for a quality region: a region that develops and sustains healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities that function interdependently and readily adapt to change; a region that creates economic, educational, social, cultural and recreational opportunities and provides safe neighborhood environments and housing choices for all; a region that protects sensitive environmental resources and fosters community identity and "a sense of place" in all parts of the region. The relationship between land use planning and transportation is central to the Plan, which calls for urban investment, concentrated development patterns, and smart growth.

The New Visions 2030 Plan supports integrated design, arterial management, and complete streets. Integrated design means using transportation investment as a way to

improve the community rather than as a way to get through the community. Integrated transportation planning and community design considers transportation and community planning in an integrated fashion. Such a program supports a “complete streets” approach where arterials are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.

### **What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

Examples of accomplishments since the 2030 Plan was approved are listed below. These projects and studies were a result of the CDTC New Visions Plan and illustrate implementation of the New Visions Planning and Investment Principles.

- Route 5 was rehabilitated in the City of Schenectady with The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds. A section of the project area, which extended from Washington Avenue to Balltown Road and also included transit station/ADA improvements in coordination with CDTA’s Route 5 BRT project, included a road diet on State Street in Schenectady from Fehr Avenue to just west of Balltown Road. A center lane turn lane was provided with one through lane in each direction. Complete street features and ADA compliance were incorporated.
- Phase 1 of the Fuller Road Reconstruction project was completed in the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany, including sidewalks, four foot striped shoulders in some sections, and a roundabout at Tricentennial Drive. Phase 2 of the project, in the City of Albany and the Town of Colonie, and a project to construct a roundabout at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Fuller Road in the City of Albany, are underway.
- The Relocation of Maxwell Road, incorporating sidewalks and a new roundabout at the intersection of Maxwell and Albany Shaker Road in the Town of Colonie was completed. This project is a critical element in completing a functional service road system for Wolf Road. Service roads are considered a successful arterial management treatment. This project was an ARRA funded project through the CDTC TIP.
- The Slingerlands Boulevard was completed between North Bethlehem and the City of Albany and the intersection of New Scotland Road and Cherry Avenue Extension in the Town of Bethlehem. This project was based on community planning and supportive of economic development. Four roundabouts were included, and traffic was diverted from New Scotland Road. This project included the construction of sidewalks on New Scotland Road. Roundabouts helped slow speeds, making this part of Slingerlands more walkable.
- The Round Lake Bypass was built to support the development of the Luther Forest Technology Park and to protect community quality of life in the Village of Round Lake.
- Delaware Avenue in Albany was reconstructed with special attention in design to community compatibility and complete street features, including sidewalk bulb-outs and shared lane markings or “sharrows”. This project, funded with ARRA funding through the CDTC TIP, represented an example of urban investment.

- 19<sup>th</sup> Street (Route 2) was reconstructed in the City of Watervliet. Complete street features including pedestrian accommodations were incorporated. This project was an ARRA funded project through the CDTC TIP.
- The Congress Street reconstruction project in the City of Troy, Phase 1, was completed. The project included complete street features and will support mixed use economic development in the City of Troy.
- New roundabouts were built at Curry Road/Carman Road in the Town of Rotterdam, Schoolhouse Road/Krumkill Road in the Town of Bethlehem, Fuller Road/Tricentennial Drive in the City of Albany, Sand Creek Road/Colonie Center Service Road in the Town of Colonie, Route 67 in Malta.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds provided opportunities to implement livability and complete streets features in the Capital District.

The CDTC Linkage Planning Program has been used to complete a significant number of land use/transportation community planning studies since the New Visions 2030 Plan was approved. These studies represent partnerships with local communities to implement the New Visions Plan. Linkage studies completed since 2007 include the following:

- Albany (City) Bicycle Master Plan
- Altamont Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bethlehem Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study
- Bethlehem Route 9W corridor Study
- Broadway (Village of Menands) Transportation, Access and Land Use Study
- Clifton Park Town Center Plan
- Clifton Park/Halfmoon Exist 9 Land Use and Transportation Plan
- Cohoes Van Schaick Island Transportation and Revitalization Plan
- Guilderland Westmere Corridor Study
- Guilderland/Princetown Land Use and Transportation Study
- Mechanicville Central Corridors Linkage Study
- Neighborhood Master Plan for the Hamlet of Guilderland Center (Town of Guilderland)
- New Scotland Hamlet Area Master Plan
- North Swan Street Multimodal Accessibility Study (City of Albany)
- Railroad Avenue Corridor Study (Albany County/Towns of Colonie and Guilderland)
- Rotterdam Five Corners Land Use and Transportation Study
- Rotterdam NY 7 & NY 146 Land Use and Transportation Study
- Rotterdam NYS Thruway Exit 26 & I-890 Land Use and Transportation Study
- Route 32 Redevelopment Plan (City of Watervliet/Town of Colonie/ Village of Menands)
- Sand Lake Hamlet Linkage Study
- Schaghticoke Route 40 Corridor Study
- Schenectady (City) Route 5 Transit Gateway Study
- Schenectady (City) Route 5 Transit Oriented, Mixed Use Catalyst Project Study
- Scotia Waterfront Concept Study

- Wilton Exit 16 Linkage Study

The NYSDOT GreenLites Program is a NYSDOT self-certification program that distinguishes transportation projects and operations based on the extent to which they incorporate sustainable choices. NYSDOT project designs and operations are evaluated for sustainable practices and an appropriate certification level is assigned. NYSDOT uses GreenLites to incorporate transportation sustainability into their projects and operations, this ensures NYSDOT works to:

- Protect and enhance the environment
- Conserve energy and natural resources.
- Preserve or enhance the historic, scenic, and aesthetic project setting characteristics.
- Encourage public involvement in the transportation planning process.
- Integrate smart growth and other sound land-use practices.
- Encourage new and innovative approaches to sustainable design, and how facilities are operated and maintained.

CDTC in partnership with the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) continued to develop the Sustainable Development/New Visions Guidebook for planning boards, zoning boards and local officials. The goal of the guidebook is to present local examples through fact sheets on projects, plans and programs that best incorporate smart growth principles to illustrate that these kinds of efforts can be undertaken in the Capital Region and describe how they came to be. Complementing the projects are examples of regional development strategies that can be utilized to support good project design at the local level. The Linkage Forum continues to be used as a sounding board on the project which will be completed in the early part of 2011. Website design is underway. A brief brochure will be prepared to highlight the web material.

In June 2009 U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced an interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities to help improve access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide. They outlined six livability principles to guide this partnership. The six livability principles include:

1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

The CDTC New Visions Plan supports this definition of livability in many ways, and CDTC practice has been recognized in three national case studies sponsored by USDOT in the last year as an example of using regional planning to support livability.

CDTC won a [USDOT/APA award](#) from the 2010 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards (TPEA) Program for the Linkage program.

The Smart Growth and Public Infrastructure Priority Act (Chapter 433 of the Laws of 2010) went into effect in New York in the fall of 2010 and requires state agencies responsible for infrastructure and all state authorities to evaluate public infrastructure projects they fund or undertake against ten Smart Growth Criteria. If projects are not consistent with these Smart Growth Criteria, the agency or state authority must document justification for why the infrastructure project should proceed. The law also requires these agencies to create smart growth advisory committees to ensure state sponsored infrastructure spending: advances sustainable development; doesn't result in sprawl development; and involves a consultation process with residents, environmental groups, local officials and other stakeholders.

Proposals for complete streets legislation were advanced in the New York State Legislature in 2010, however a bill has not yet been passed. Complete Streets legislation would apply to all roads eligible for State and Federal funding and would require that pedestrian and cyclist accommodations be considered in the planning, design, and construction of all road projects receiving state or federal funds. Complete streets legislation would provide a stronger foundation for implementation of New Visions strategies and actions and would further encourage local communities to incorporate complete streets approaches into their municipal policies and road improvement and maintenance programs, such as the resolution recently adopted by the [Town of Bethlehem](#). Bethlehem's policy states it is "the intent of the Town of Bethlehem Complete Streets Policy is to recognize bicyclists and pedestrians as equally important as motorists in the planning and design of all new street construction and street reconstruction undertaken by the Town."

## **Conclusions**

Support for integrating transportation planning and land use planning has increased over the last three years at the State level with the passage of smart growth legislation. At the federal level, support for principles of sustainability and livability has served to further validate the New Visions Plan. At the community level, the CDTC Linkage program continues to confirm the direction of the plan. The New Visions 2035 Plan will continue to strongly support land use planning, urban reinvestment, concentrated development, and smart growth. CDTC will continue to partner with local communities through Linkage Studies to support the regional land use and development vision. CDTC continues to support integrated design, and complete streets.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the comprehensive update of the New Visions Plan, beginning in 2012, CDTC will explore further opportunities to reach out to Capital District communities.

The New Visions strategies and actions include the following: “Revise NYSDOT’s project scoping and development procedures manual to allow increased flexibility in the design process”. There is still a disconnect between New Visions planning principles and the project design process. Incorporating complete streets treatments into projects already occurs, and is supported by NYSDOT policy, but is constrained in scope and extent because of rules laid out in NYSDOT’s Design Manual and Project Development Manual (formerly the Environmental Action Plan). For example, designing roads to achieve auto level of service D in the peak hour in 2035 or 2045 may conflict with the CDTC Congestion Management Process and the concept of a complete street. Designing roads to how fast drivers want to travel (i.e. 85th percentile speed) rather than what the community wants the speed to be can work against the concept of a complete street. The development of the 2040 Plan will provide an opportunity to explore ways to improve the integrated design process. Working with NYSDOT partners and other project implementers specific policies, strategies and actions needed to improve and implement the integrated design process will be pursued.

In 2010, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission submitted a grant application to the US Housing and Urban Development agency or HUD for development of a Capital District Sustainable Communities Plan to build off the policies of the existing New Visions Transportation Plan, particularly related to its land use/smart growth strategies, and also including a broader set and deeper treatment of additional issue areas such as affordable housing, workforce development, homelessness and the local food supply. To develop that plan, CDRPC pulled together a consortium of agencies, institutions, and groups within the region. While the grant was not awarded in this recent round of funding, there are aspects of the proposal that can be explored further and potentially incorporated into New Visions 2040 plan development. First and foremost among these is the development of a Pattern Book for the purposes of providing our region’s communities with a visual and graphic toolkit illustrating ways to implement New Visions principles related to integration of land use and transportation, walkable communities at the neighborhood, street and parcel level. Other components which could be considered include the Sustainable Housing Plan and the Sustainable Economy Plan; a Smart Growth Model Land Use Code; a Green Infrastructure Plan; a Sustainable Region Housing Plan; and a Community Food Assessment.

To support the New Visions 2040 update, CDRPC will utilize its geographic information system or GIS to document and assess land development patterns in the Capital District between 1997 and 2010. This will involve utilizing a combination of satellite, ortho-photography, and tax parcel data, along with field visits and interviews with local town/city planners. This information will help to guide development of the proposed Pattern Book.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Infrastructure**

#### **Background**

The highest priority of CDTC's New Visions Plan is to maintain the Capital District's infrastructure, including all federal-aid roads and highways, and all state and locally owned bridges<sup>1</sup>. In order to help properly maintain these assets, CDTC together with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and some local municipalities, conduct regular surveys of the condition of Capital District roads. Bridge inspections are exclusively conducted for all area bridges by NYSDOT. Based on this information, CDTC has been able to identify those facilities that are in the greatest need of repair, and to develop a program to schedule those repairs.

The New Visions 2030 development included the use of a *Transportation Finance Task Force*. The task force consisted of representatives from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Main Office and Region One, CDTA, the New York State Senate, the Schenectady County Legislature, two local consulting firms and several local governments (city, county, town and village). The *Transportation Finance Task Force* included as part of its work, updates to the infrastructure part of the New Visions plan. The New Visions 2030 plan includes the products of the task force.

#### **What Has Transpired Since Adopting New Visions 2030**

**Construction Inflation:** A major consideration in the New Visions 2030 update was the impact of construction inflation on the ability to finance infrastructure and other work, mostly because it had increased drastically and without much warning in the three or four years prior to the inception of this task force. The task force determined the magnitude of the inflation, its impacts on the recent past, and projected its impacts on the future. Since that time, construction inflation has tapered off to a more traditional rate.

**Funding:** The majority of federal funding in the Capital District is spent on the preservation of roads and bridges. Over the last five years, more than \$420 million (federal, state, and local) has been invested in the region's (federal-aid eligible) roads and bridges, including resurfacing, rehabilitation or reconstruction of about 300 lane-miles of pavement and repair or reconstruction of 47 bridges. Notable bridge projects include \$58M for the Batchellerville Bridge in Saratoga County and over \$40M for the Exit 6 Bridge over I-87 in Albany County. State and local highway funding, as well as transit funding, has experienced a combination of fiscal squeezes and one-time stimulus

---

<sup>1</sup> *Federal-aid roads are typically the most heavily traveled routes and are functionally classified as arterials or collectors, serving both regional and inter-municipal travel needs. The remaining streets, classified as local, primarily serve property access. Roads on the federal-aid system are eligible to compete for certain categories of federal transportation funds through CDTC's Transportation Improvement Program. Federal-aid designation does not guarantee that the cost of roadway resurfacing or reconstruction will be covered by the Region's federal-aid resources.*

programs. Significant growth in real terms has not occurred (see the Financial Plan discussion).

**Maintenance Strategies:** Given the atmosphere of a shortage of funding, the strategy to perform the lesser expensive and short lasting repairs continues to be in effect for most roads and bridges. This maximizes the pavement condition benefit of funds at least in the short term. As a result, the New Visions strategy of reconstructing significant portions of the Interstate system has not been performed. CDTA has transitioned to its continuous fleet replacement strategy, but funding gaps in the overall transit capital program are present.

**Road & Highway Condition:** As shown in Table 1, federal-aid roads held their own between 2005 and 2009; at the risk of overstating subtle trends, the data indicate that slight declines in locally-owned federal-aid pavement conditions are more than balanced by modest improvement in overall state pavement conditions. The CDTC sample-based estimate of the conditions of the region's non-state federal-aid system – federal-aid eligible roads owned by counties, towns, villages, and cities – shows improvement from 2004 to 2008, but is likely that trends vary considerably from municipality to municipality and differ by level of municipality.<sup>2</sup> While funding constraints have not caused noticeable decline in pavement conditions, little progress has been made toward the New Visions 2030 goal of significant reconstruction of the major highway system – including an expressway system that will range from 50 to 85 years of age by 2035. Additionally, financial “triage” has prevented the state and others from even programming necessary work on a number of roads in poor or low-fair condition; as a result, pavement conditions on state owned arterials on the NHS system appear to now be more similar to those on locally owned arterials than to conditions on the Interstate system.

---

<sup>2</sup> *CDTC rate the condition of a 100% sample of Albany City and Albany County roads annually; trends there show steady decline (city) and general stability (county) of pavement condition.*

**Table 1**  
**Current Road & Highway Condition Compared to New Visions 2030 Update**  
**For All Roads & Highways in the Capital District By Ownership<sup>3</sup>**

| Road Type        | Lane-Miles | 2005              |                   | 2009              |                   | New Visions Goal  |                   |
|------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                  |            | Percent Poor/Fair | Percent Poor+Fair | Percent Poor/Fair | Percent Poor+Fair | Percent Poor/Fair | Percent Poor+Fair |
| Federal-Aid      |            |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| New York State   | 2,850      | 10/37             | 47                | 8/32              | 40                | 13/20             | 33                |
| Non-State (NSFA) | 1,668      | 19/28             | 47                | 20/34             | 54                | 14/20             | 34                |
| All Federal Aid  | 4,518      | 13/34             | 47                | 12/33             | 45                | ---               | ---               |
| Non-Federal Aid  |            |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Local            | 10,764     | 27/23             | 50                | 19/27             | 46                | 15/20             | 35                |
| State            | 166        | 10/52             | 62                | 6/48              | 54                | 15/20             | 35                |
| All Roads        | 15,448     | 23/27             | 50                | 17/29             | 46                | ---               | ---               |

**Bridge Condition:** CDTC staff reviewed bridge condition by ownership and compared recent known conditions to the conditions at the time of the New Visions 2030 update and the goals of the 2030 plan. Overall, conditions worsened somewhat, consistent with forecasts documented in the 2030 Update, and giving back some of the gains achieved in prior years towards the long-term bridge condition goals of the plan.

**Table 2**  
**Current Bridge Condition Compared to New Visions 2030 Update**  
**For All Bridges in the Capital District By Ownership<sup>4</sup>**

| Ownership                     | Number of Structures | Deficient Structure |           |               |                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|
|                               |                      | 2006                | 2010      | 2018 Forecast | New Visions Goal |
| New York State:               |                      |                     |           |               |                  |
| NYSDOT Interstate             | 148                  | 30% (44)            | 38% (56)  | 47%           | 24%              |
| NYSDOT Non-Interstate and OGS | 360                  | 33% (116)           | 34% (123) | 31%           | 20%              |
| NYS Thruway                   | 69                   | 24% (16)            | 35% (24)  | 24%           | 24%              |
| Local                         | 348                  | 30% (104)           | 32% (110) | 39%           | 20%              |
| Other                         | 19                   |                     | 47% (9)   |               |                  |
| All Bridges                   | 944                  | 30% (283)           | 34% (322) | 40%           | 22%              |

<sup>3</sup> New York State highway mileage and pavement condition data is derived from NYSDOT's Roadway Inventory System Pavement Data Extract. Information for non-state federal-aid and local non-federal aid roads was derived from CDTC's Pavement Inventory. Local non-federal data is based on a 2008 pavement survey. NYS federal-aid data include highways under New York State Thruway jurisdiction.

<sup>4</sup> Information in this table was derived from NYSDOT's Annual Bridge Reports for 2005 & 2009. Values shown in parentheses in the table represent number of structures. NYSDOT defines a deficient bridge as one with a condition rating less than 5 on a 1-7 scale. A deficient condition rating indicates the presence of sufficient deterioration and/or loss of function to require corrective maintenance or rehabilitation. It does not mean that the bridge is unsafe. The federal bridge rating scale (not reported here) distinguishes between 'structural deficiency' and 'functional adequacy'. According to the federal scale, only about 25% of deficient bridges identified by NYSDOT can be considered 'structurally deficient'. Even then, federally identified 'structurally deficient' bridges are not necessarily considered unsafe.

**Transit Conditions:** CDTA's capital investment, on the whole, has kept pace with that of the New Visions 2030 plan. While capital budget gaps continue (projects on the TIP that seek or require additional capital funds), CDTA has succeeded with its transition to a program of routine fleet replacements and has made inroads with both vehicles and station improvements for BRT. Constraints and reductions in operating resources continue to be a much greater issue constraining service improvements.

**Intermodal Facilities:** Major capital investment at the Rensselaer station, Saratoga Springs station and the Albany International Airport were complete prior to adoption of the New Visions 2030 plan. Investment in these facilities, particularly the airport, has continued. Plans for rehabilitation or reconstruction of the Schenectady station are in place with partial funding in hand, and double-tracking and Livingston Avenue bridge rehabilitation has secured ARRA funding. The Port of Albany is well underway with wharf improvements, in part due to CDTC's support for ARRA highway funding – the only MPO in the state to offer such support for port projects.

## **Conclusions**

**Construction Inflation:** The New Visions 2030 Update incorporated the drastically increased inflation leading up to the update into the costs of repairs, but did not assume that it would continue at that pace. Instead, it was assumed that costs had been bumped up and more reasonable inflation would occur from the levels of those new, higher, costs. CDTC staff analysis shows that this is consistent with what has happened in the three years since the 2030 Update, requiring no adjustment to unit cost assumptions in the plan. (See also the Financial Plan discussion.)

**Funding (Traditional and Additional):** Funding levels have not increased substantially but continue to be a hot topic at state and federal levels; the New Visions 2030 long-term funding assumptions remain valid (see the Financial Plan discussion).

**Maintenance Strategies:** Short term changes to repair strategies would not be expected to have significant long-range effects. If budget-driven, lower-cost repair strategies were expected to be in place over a long term period, it would require updates to the data of the Highway Condition Project Model (HCPM), and new projections would need to be made. As stated above, the New Visions strategy of reconstructing significant portions of the Interstate system has not been performed. Since very little could have been done in the first three years of the period since the 2030 Update was approved, this is not cause for alarm. However, if this were to continue, the effects of it would need to be studied and incorporated into the next long-range plan. For the present, the New Visions 2030 policies remain valid.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

As with any long-range plan update, during the 2040 Plan Update, the following will need to be updated and incorporated into new cost and condition projections: cost of repairs (which are affected by construction inflation), funding (which could change in the

next federal or state multi-year funding legislation), repair strategies and their effects, transit fleet and station treatments and intermodal facility needs. In particular, some focus will need to be placed on the reconstruction of Interstates, the scale and pace of other high cost infrastructure renewal projects and the relationship between transit operating funds and capital plans.

In addition to pavements and bridges, maintaining culverts is essential to the safety, reliability, and longevity of the region's roadway infrastructure. Many aging culverts have deteriorated beyond the point where they can withstand maximum flow, while others have filled with sediment, reducing their capacity and causing them to overtop prematurely. State-owned culverts are inspected by NYSDOT in a manner similar to bridges. Currently, of the \_\_\_ large culverts maintained by NYSDOT, \_\_\_ are rated structurally deficient<sup>5</sup>. Consideration should be given to conducting a comprehensive inventory of culverts maintained by region's counties, towns, and villages.

Consideration should also be given to developing a comprehensive asset management plan that includes pavement, bridge, culvert, guiderail, traffic signal, transit and "green" assets. A comprehensive asset management plan would be particularly valuable in refining the financial plan for preservation of the whole system.

Additionally, CDTC will re-examine its sampling approach to estimating the condition of non-federal-aid roads. It is possible that the variety of road types and the variety of municipality types calls for a larger or differently-structured sample to increase confidence levels in the results.

---

<sup>5</sup> *Data for Region 1 was not available at the time this document was printed. Currently, of the 6,000 large culverts maintained by NYSDOT statewide, about 2,100 are rated structurally deficient.*

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Transit**

#### **Background**

Transit provides travel options, increases mobility and can support economic development. The 2030 New Visions Plan incorporated CDTA's Transit Development Plan which outlined a path to improve and grow a variety of transit services for the Capital District. "Big ticket" initiatives outlined a vision of potential further investment in BRT and fixed guideway transit systems as a means of supporting regional growth.

#### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

- Ridership on CDTA rose 22% as people faced \$4.00 per gallon fuel prices in 2008. There were 250,000 more boardings in April of 2008 than April of 2007. Most of the new riders had cars but couldn't afford the gas prices. The Route 5 Corridor between Schenectady and Albany and Route 22 between Troy and Albany had the most significant growth in ridership although ridership in general increased on all the routes. Increases in ridership remained fairly steady even when gas prices fell—proving that people are willing to change their driving behavior if a convenient, reliable and affordable alternative is available. Despite this trend in ridership, CDTA was forced to increase fares from \$1.00 to \$1.50 in April 2009. The cost of monthly bus passes increased by about 50% as well. A streamlined fare policy was implemented. The weak economy, combined with reductions in federal and state funding for mass transit left CDTA with a funding gap that threatened their ability to provide the level of service this region demands and deserves—at a time when more people than ever were using public transportation.
- Bus Rapid Transit- In 2007, the region made the decision to support Bus Rapid Transit or BRT in the Route 5 corridor (called "BusPlus"). Although large deficits loom, CDTA, with the support of CDTC board members, decided that they could not afford to walk away from the commitment to BRT. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) combines the best features of rail with the flexibility and cost advantages of bus service. With BRT, buses travel on roadways with limited stops and signal priority to transport passengers quickly and efficiently.

The Route 5 BRT project is advancing. Twenty eight of the thirty six BusPlus shelters will be built by April 2011. Agreements for several park and ride lots along the BRT corridor have been signed. The new service is easy to identify with a distinctive silver and red color scheme on buses, signs and stations. Construction of signature stations for the new BusPlus service began in 2009 in Albany, Colonie and Schenectady and will be completed in 2011. Later in 2011, modern bus and station technology will combine with transit signal priority at designated intersections to provide efficient limited-stop transit service to major workplaces, shopping destinations and residential areas along this heavily-traveled route. Over the next few

years, when all the system elements are added, BusPlus will be the most convenient way to travel along Route 5. The BusPlus service will roll out on April 11th.

- In 2008, the Capital District North/South Corridors Key Travel Market Assessment Study was commissioned by the High Speed Rail Task Force and CDTA and completed in early 2009. This study looked at existing and potential future transit travel markets along the north/south corridors throughout Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, and Washington counties.

The consultants considered a spectrum of BRT systems and looked at the market potential using CDTC's 2030 New Visions alternative growth future scenarios. The report concluded that:

- With the possible exception of the CP Rail Corridor, due to the relatively low return on ridership for a high transit investment, light rail should be deferred from consideration at this time for transit.
  - For the US 9 and I-87 corridors, improvements to the existing NX Service and local bus services appear to be sufficient to meet future demand. Managed lanes would be an option to prioritize transit.
  - The River Corridor appears to have high potential benefits. Existing transit in this corridor enjoys high ridership, and transit improvements could reach new markets.
- Route Structure Improvements- Over the past two years, CDTA engaged in a major evaluation and update of their route structure. The purpose of this effort is to establish a new routing network that better aligns services to demand because where people live, work, shop and travel has changed dramatically over the years. The planning for the new route systems is based on ridership data, future developments, and most importantly, input from riders and residents. Route restructuring has been taking place county by county, with revisions to the Saratoga Springs routes occurring first. Ridership nearly quadrupled since that route restructuring took place. More recently, refinement of the Transit Development Plan for Schenectady was completed, and an effort to refine the TDP for Albany was initiated. Ridership has increased on Schenectady routes since the routes were restructured. The Albany restructuring should be complete by the end of 2011.
  - The City of Albany is also currently working with CDTA to develop a Transit-Oriented Development zoning ordinance in the City's transit intensive corridors: NY5 (State/Central), Washington/Western Avenues and Route 32/Broadway. In addition to the TOD zoning ordinance, a TOD Guidebook will be developed and can be used throughout the Capital Region. This initiative will progress in 2011.

## **Conclusions**

Although budget issues have been challenging because of reductions in federal and state funding for transit, strong increases in ridership, especially in 2008, have reaffirmed the importance of transit and have validated the New Visions Plan's support of transit. Transit contributes to congestion management, air quality and energy savings; transit offers an alternative travel mode, reducing auto dependence; and transit provides essential mobility for those who do not operate a private vehicle. Major investments in

transit such as the BusPlus project are integral to the New Visions policies on urban reinvestment, regional growth and economic development. The New Visions 2035 Plan continues CDTC's commitment to transit services and recognizes the importance of transit investment to the Capital Region.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

The development of the New Visions 2040 Plan will begin at the end of 2011 and will be a multi year effort that will give CDTC the opportunity to engage the public and stake holders in a broad and comprehensive dialogue about the Plan.

During the 2040 update, CDTA will continue to build upon the Route 5 BRT and will make a decision about implementing a BRT on Washington/Western Avenues. CDTA's concept of a 100 miles of BRT will be reviewed. Funding alternatives will be explored. The TDM and bicycle/pedestrian efforts will complement transit development. An update to the transit propensity index based on 2010 Census data will be undertaken.

Increasing investment in public transportation will pay dividends to the entire region. An investment in CDTA will:

- Create and sustain jobs and reduce our business and energy costs in the long term. Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates an average of \$6 in economic returns.
- Clear the air. Traffic congestion in the Capital Region is costly and wastes 2.8 million gallons of fuel each year. By riding CDTA buses, we can save 2.6 million gallons of gas, and reduce emissions by nearly 26,000 tons a year.
- Provide more mobility choices for future generations—by guiding the rebuilding of our street and highway infrastructure in ways that make them more efficient, effective and transit-friendly.

In recent years, budget constraints have slowed the implementation of BusPlus and other service improvements. If resources remain significantly restrained for transit, the 2040 Plan update will need to consider implications for long term transit system goals. Potential actions to address funding shortfalls should be considered. Additional revenue sources may need to be explored, including local revenues such as a sales tax increase.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Congestion Management, Arterial Management and Expressways**

#### **Background**

The New Visions 2030 Plan incorporates the CDTC “Congestion Management Process” (CMP). The CMP recognizes that congestion is worst in the AM and PM peaks; and that the most unbearable congestion is related to incidents, especially on the expressway system. An accident during rush hour on the Northway can back up traffic for hours. The CMP calls for an emphasis on managing congestion—rapid clearing of incidents, information for travelers to avoid incidents, and taking advantage of technology (Intelligent Transportation Systems) including signal timing and coordination. The CMP also relies on travel demand management and encourages transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel. The Plan identifies the future option of managed lanes on the expressway system. An example of a managed lane could be a “HOT” lane on the Northway—a premium service lane that allows carpoolers for free, other drivers for a toll, and allows transit service to bypass congestion. A HOT lane is identified as one of the unfunded “big ticket initiatives” in the Plan.

One of the conclusions of the analysis performed for the New Visions 2030 Plan is that there is no feasible capital improvement such as widening that can eliminate daily recurring congestion in the peak periods. ITS, incident management and operational improvements represent the most effective strategies for expressway congestion management. The CDTC Regional Operations Committee will continue to explore operational improvements to manage traffic.

Arterial management has been, and will continue to be an important tool to improve transportation system performance in the Capital District. A comprehensive arterial management program that promotes properly located and spaced driveways and controlled intersections, use of raised medians, and emphasizes connected streets, pedestrian and bicycle treatments, and transit access, in the end, supports a safe and efficient arterial street system for all users and enhances a community’s quality of life – both of which are key to every community’s economic base.

The New Visions 2030 Plan supports the development of good access management programs that provide uniform standards and procedures, and that promote their fair and equal application. The New Visions 2030 Plan recommends that the CDTC staff continue to work with State, county, and municipal governments in arterial management planning.

#### **What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

- *The Hudson River Crossing Study* was completed in 2008. The study evaluated traffic demand and operations for river crossings and made recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle facilities across the Hudson River. The study recommended

that capacity should not be increased on the Patroon Island Bridge, which supported the NYSDOT decision to rehabilitate the bridge rather than replace the bridge.

- *The Route 5 Arterial Management Study* was completed. A key set of products resulting from this study were designed to provide easy to understand, transferable tools for local development review boards in requiring access management at the site plan and broader corridor level. Other study objectives included providing a means for better coordination on access management issues across jurisdictions (i.e. municipalities/NYS DOT) and to identify opportunity sites for short to medium term implementation of access management techniques. Specific study products included:
  - The NY 5 Access Management Plan Report
  - A Site Plan Review Access Management Checklist
  - An Access Management Toolbox
  - “Opportunity Site”/Study Area Recommendations for the Route 5 corridor
  - Sample Zoning Text
  - A Powerpoint Presentation focusing on benefits of access management to various roadway users, businesses and communities for use in education and outreach to Municipal Planning Boards and others throughout the Capital District
- *The Northway Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) Study* was initiated. Incident Corridor Management is the comprehensive management of freeway, transit, arterial, and parking systems within a corridor using intelligent transportation system (ITS) technologies and innovative practices. The ICM for the Northway corridor will examine the Northway, Route 9 and connecting routes, as well as transit service and arterial management. Incident detection and verification, emergency response, management of on-site emergency personnel, clearance of vehicles and debris, and recovery to normal traffic flow will be examined and improved. Opportunities to improve transit service in the corridor will be integrated into corridor operations.
- Exit 6 of the Northway was reconstructed as a single point urban interchange, resulting in a significant improvement in traffic operations at the interchange. Pedestrian and bicycle access was significantly improved.
- The CDTC Congestion Management Process (CMP) was recognized in the FHWA document *Congestion Management Process: A Guidance Document*, as a national case study. The way in which the CDTC CMP incorporates livability was highlighted.
- The CDTC Regional Operations Committee has developed a proposal for a regional operations initiative which would provide technical traffic engineering and corridor planning services for municipalities supportive of maintaining traffic signal systems and other operations. The regional operations initiative has not yet been funded by CDTC due to limited funding.
- The City of Albany in partnership with NYSDOT has requested CDTC to conduct a planning study for the I-787 Corridor. This effort would be intended to answer questions regarding: (1) the short term and long term infrastructure needs for this facility; (2) the opportunities for alternative designs to reduce long term infrastructure costs and/or improve transportation-community compatibility; and in the context of long term needs, (3) near-term access improvements to support the City’s downtown and waterfront economic development initiatives.

- The following table illustrates the status of major projects, including congestion management capacity projects and community compatibility/economic development capacity projects.

**Major Projects, Congestion Management Capacity Projects and Community Compatibility/Economic Development Capacity Projects**

| <b>Project Title</b>                                   | <b>Total Cost</b><br>(millions of dollars) | <b>Project Type</b>  | <b>Status</b>  |
|--|--|----------------------|--|
| A240, Exit 3/Exit 4                                    | 43.912                                     | Infra, CMP, Com/Econ | Project is nearing final design  |
| A372, Watervliet Shaker Road, Sand Creek to New Karner | 6.435                                      | CMP                  | Project is being advanced by Albany County and the Town of Colonie.  |
| A295, New Karner Road                                  | 17.275                                     | Infra, CMP           | Albany County plans to implement recommendations of the Pinebush Transportation Study Update of 2004                                     |
| A290, Selkirk Bypass                                   | 8.104                                      | Com/Econ             | Town is pursuing Thruway Interchange, which would expand this project beyond Plan commitment   |
| A392, Wolf Service Road (Maxwell Phase 2)              | 2.748                                      | CMP                  | Phase 1 complete   |
| SA108, S96 Balltown                                    | 37.916                                     | Infra, Com/Econ      | Project is being developed by NYSDOT   |
| SA109, S120 Glenridge Road                             | 15.137                                     | Infra, CMP           | Construction expected in 2011  |
| S97, Route 50/Freemans Bridge Road                     | 16.000                                     | Infra, CMP           | Cost and scope to be refined; funding is not shown in the TIP.   |
| R173, I-90 Exit 8 Connector, Phase 2                   | 90.000                                     | Com/Econ             | Demo funding (\$16.362M) is insufficient to complete project; change in scope is being explored; Plan support contingent on demo funding |
| A345, Bypass for Elm St. Industrial Access             | 5.675                                      | Com/Econ             | Project has not advanced beyond initial scoping  |
| R195, South Troy Industrial Access road                | 6.648                                      | Com/Econ             | Project scope recently revised in the latest TIP   |
| A491/R268 Patroon Island Bridge                        | 100.000                                    | Infrastructure       | NYSDOT has decided to progress this project as a bridge rehabilitation project; the cost estimate is preliminary.                        |
| SA104, Batchellerville Bridge                          | 58.000                                     | Infrastructure       | Bridge replacement; contract awarded   |

1. All costs in millions of dollars.  
 2. CMP stands for "Congestion Management Process". CMP projects are consistent with CDTC's Congestion Management Principles -- including addressing critical levels of congestion, integration with demand management strategies, compatibility with the community character and plans and expectation of local land use management.

3. "Com/Econ" refers to projects which address economic development and community compatibility purposes.  
 4. "Infra" stands for "infrastructure"

## **Conclusion**

The New Visions Plan recommendations on Congestion Management have been reaffirmed by USDOT emphasis on livability in transportation. The maintenance plan will continue with an emphasis on management and operations. CDTC will renew the Congestion Management Process approved in 2007, as well as the 10 Congestion Management Planning and Investment Principles. CDTC will continue to support the Transportation Management Center (TMC), ITS and operations projects.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

CDTC used a rich data source in the development of the New Visions 2030 Plan, called the MIST data set (Management Information System for Transportation). This data set, maintained by NYSDOT, provides information on speeds, volumes and incidents for each expressway lane, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This data set was used to develop a reliability performance measure for congestion management. In the 2040 Plan update process, this data set can be used to further refine CDTC's understanding of traffic flow and congestion. Such analysis can be used to enhance and expand the capabilities of the CDTC STEP Model.

The MIST data is only available on selected segments of the expressway system. Emerging technologies and data collection systems based on using cell phones as probes hold the potential of significantly expanding the information available to CDTC for upgrading the STEP Model and increasing our understanding of congestion. Speed and delay data will be collected in greater detail and integrated into the CDTC Congestion Management Process. These data sets and their potential can be explored during the next generation Plan update. Improved data sets can also be used to improve day to day operations in managing the transportation system.

The 2040 Plan update will be able to take advantage of the completion of *The Northway Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) Study*. Opportunities to expand Integrated Corridor Management to other corridors in the region will be explored.

The 2040 Plan update will include a reassessment of major projects, congestion management capacity projects, and economic development/community compatibility capacity projects for status and priority.

**New Visions 2035 Plan Update**  
**Topic: Bicycle/Pedestrian Transportation**

**Background**

Bicycling and walking are not just leisure activities; they are viable modes of transportation and mobility for many people throughout the Capital District. Most people agree that walking and bicycling help reduce pollution, traffic delays, and fuel usage. The benefits of walking and bicycling do not end there. In addition to enhancing quality of life measures, walking and bicycling have proven to provide important and much needed health benefits, as well as having a positive impact on economic development.

CDTC has made a strong commitment to improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This means incorporating ADA compliant sidewalks and pedestrian crossings, and bicycle lanes in highway construction projects; encouraging site design by developers that provides high quality pedestrian access; developing bike/hike trails; encouraging the incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into city, village and town plans. One of the currently unfunded “big ticket initiatives” described in the Plan presents a vision for a regional greenways program that would result in 280 miles of bike-hike trails linking parks, natural areas, cultural features, historic sites, neighborhoods and retail areas.

The Policy Board approved the bicycle and pedestrian portion of New Visions 2030 which can be found at <http://www.cdtcmpto.org/rtp2030/materials/bp-doc.pdf>

**What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

There have been huge advances in bicycle and pedestrian planning since 2007, especially in terms of safety and education.

Capital Coexist

In April 2010, CDTC launched a localized bicycle education campaign, *Capital Coexist* ([www.capitalcoexist.org](http://www.capitalcoexist.org)). Capital Coexist was developed in response to the completed Albany Bicycle Master Plan and public requests for bicycle safety and education material.

Regional Bike Rack Program

CDTC staff worked closely with CDTA to develop the first regional [Bike Rack Program](#). The 2010 program was a success with more than 300 new bike racks being distributed. The program is expected to continue in 2011 using TDM funds.

NYS Pedestrian Action Plan/Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CDTC staff has played a major role in representing the NYSMPO Association on a committee looking to develop a statewide Pedestrian Action Plan. This Plan has been funded through the Governors’ Traffic Safety Committee and includes a wide array of

stakeholders. Staff has also represented the MPO Association on the NYSDOT Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

#### Linkage Planning Studies

The overwhelming majority of Linkage Program planning projects undertaken by CDTC with regional and community partners completed since 2007 consider bicycle and pedestrian issues, needs and potential improvements in development of their conceptual improvement plans. Some notable projects have included:

- **Altamont Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan:** In 2009, CDTC assisted the Village of Altamont in development of this plan with the main objective of establishing and expanding bicycle and pedestrian linkages between the Village's primary destinations and neighborhoods via creation of a non-motorized network plan.
- **City of Albany Bicycle Master Plan:** December 2009 marked the completion of this plan that established a hierarchy of routes and identification of networks to advance the vision of the City to have bicycling a viable mode of transportation.

#### Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues Task Force

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues Task Force continued to meet on a monthly basis, providing technical and policy suggestions to the Planning Committee and Policy Board. Each month, the Task Force discusses on-going Linkage projects and is encouraged to review and provide feedback on draft materials as well as participate in public forum meetings. Individual members of the Task Force are very involved with AARP's efforts to develop Complete Streets.

There are on-going discussions to improve the communication between the Task Force and the Planning Committee and Policy Boards.

#### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

CDTC was heavily involved in the **Transportation Enhancement Program** and the new SAFETEA-LU program, **Safe Routes to School**. Staff participated in the review, evaluation, and prioritization of the received applications.

Since New Visions 2030 was adopted, the Capital Region received funding for four Enhancement projects (2008). There were some concerns from the Planning Committee and Policy Board related to how projects were prioritized during the evaluation process. Staff has been working with NYSDOT Main Office to address these concerns and make suggestions to DOT Executive Management for statewide improvements to the Enhancement Program during the next solicitation.

CDTC continued its support of the **Spot Improvement Program** by increasing the funding availability during the 2010-2115 TIP update to \$250,000 per year.. Unfortunately, CMAQ funding levels were over programmed resulting in a delay of the 2010 sollicitaion. This program has grown and is essential to getting small scale bicycle

and pedestrian projects built that would normally fall under the radar of projects considered for federal aid.

The Spot Improvement Program has been able to fund a large variety of small-scale bicycle and pedestrian projects. In 2008, six projects were funded with continued emphasis of ‘filling gaps’ while maintaining geographic balance.

The Safe Routes to School Program provided an excellent opportunity for municipal/school district partnerships to be created to better the bicycle and pedestrian travel environment. In the first round, six projects were awarded funding in NYSDOT Region 1.

The ‘newness’ of the SRTS program meant there was a learning curve for NYSDOT and the MPO’s. There have been concerns about the distribution of the non-infrastructure funds. Staff is actively participating in a statewide task force to iron out existing concerns and to improve the overall program.

#### Additional Activities

CDTC is collaborating with several stakeholders to ensure that any rehabilitation to the Livingston Avenue Bridge include accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians. In addition to the Livingston Avenue Bridge, CDTC has participated in several regional forums that discuss bicycle and pedestrian issues.

Some progress has been made in implementing components of the *Greenway Concept Plan for the Capital Region*. See the *Big Ticket Initiatives* section for progress details.

#### American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

NYSDOT recently completed a draft-for-public-review [ADA Transition Plan](#) which includes information on ADA compliance status of NYSDOT facilities, including the state-owned pedestrian network. The plan outlines the steps and timeframe required to render the network compliant, with compliance defined as accessible by individuals with disabilities. To develop the ADA Transition Plan, NYSDOT undertook an extensive inventory of all state-owned sidewalks and produced region by region detailed listings and summaries of facilities needing improvement. The summary for Region 1 indicates 81% of the region’s pedestrian network is currently considered accessible, with a 100% compliance goal to be reached by 2019. A number of ARRA funded projects within the CDTC planning area included bringing pedestrian facilities along transit routes into ADA compliance in coordination with road resurfacing/rehabilitation projects and the NY5 BRT project. The ADA also requires municipal entities to develop ADA Transition Plans for their public facilities, including pedestrian facilities.

#### **Conclusions**

The level of interest in improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities has greatly increased at the federal, state, and local levels. The New Visions 2035 Plan continues CDTC’s strong commitment to bicycle and pedestrian issues. Significant progress has been made in

implementing bicycle pedestrian improvements, however, the needs are still great. As state and federal fiscal issues evolve, funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements will be an important issue during programming discussions.

New Visions continues to highlight the importance of complete streets and the community health benefits of bike-ped improvements. Staff and the Task Force continue to build upon existing ideas. The Capital Coexist campaign will continue to serve as a bicycle education and safety tool.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 update, CDTC will continue to build bicycle and pedestrian related partnerships.

The Game Plan and Toolbox that was approved as part of New Visions 2030 will require significant updating to incorporate Capital Coexist and the other on-going tasks and projects. It is felt that the bicycle and pedestrian priority network that was established as part of TEA-21 and periodically updated needs to be revisited to make it more prominent and viable when making transportation funding decisions.

The 2040 plan will include additional data collection and inventory analysis of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, potentially including an ADA compliance inventory of the local pedestrian network as a complement to what NYSDOT recently completed for the state-owned system and similar to how CDTC conducts the Highway Pavement Condition Inventory. The possibility of using interactive mapping on the CDTC website will be explored.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues Task Force has indicated the desire to increase the New Visions Plan funding commitment for bicycle/pedestrian improvement projects. This issue can be further explored in the 2040 Plan update process.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Safety**

#### **Background**

New Visions 2030 lays out a clear strategy to meet a long-standing goal of improving the safety of the transportation system for all of its users both in response to new federal requirements and recent developments in the state of the practice. The plan relies on an integrated, multi-modal approach to safety planning. This approach not only supports the continued use of traditional safety countermeasures on high speed facilities (clear zones, rumble strips, etc.), where appropriate, but also encourages the “Complete Streets” concept (where arterials, collectors and local roads are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users). In addition, the approach supports the use of innovative design techniques such as roundabouts, “visual friction” (the visual cues drivers get from the road environment to slow down), and access management techniques (to reduce conflict points between users of a roadway).

This integrated approach also recognizes that:

- education and enforcement efforts by local safety professionals have a real impact on driver behavior and
- designing improvement projects in sync with surrounding community context can help encourage responsible driving behavior.

Taken together, this approach will help reduce the level of risk for the region’s most vulnerable users of the transportation system, namely bicyclists, pedestrians, children and the elderly.

#### **What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

##### NYSMPO Safety Working Group

CDTC staff has been heavily involved with the New York State MPO Association on safety issues through the Safety Working Group (SWG). CDTC staff has chaired the SWG since 2008 and has been actively involved with the group since it began in 2005. This high level of involvement is necessary to help build the capacity of not only CDTC staff but of all of New York’s MPOs to integrate safety into the planning process.

Since 2007, SWG activities have resulted in:

- direct training of CDTC staff on subjects such as Road Safety Audits, Older Drivers, Designing Pedestrian Safe Streets, and the AASHTO Highway Safety Manual.
- development of Safety Assessment (SA) Guidelines for local roadways which outline a process to improve safety on all types of local transportation facilities for all types of users. Completed in 2009 through a NYSDOT State Planning and Research grant in partnership with the MPO Association, these Guidelines have been promoted to CDTC’s member agencies as a low cost tool to review and improve safety.

- the opportunity for the MPOs and especially CDTC to be at the table on safety related issues in NYS as the state implements the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which was updated in early 2010 with SWG and CDTC staff involvement.
- an FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Peer Exchange hosted by the SWG at the MPO Annual Meeting in June 2010 through FHWA's HSIP peer to peer program. The Louisiana DOT, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Council and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission along with the NY MPOs, DOT and others participated in this one day event to share information on local safety planning initiatives. A summary of the event can be found at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/p2p/ny/>.

### NYS Traffic Safety Information Systems Strategic Plan

New York State, through the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) and the Institute for Transportation Safety Management and Research (ITSMR), implemented a multi-year strategic plan to improve the state's traffic records systems. Updated annually, the NYS Traffic Safety Information Systems Strategic Plan addresses:

- deficiencies in state data systems such as crash, roadway, and vehicle data systems.
- changes to these systems to address issues such as data access, timeliness and quality.

The Strategic Plan process allows for federal funds through GTSC to be designated for projects that improve traffic records systems, specifically and significantly improving the safety data systems in NYS since 2007. CDTC staff has been actively involved in this process representing the SWG on the Traffic Records Coordinating Council.

### Accident Location Information System (ALIS) crash data application

In 2009, NYSDOT introduced the ALIS crash data application which was largely funded through the traffic records strategic planning process. This internet accessible database provides much more detail regarding the location of crashes on the off-state system and allows for a direct download of crash data into other software types for additional analysis. The application includes two modules: the Location Editing/Simple Query Report (LESQR) and the Query Reporting Analysis (QRA). CDTC staff assisted NYSDOT on the development of the QRA module.

CDTC has used the ALIS application:

- to continue its work on the safety pilot project in Rensselaer County which is intended to analyze crashes on county and locally owned roadways to identify locations of interest for additional safety analysis, perhaps through a Safety Assessment. This pilot project is intended to provide a model for the region in the development of a formal safety management system for CDTC.
- in the Transportation Improvement Program project evaluation process to calculate safety benefits.
- to identify existing safety issues in study areas of Linkage Program planning initiatives.

- in the evaluation process for projects ultimately programmed in the 2007-2012 TIP, for which CDTC established and programmed two safety related regional set-asides: RG104: Intersections, Queue Jumpers and Roundabouts Set-Aside (\$5.0 M) and RG105: Safety Set-Aside for Non-State Roads (\$7.52 M). Seven projects were funded through these set-asides. In addition, the 2010-2015 TIP update process led to the programming of three additional safety related projects.

Over the past three years much has also been achieved on bicycle and pedestrian safety and education. The details are described in the summary on bicycle and pedestrian issues but a few highlights include the launch of a localized bicycle safety education campaign, *Capital Coexist* ([www.capitalcoexist.org](http://www.capitalcoexist.org)) in April 2010 and CDTC's direct involvement in the Safe Routes to School program which funded four projects in the Capital Region.

ITS was identified in the New Visions 2030 Safety plan as important to improving safety in the Capital District. Much has also been achieved on operations and ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) since 2007. The details are described in the summary on Congestion, Arterial Management and Expressways.

## **Conclusions**

The progress made since 2007 has validated the principles, strategies and actions related to regional safety planning in New Visions 2030, the first long range regional transportation plan that dealt with the new era of safety planning as required in SAFETEA-LU. While much of the last three years has been spent in capacity building, the New Visions 2035 plan will continue to support this important aspect of safety planning and positions CDTC to be prepared for the future.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

It has been speculated nationally that the next federal transportation bill, in whatever form it takes, will have even more emphasis on safety than SAFETEA-LU. Therefore, the efforts undertaken on safety through the 2035 plan will position CDTC to quickly react to any future changes in federal safety policy for the 2040 plan. In addition, through the work of the Safety Working Group (SWG), CDTC will be looking at best practices in performance measurement for safety, an issue that has gained increased attention at the federal level. CDTC will also continue to make progress on its safety initiatives, further integrating safety into the planning process and will continue to work with NYSDOT on identifying safety projects for the use of Highway Safety Improvement Program funds on important local system locations/programs.

The TIP evaluation process for new projects utilizes a benefit/cost ratio as a key consideration and safety benefits are one of the input values. With improved crash data access and an improving [national dataset on crash reduction factors](#) CDTC staff will continue to monitor updates to this dataset and to explore a refinement of the safety benefit calculation for the TIP.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Travel Demand Management - TDM**

#### **Background**

The New Visions Plan continues to call for a variety of programs and initiatives aimed at managing travel demand. Park and Ride lots, encouraging car pooling and vanpooling, telecommuting, staggered work hours, employer based programs, guaranteed ride home, and support of use of non-auto modes such as transit, bicycling and walking are strongly supported by CDTC.

CDTC has made a strong commitment to designing and implementing Travel Demand Management or TDM programs. \$525,000 in Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds is programmed annually to support TDM activities. CDTA, the region's transit authority, has access to the funds and in cooperation with CDTC staff, identifies, designs and implements a variety of pilot and permanent TDM programs. The effectiveness of each program is assessed, and CDTA drafts an annual summary report highlighting all of the TDM programs.

#### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

A plethora of TDM activities have been advanced since the New Visions 2030 Plan was approved in 2007. CDTA created a "TDM Specialist" position within their organization for the purpose of developing and monitoring TDM programs and for reaching out to potential partners. These activities include:

##### Transit Pass Subsidies

One of the earliest efforts to promote transit with subsidies was a program targeted to New York State employees. Through this program:

- CDTA provided transit pass subsidies for members of the Professional Employees Federation (PEF) and the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA).
- participants received a 25% discount (higher than offered through CDTA's regular Corporate Program) on the purchase of CDTA monthly bus passes (Swipers).
- Set a principal goal to establish a permanent commuter benefit program because of the high percentage of state employees in the Capital Region workforce. The transit subsidy program was very popular among state employees. However, the goal of establishing a permanent commuter benefit program was not achieved.
- CDTA then transitioned to an approach to continue the deep discount when the 3-year sunset on the use of CMAQ funds for the program came, until the inception of NYS-Ride program, which is a pre-tax commuter transit pass program for New York State employees.

##### Carpool/Ride Matching

In 2008, TDM monies programmed in the TIP were used to upgrade the Commuter Register on-line carpool information website to a GIS based platform, powered by

GreenRide. At that time, a re-branding of the Commuter Register occurred, with the site renamed “iPool2” to complement CDTA’s iRide campaign.

The [iPool2.org](http://iPool2.org) website:

- is designed to be a one-stop for all commuter related information.
- contains information on Park and Ride Lots (with Google maps for directions), Transit Services, and the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program. The GRH program was partnered with Access Transit, so that taxi rides are scheduled and pre-paid for by Access Transit, eliminating the requirement (except for after hours situations) for users to pay for an emergency ride home out of pocket and complete paperwork for reimbursement.
- has resulted in the creation of over 1,000 iPool2 accounts with the estimated number of carpools formed eliminating over a million miles of VMT and reducing about 400 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. Prior to the iPool2 platform, the Commuter Register averaged about 40 carpool ads per year.

### Van Pools

In the spring of 2009, CDTC, CDTA, and the Albany Downtown BID partnered with VPSI, a national vanpool firm, and submitted a successful proposal to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to start a vanpool pilot project in the Capital Region.

The NYSERDA grant is used to subsidize the cost of the vanpool lease by \$500 per month and to do limited marketing, with the project partners supplying an in-kind match by marketing the program to area employers and individual commuters.

To date, ten vanpools have been formed, with each vanpool driving an average of 62 miles per day, with the longest commute of 95 miles and the shortest commute of 28 miles, resulting in the elimination of nearly 655,000 miles of vehicle travel (VMT). The VMT data can be reported by CDTA to the National Transit Database (NTD).

As a result, CDTA, which already reports to the NTD for Urbanized Area Formula funding for current bus service, will garner additional funding to go toward vanpooling. Because there is a two-year delay in receiving funding from the start of a vanpool service, the NYSERDA contract bridges the gap between the initiation of the program and the arrival of formula funding.

### Additional TDM Programs

The [Occasional Use Parking](#) program is a partnership of CDTA, CDTC and the Albany Parking Authority which:

- allows Swiper transit pass holders to park up to 5 times per month in pocket lots located along Central Avenue, at the WAMC public lot at Central and Quail, and at the Quackenbush parking lot.
- using “Smart Meters” to track use and prevent fraud, allows CDTA customers the flexibility to drive to work on occasions when they need their personal vehicle, increasing the attractiveness of becoming a regular transit rider.

### [LINK](#)

A long standing program, the LINK, provides free transfers to the CDTA system with a “LINK” Ticket to commuters arriving in the Capital District from a long-distance bus carrier, thereby encouraging bus commuting by allowing a free local connection to Capital District destinations. LINK also increases CDTA ridership and the viability of the long-distance carriers, resulting in a monthly average of 4,200 rides in 2010.

### TMA

With the aid of a consultant, CDTA and CDTC staffs investigated the feasibility of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in the Harriman Campus area. A TMA is a non-profit, member-controlled organization that promotes alternative modes of transportation in a particular area, such as a commercial district, mall, medical center, university campus, or industrial park. Surveyed employers indicated an interest in participating in a TMA; however, lack of traffic congestion, a clear champion, and stakeholder funding commitments significantly detracts from the likelihood of success at this point in time. The consultant recommended creation of a Transportation Coordinator Network as an informal TMA program, to demonstrate private sector leadership.

### Additional CDTA Transit Pass Subsidies

Three programs provide free unlimited access 31-day rolling passes for CDTA fixed route services; participants are required to complete entrance and exit surveys to track each program’s effect on travel behavior:

- Homeowners’ Incentive Program
- Transit for Refugees and Immigrants Program
- Sustainable Housing Partnership

### Regional [Park and Ride](#)

In early 2009, CDTA commissioned a consultant study of the existing park and ride lot infrastructure. The scope of work, crafted by CDTA and CDTC staff, includes an inventory of existing lots and their usage, determination of potential express transit service markets and identification of potential site locations for the development of additional park and ride facilities for transit, carpooling, and vanpooling.

### [Price Chopper AdvantEdge for Transit](#)

In March 2010, an innovative pilot partnership with Price Chopper created a bus pass version of Price Chopper’s very popular Fuel AdvantEdge Program. CDTA sells passes and tickets to Price Chopper at the 10% corporate discount. CDTA bus riders redeem Fuel AdvantEdge Points for discounts on bus passes, a \$2 discount is “equivalent” to each 10¢ fuel discount earned. CDTA and Price Chopper equally split the difference on pass and ticket sales that receive a discount greater than the 10% corporate discount. Recently, the program expanded and transit passes are now sold at all 42 Price Chopper stores in the Capital Region. This promotional effort addresses a number of objectives to make transit more attractive, including a long-term increase in the number of sales outlets, discounts for new and loyal riders, and a significant increase in the visibility of transit.

### TDM Website

In November 2010 CDTA, in partnership with CDTC, was awarded a NYSERDA grant to develop a TDM website to increase awareness of various transportation modes and illustrate the impact of single-occupancy vehicle use on the transportation system and environment. CDTA and CDTC will work with Zone 5, a web and graphic design firm, to create the site which will include:

- an emissions calculator
- alternative transportation amenity maps
- vanpool routes
- photo and video galleries
- CDTA service advisory alerts.

The implementation of this website will have a positive impact on the existing transportation infrastructure and economic well being of the Capital District, while also helping protect the environment by increasing the visibility and appeal of existing resources that reduce pollution and consumption of energy resources.

### **Conclusions**

With recent and expected continuing emphasis on the NYS Climate Action Plan and NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities program, of which several Capital District municipalities are now part, the marketing and outreach efforts of the 2035 Plan's TDM strategies as continued from the New Visions 2030 Plan, sync well with the recommended actions of those two efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The New Visions 2035 Plan strengthens CDTC's commitment to transportation demand Management Programs. The strong record of implementing past plans via the TIP, resulting in significant annual allocations to support these TDM activities, has provided an established foundation for their continuation, producing a tangible set and variety of benefits to the region's transportation system, quality of life, and environment.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 update, CDTC will continue to build TDM programs and will continue to market them to area employers. The NYSERDA grant for the vanpool pilot is expiring, so a heavy emphasis on marketing the vanpool program, with the help of NYSERDA's consultant, Action Research, will use results from an employer survey to identify employers that would be willing to entertain promoting vanpooling and carpooling to their employees. The Regional Park and Ride lot consultant study will provide recommendations for additional lots, additional express transit services, and transit priority on highways. These recommendations will be incorporated into the 2040 New Visions Plan.

The 2040 plan will present valuable statistics on the effectiveness of transit pass subsidies, vanpool subsidies, programs that make transit more attractive and parking policies.

**New Visions 2035 Plan Update**  
**Topic: Elderly and Disabled**

**Background**

The New Visions 2030 Plan addressed the needs of the elderly and mobility disabled population in several ways. The Plan recognized that the population is aging and that the mobility expectations of this next generation of “elderly” persons will be higher than its earlier counterparts. Some of the plan’s action items addressed this by recommending improved signage and sign reflectivity and improved site distances, particularly at intersections. Other action items addressed mobility concerns of both the elderly and mobility disabled populations. The Plan called for locating human service agencies, senior housing, assisted living and nursing homes in places that are easily served by transit. The plan also called for coordination of human service agency transportation and for regional mobility management.

During the last New Visions update, the newly passed SAFETEA-LU legislation contained a new requirement for coordination. The Legislation required projects selected for funding under the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program, the New Freedom Program and the Section 5310 Elderly Individuals with Disabilities Program to be “derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan”, and that the plan be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public”.

The result was the **Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the Capital District**, drafted in early 2007 and adopted in June 2007. The Plan and its recommendations were incorporated into the New Visions 2030 material. Since the coordination requirements and recommendations of the Plan had been newly adopted as part of the New Visions 2030 Plan adoption, little had been done in the realm of implementation at that time.

**What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (RTCC)

JARC

With the direction of the Coordinated Plan and newly formed Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (RTCC), great strides have been made in the coordination arena since New Visions 2030 was adopted.

Prior to the passage of SAFETEA-LU, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds were not allocated to states and regions by formula (based on the number of low-income persons), but were discretionary grants. Between 1999 and 2007, CDTA prepared applications for JARC funding, on behalf of its four constituent Capital District counties and had successfully garnered four discretionary grants totaling over \$2M.

The Coordinated Plan clearly recommended that the existing JARC program activities should be continued with formula allocations. However, SAFETEA-LU required that a funding solicitation be drafted and circulated in the region, opening up the application process to all those who were interested. CDTC staff drafted two JARC solicitations, one in 2007, and one in 2010. Both were advertised using Public Notices, email and on CDTC's webpage. In both cases, CDTA was the only applicant and proposed to continue funding trip planner positions, the safety net brokerage and a mobility manager. These are all very successful aspects of the JARC program and are recommended to continue in the Coordinated Plan. It is uncertain if the JARC program will continue in future federal transportation legislation.

#### New Freedom Program (NFP)

The SAFETEA-LU legislation established the New Freedom Program (NFP) as a formula program based upon the number of persons with disabilities residing in the metropolitan area. The Albany-Schenectady-Troy urban area's apportionment was about \$650,000 over 5 years. According to the legislation, the purpose of the NFP is to provide new public services and alternatives *beyond* the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to assist individuals with disabilities. As with the JARC program, SAFETEA-LU required that a funding solicitation be drafted and circulated in the region, opening up the application process to all interested parties. CDTC staff drafted two New Freedom solicitations, one in 2008, and one in 2009. Both were advertised using Public Notices, email and on CDTC's webpage. Very few agencies submitted proposals, probably due to the required 50/50 match for operating service. An evaluation committee, drawn from the RTCC committee, was formed to evaluate the project proposals submitted by area human service agencies. Four very innovative projects were approved as a result of this process:

#### **Project 1: Trip Scheduling and Dispatch Software**

Catholic Charities of Schenectady County purchased, installed, and maintains trip scheduling and dispatch software. Sufficient licenses were purchased to enable Schenectady County ARC to use the software and to potentially add other Schenectady County human service agencies. Catholic Charities and Schenectady County ARC each provided 50% of the match. This project is a very successful collaborative effort and will likely grow to include additional human service agencies.

#### **Project 2: Schenectady County Weekend Service for Mobility Disabled Persons**

Catholic Charities of Schenectady County received New Freedom funds to conduct a feasibility study of expanding weekend service to seniors, most of whom are frail and mobility challenged. Using New Freedom monies and match dollars, Catholic Charities began demand responsive accessible transportation service on weekends in October 2009. One way fees range from \$4.00 to \$6.00. This project addressed the need for additional weekend service

for the mobility disabled population –a significant need outlined in the Coordinated Plan. Catholic Charities also has a contract with the Eddy, an area Nursing Home to provide weekend transportation to and from dialysis, expanding collaborative efforts even further. Weekend ridership is growing steadily. The van has also been booked by senior groups on weekends and during the evening hours to recreational and entertainment venues.

### **Project 3: Fixed Route Feeder Service in the City of Watervliet and Green Island**

The City of Watervliet requested funds to purchase a 15 passenger accessible vehicle that would be used to provide feeder transit service within the city, connecting senior housing and other residential complexes to retail and recreational facilities. The feeder service, which began in the summer of 2010, connects to CDTA's fixed route service and will serve a limited section of Green Island; ridership is growing steadily.

### **Project 4: CDTA Accessible Taxi Program**

Under the New Freedom Program, there is a separate allocation for the Saratoga Springs Urban Area. Although two separate New Freedom Solicitations were circulated, no proposers came forward with projects for the Saratoga Springs Urban Area. As a result, about \$21,000 was forfeited in FFY '06. The RTCC suggested that CDTA come forward with a project to spend down the remaining allocations for this area, so the region would not forfeit the remaining \$66,300 in federal funds. The RTCC suggested that CDTA use the remaining A-S-T New Freedom funds for accessible taxis in the greater urbanized area, a need identified in the adopted Coordinated Plan. CDTA submitted an application to purchase up to 10 accessible taxis (8 for deployment in Albany-Schenectady-Troy and 2 for deployment in Saratoga) and "lease" the taxis to taxi companies operating in Saratoga Springs and the greater Capital Region. The "lease" fee is considered match. An RFP was developed and Yellow Taxi was awarded the contract for the first two accessible taxi's which were deployed in late 2010.

There is a separate FFY 2011 allocation of New Freedom funds available to Saratoga County for projects such as the ones highlighted above. Discussions with a group of Saratoga County organizations have been occurring, with the Saratoga ARC taking the lead. A volunteer driver program is being considered. If that is not feasible for the dollars available, the Saratoga ARC is considering implementation of a weekend transportation program similar to the one that Catholic Charities offers; a decision is likely in early 2011.

### **Section 5310**

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), through its Transit Bureau, administers the Section 5310 program. Section 5310 funds can only be used to purchase vehicles in NYS, at an 80/20 federal to local match ratio. NYS has a well-

established process, which includes an inter-agency review committee, for selecting fund grantees on a discretionary basis. CDTC is one member of the committee annually reviewing grant applications for this area. SAFETEA-LU legislation required that the MPO confirm that the proposed service to be provided by the requested vehicles would not duplicate effort and would be consistent with the coordinated plan. The result has been increased dialogue between human service agencies, additional members to the RTCC. Attendance at the Committee's meetings has grown as has involvement in coordination activities.

#### Schenectady County Long Term Care Consortium

The Schenectady County Long Term Care Consortium was formed in 2002 to promote the long term health and well being of Schenectady County residents. In 2006, the Consortium released *Building Partnerships for an Aging Community: 2006-2008 Strategic Plan*. The Plan includes goals and milestones in three service priority areas – Information and Assistance, Service Coordination, and Transportation –the Consortium formed workgroups to provide leadership for advancing each strategic priority. A CDTA staff person chairs the transportation workgroup; CDTC staff is a participant. A special forum of Schenectady County Senior Transportation Service Providers was held in 2008 and was sponsored by the Transportation Committee of the Schenectady County Long Term Care Consortium. About fifteen community senior transportation service providers participated. Objectives of the event were threefold:

- To provide an overview of the Schenectady County Long Term Care Consortium mission, goals and objectives and engage community providers as active Consortium members,
- To identify barriers, gaps and opportunities in the Coordination of senior transportation services among community providers from experienced community leaders,
- To explore future ways community providers might collaboratively address identified barriers to better serve their senior clients.

The event was well attended and several follow-up discussions between several human service agencies were held. Some coordination has taken place as a result.

#### CDTA's STAR Service, Special Fare Policies and 100% Accessible Transit Buses

CDTA's special transit service (STAR) began operation in the summer of 1982. The service was designed for use by any Capital District resident unable to utilize CDTA's fixed route bus service because of a disability. The STAR fleet consists of 34 vehicles. 220,521 elderly and/or handicapped people were provided specialized trips during fiscal year 09/10; 217,474 in FY 08/09. So far in FY 10/11. STAR is showing a 7% increase in ridership over 09/10 levels and demand is expected to continue to grow. The financial impact of the substantial subsidies required to provide this service is one of the major operating and fiscal issues facing CDTA.

Federal regulations mandate that transit fares for elderly and disabled riders during off-peak hours be no more than one-half the base peak-hour fare. CDTA, since 2008, has

offered half fare to the elderly and disabled without time restriction – it is available all of the time. The total number of half fare rides was to close to 1.65 million in FY10. The cost of providing half fares was \$1,237,000. The growth in the cost of the program is attributable to changing demographics and the aging of the baby boom generation; costs will likely continue to grow.

CDTA replaced its entire fixed route fleet between 1998 and 2003 with low floor buses, making it 100% accessible. 14,896 wheelchairs were loaded on to a fixed route bus in fiscal year 08/09, and 14,439 in FY 09/10. Wheelchair boardings on the fixed route system are consistently higher in the summer months.

Over the past several years, CDTA has improved bus stop amenities and accessibility and has worked cooperatively with area municipalities and NYSDOT to improve ADA compliance and pedestrian amenities along transit routes. Work on pedestrian access, including issues related to the elderly and mobility disabled population, will continue as opportunities arise.

CDTA conducts “town meetings” to gather feedback from users of the STAR service on a biannual basis. The last two meetings were held in May 2010 and December 2010, and another is scheduled for May 2011. The sessions serve as a mechanism by which information regarding changes in STAR service can be disseminated. Also, the meetings provide an opportunity for STAR users to comment on how CDTA can better serve the disabled community. CDTA will continue to conduct STAR town meetings during the 2010-11 fiscal year.

## **Conclusion**

With the SAFETEA-LU requirements for coordination still in effect, and the positive results this regional coordination has achieved, these enhanced efforts will continue under the New Visions 2035 plan. The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the Capital District must be updated every four years, with the next update due in 2011. The updated Coordinated Plan will outline everything discussed above, and will reflect 2010 Census data that was recently released.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 update, CDTC will conduct another, shortened version of the 2006 survey of Human Service Agencies located in the Capital District. A partnership with the [211 system](#), run by United Way will allow CDTC staff to have access to the most recent data base of agencies. The survey will be conducted on-line, and United Way staff will pre-notify agencies and send out reminder notices as needed. An on-line instrument like survey monkey will be used, which will automatically summarize responses to the survey. The survey should be complete by Fall 2011 and will be incorporated into the Coordinated Plan.

CDTA will continue to run Access Transit which was formed in 1997 for the purpose of "brokering" medical trips for Medicaid clients. Approximately 206,000 trips were brokered by ACCESS Transit in both 2009 and 2010 to Medicaid eligible residents of Rensselaer and Schenectady counties. The number of brokered trips has been rising; in 2008 approximately 180,000 trips were brokered. CDTA has consolidated its call center operations to improve efficiency, and is positioning itself to attract additional brokerage contracts. STAR service will continue as well, and the number of trips provided is likely to increase. Feedback from the CDTA run "Town meetings" will also be used to tweak the system and will be incorporated into the 2011 Coordinated Plan.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Environmental Impacts/Sustainability**

#### **Background**

The New Visions 2030 Plan addressed Environmental Impacts and Sustainability in several ways and provided a framework for improving regional environmental quality. With its strong emphasis on smart growth and fostering a safe, multi-modal and well managed system that works well for all users, the New Visions 2030 plan contributes to urban revitalization, attractive suburban and rural centers, and preservation of open space, while working to minimize capacity expansion for single occupant vehicles. Related beneficial environmental impacts include a reduction in energy consumption, avoidance of disruption of natural and cultural resources and reduction in air pollution, and protection of environmental justice populations. Protecting the environment and creating a more sustainable transportation system is an important *New Visions 2030* strategy, particularly in light of global climate change.

The New Visions 2030 plan was the first to be developed and adopted under SAFETEA-LU planning requirements. One new planning factor required that the projects, strategies and services considered and provided for in the regional long-range plan not only promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns, but also work to protect and enhance the environment. New requirements were also placed on both the content and consultation process in developing plan elements related to environmental protection including a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out those activities; this discussion was required to be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies. CDTC initiated consultation on the draft plan with a wide array of agencies and groups responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation within the region. A scan of CDTC's innovative practices included in the New Visions 2030 plan revealed a wide array of ways the region works to lessen the environmental impacts of transportation while fostering a sustainable region. CDTC also obtained a series of maps and geographic information system files on various natural and cultural resources and protected open space within the four county CDTC planning area. CDTC's approach to meeting these requirements was highlighted in a recent FHWA Case Study, [\*Environmental Mitigation in Transportation Planning Case Studies in Meeting SAFETEA-LU Section 6001 Requirements.\*](#)

CDTC staff has performed the role of coordinator for the [Capital District Clean Communities coalition](#) since 2001. The Capital Region was designated a "Clean City" by the US Department of Energy in April 1999. The Capital District provides substantial opportunities for the expansion of the alternative fuel marketplace, particularly with the large state vehicle fleet that operates in the area. Stakeholders in the Capital District Clean Communities (CDCC) coalition have become much more involved and proactive in the mission of the coalition. The alternative fuels currently in use in the Capital

District are compressed natural gas (CNG), propane, bio-diesel, ethanol and electricity. Coalition stakeholders own and operate 374 CNG, 40 propane, 56 electric and 853 bio-diesel vehicles. In addition, there are 608 hybrid-electric and 2395 flex-fuel (ethanol) vehicles in the NYS fleet that are housed and operate primarily in the Capital District.

### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

#### Alternative Fuel Projects

Since 2007, a range of alternative fuel related projects have been facilitated by the CDCC or have been funded through federal transportation or NYSERDA funds. Projects range from:

- establishment of twelve public E-85 fueling stations
- purchase of propane school buses for three area school districts, with several of these districts now intending to eventually power their full fleets by propane
- installation of a public CNG fueling station
- purchase of alternative fuel vehicles by UAlbany, Coca Cola, Verizon and National Grid for their fleets in the Capital Region using ARRA funds.

Using Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) monies programmed in the 2010-15 TIP as a set aside for a Diesel Retrofit program, four projects were funded in the cities of Watervliet and Schenectady, Schenectady County and the Town of Niskayuna. With setaside funds remaining, CDTA requested \$292,475 to retrofit 24 transit buses. Since 2007 CDTA committed to replacing much of their fleet with Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) technology and now has over 60 hybrid electric buses. The hybrid transit buses achieve almost 25% improved fuel efficiency, are less noisy and operate in electric mode while idling. CDTA also has about a dozen non-revenue hybrid electric vehicles.

#### Development of a NYS Climate Action Plan

In December 2009, CDTC staff became a member of the Climate Action Council's Transportation and Land Use Technical Work Group, charged with defining actions the state could implement to help achieve an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The result of this Technical Work Group's efforts, along with those from the other Technical Work Groups, were incorporated into the full final draft [NYS Climate Action Plan](#) submitted to the Governor in the fall of 2010; public comment and review ends February 7, 2011. Recommendations from the Transportation and Land Use Technical Work Group are all consistent with CDTC's 2030 New Visions Plan and focus on many of the successful activities CDTC and CDTA have been involved in—land use planning, transit oriented development, smart growth, alternative fuels, TDM, and pedestrian and bicycle amenity programs.

The TDM activities (see TDM section) that CDTC is involved in contribute to a reduction in GHG emissions and maintaining environmental quality. It is estimated that the iPool2 program has reduced GHG emissions by almost 900,000 pounds. The vanpool program alone has reduced emissions by 592,000 pounds. Improved transit, pedestrian and bicycle amenities all contribute to a healthier environment.

### Natural and Cultural Resources Mapping

During the 2010 – 2015 TIP Update proposed projects having potential for significant environmental impacts were mapped against natural and cultural resources location information to identify possible overlaps and generalized environmental impacts. Prospective project sponsors were provided a link to the environmental resources mapping to assist in discerning if a proposed project fell within a resource area and to potentially foster up front or “broader than project specific” mitigation efforts.

### FHWA’s *Everyday Counts* and *Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL)* Initiatives

FHWA’s *Every Day Counts* initiative sets up a framework for considering and incorporating documents and decisions from the earliest stages of project planning into the environmental review process through to project design. Through this integrated process, much of the data and analysis undertaken during planning can be more easily carried forward into project development activities, better connecting the planning process and environmental assessment required during project development (design) under NEPA. In practice, these two processes are often disconnected. Use of FHWA’s *Every Day Counts* initiative can lead to more seamless decision-making that minimizes duplication of effort, promotes environmental stewardship, and reduces delays in project development. FHWA is encouraging States and MPOs to explore ways to integrate EDC into the planning process by using some form of FHWA’s Planning and Environmental (PEL) questionnaire to ensure that planning information is properly documented for use in the NEPA process.

CDTC has been participating in events, and is continually tracking available tools, related to FHWA’s *Planning and Environmental Linkages* or *PEL* initiative which strives to bring transportation planning and implementation agencies together with natural and cultural resource agencies to facilitate earlier, enhanced coordination and communication. The intent is to link planning and programming with project development more strongly in a streamlined manner, hopefully resulting in avoidance of environmental impacts, more effective mitigation approaches, and even environmental enhancements when implementing projects. Through these initial efforts, updated web-based resource inventories are being disseminated.

### Smart Growth

CDTC staff participates in the Capital District Smart Growth Forum facilitated by Empire State Future. This forum meets quarterly to discuss smart growth and sustainability efforts by a variety of public agencies and non-profits focused on affordable housing, historic preservation, regional planning, open space preservation, and the environment.

### **Conclusion**

The New Visions 2035 plan maintains and strengthens CDTC’s commitment to environmental sustainability. Consistent with recommendations in the NYS Climate Action Plan, the Capital District Clean Communities coalition will continue to expand as will TDM activities including a website to increase awareness of various transportation

modes and illustrate the impact of single-occupancy vehicle use on the transportation system and environment.

Using recently developed web-based natural and cultural resource inventories as well as NYSDOT's Environmental Viewer, CDTC will be in a stronger position to refine the GIS-based screening process for TIP project candidates and other planning efforts, including Linkage planning studies. Consistent with the potential array of tasks to be undertaken as part of the *Energy and Climate Change Initiative* outlined in CDTC's current Unified Planning Work Program, staff will begin the process to create an integrated community and transportation design toolkit to help in developing sustainable transportation and development projects, and other activities. This work will build upon the *New Visions Guidebook*. In addition, as recommended in the New Visions 2030 Plan, expanding CDTC's membership to restore the NYSDEC as a CDTC member will be sought once the new administration has settled in. Adding NYSDEC as a member agency will allow for enhanced communication and information sharing regarding the region's critical environmental issues, environmental resources, and to ensure broader coordination of land use/transportation planning efforts.

The New Visions 2035 Plan also provides the continued foundation for strengthening efforts to implement initiatives intended to more effectively link transportation planning with environmental review and other aspects of development/design of projects.

To meet the consultation requirements New Visions 2035 draft plan materials will be distributed to an updated consultation list that will include new sustainability focused groups such as the Capital District Smart Growth Forum, Sustainable Saratoga, ECOS, and the NYSDEC designated Climate Smart Communities in the region.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 update, CDTC will continue to build membership in the Clean Communities coalition and will continue to fund the coordinator position. The coordinator will continue to attend USDOE national clean cities events and continue dialogue with other coalitions. Using map based information resulting from the work to be done by CDRPC to track land consumption as mentioned in the Integrated Design section, generalized impacts/encroachment on mapped natural and cultural resources will be monitored in relation to potential future transportation projects and programs. Federal and State level legislative and programmatic activities related to global climate change and adaptation will be monitored and incorporated into New Visions 2040 plan work.

**New Visions 2035 Plan Update**  
**Topic: Public Participation**

**Background**

The New Visions Plan went through an extensive and in depth public participation process. The New Visions 2030 development included the Quality Region Task Force, five working groups, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, the Goods Movement Task force, and the Finance Task Force; and public involvement in dozens of Linkage studies at the local level. The CDTC Policy Board released draft Plan materials for public review. CDTC staff worked with the “Quality Region Task Force” to look for gaps in this new material and to help develop more polished summary materials for even wider public distribution. In October 2007 CDTC’s Policy Board approved the New Visions 2030 Plan, which fully reflects the planning requirements of SAFETEA-LU, including communication with an extensive list of natural and cultural resource stakeholders related to the new environmental mitigation/consultation requirements of the law, and the CDTC [Public Participation Policy](#). After the Plan was approved, a summary [New Visions brochure](#) for the New Visions 2030 Plan was developed and distributed widely.

**What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

CDTC has continued to reach out for public participation, public information and comment through a variety of methods and forums including:

Websites

The [iPool2](#) commuter information and [Capital Coexist](#) bicycle awareness websites were launched providing carpool/alternative commuting options information and a localized education campaign geared towards cyclists and motorists safely *coexisting* when using the region’s roadways, respectively.

CDTC’s main website, [www.cdtempo.org](http://www.cdtempo.org) continues to provide a valuable tool to share information, post announcements and provide a central location for all CDTC products to be easily viewed. To the greatest extent possible, CDTC’s website is organized and formatted to accommodate persons with visual disabilities. Work has begun on a translator on the website for Limited English Proficiency (LEP), as well as a methodology to create interactive TIP mapping.

Social Media

CDTC has initiated the use of social media and recently adopted a new [social media policy](#) to address both the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way many people now communicate and obtain information online. The policy states that CDTC may use social media tools to reach a broader audience: CDTC encourages the use of social media to further its goals and the mission(s); and the best, most appropriate CDTC use of social media is to provide relevant, timely, and useful information to the public.

### [Newsletter](#)

The new CDTC newsletter *In Motion* has been published regularly since its inaugural issue in the Spring of 2008. CDTC launched its newsletter to help carry out a commitment to meaningful public participation in the regional transportation planning process which requires a concerted effort to make the wealth of available information accessible to as many people as possible. The newsletter is intended to provide readers with helpful information on transportation planning, technology, projects, and programs in the Capital District region. Information on timely topics such as NY5 BRT, projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or ARRA program, development of the 2010-2015 TIP and others have been included in recent newsletters which are available on CDTC's website and mailed to over 1,200 recipients.

### [Linkage Program](#)

CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program continues as the primary community level public participation tool designed to fulfill the adopted principles and strategies in New Visions 2030 by providing assistance to communities undertaking local planning initiatives to integrate land use and transportation. Since its inception, CDTC has funded 66 planning studies in 39 Capital Region communities ranging from the largest city to some of the smallest towns and villages. Each Linkage study must be guided by a Study Advisory Committee and each must hold at least two formal public outreach sessions, with some studies holding additional sessions or supplemental stakeholder outreach efforts. The first public session is typically held early in the process, while the second session is usually held at near the end of the planning process to allow for public comment on the ideas and concepts being proposed and to get 'buy-in' from key stakeholders. Meetings are usually held in the evening to be accessible to the greatest number of people. Public comment is accepted and encouraged at any point in the Linkage study process. The type of public outreach (charrettes, workshops, surveys, neighborhood meetings, etc.) varies to fit the study scale, what is appropriate to reach stakeholders, and compatibility with the community's structure, politics and style.

### [Ongoing CDTC Task Forces](#)

Task forces are working groups assigned a specific task or subject area and who are responsible to the Planning Committee for recommendations regarding their subject matter. There are currently has several issue-oriented task forces related to CDTC planning processes; these meet at their own schedule and pace, following overall guidelines dependent on the group. Mailing lists for meeting notices are developed and regularly updated to include interested parties; meetings are open to the public. Task Forces have their own 'section' of the CDTC website where products and other relevant materials are posted. Currently the most active Task Forces are the Bike/Pedestrian Task Force and the Regional Transportation Coordination Committee, others include a Goods Movement Task Force and a Region Operations Committee.

### **Conclusions**

The New Visions 2035 Plan will continue to support CDTC's extensive use of public participation in the planning process. The New Visions 2035 Plan will go through a wide

public review. However, based on the strong support the New Visions Plan continues to receive, and because of the short time frame necessary for maintenance plan development, the public participation process for the maintenance plan will not be as in depth as for the 2030 Plan development. Instead, the development of the 2040 Plan, which will begin at the end of 2011, will offer the opportunity for more in depth dialogue with the public.

The New Visions 2030 Plan identified the need for broad community outreach to communities to explain the land use recommendations of the Plan and to seek broader and more consistent implementation of land use and smart growth principles at the community level. These efforts will continue. The completion of a Planning Guidebook is expected in 2011 to support these efforts.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

The development of the New Visions 2040 Plan will begin at the end of 2011 and will be a multi year effort that will give CDTC the opportunity to engage the public and stake holders in a broad and comprehensive dialogue about the Plan. The timing of the 2040 plan update will allow for more comprehensive analysis and more extensive discussions with regional stakeholders, and will also afford us the opportunity to make the plan consistent with a new federal transportation reauthorization act, which is not expected until after 2011. The 2040 plan update will begin after October 2011 and will be a multi year effort that should be completed no later than by 2015.

There are many dynamic new tools that are emerging that can be used for providing information to the public and receiving comments and input, such as innovative web based surveys. During the 2040 Plan update, consideration can be given to expanding the tool set for public participation. Given that CDTC staff resources are limited, these tools may provide more efficient and effective ways to engage the public.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Freight**

#### **Background**

Goods Movement has been an increasingly important aspect of transportation planning. SAFETEA-LU encourages MPO's to promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight. MPO's should also foster economic growth and development within and between states and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan transportation planning. The legislation also requires MPO's to plan for supporting economic vitality, protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, enhancing inter-modal facilities, and improving mobility, safety, security, etc. One overwhelming characteristic of freight movement for public-sector transportation planners is its rapidly and constantly changing nature – led by the private sector.

The New Visions Plan recognizes the importance of planning and developing appropriate programs to meet the increasing demands freight movements put on the transportation system. New Visions recognizes the importance of freight to the regional economy and to private sector businesses. Congestion management and infrastructure investments will support goods movement in the Capital District.

In 2007 CDTC's Policy Board approved the freight portion of New Visions 2030 which can be found at <http://www.cdcmpo.org/rtp2030/materials/gm-doc.pdf>

#### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

Since 2007, CDTC has maintained relationships with the goods movement community and has moved forward on several New Visions 2030 recommendations related to freight planning and programming.

##### Goods Movement and the TIP

Spot Improvement Setaside- A recommendation of the 2030 plan was to develop a [goods movement spot improvement program](#) for small scale freight related improvements. It was anticipated that this program would be solicited and administered similar to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Spot program. During the 2010-2015 TIP update, the spot program was developed and approved. Although it is in the out years of the current TIP, this spot improvement program is an integral step towards improved freight planning in the Capital Region.

Other TIP Projects/ARRA Funded Projects- Several projects were funded for the Port of Albany including one to improvements needed to fulfill requirements of the Maritime Transportation Security Act and an ARRA funded project for wharf and dock repairs.

### Freight Data Research

CDTC participated in research effort: *A Freight Data Architecture Application at the Local Level Using Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) Data*. The need for a freight data architecture has prompted several major studies, including one conducted for the National Cooperative Freight Research Program or *NCFRP*, entitled *NCFRP 12 Specifications for Freight Transportation Data Architecture*. The establishment of an architecture will make it possible to link together a variety of existing freight data and other related datasets to create a more robust understanding of freight activities and to provide local planning agencies with a clearer picture of freight movements at the local level. As part of this research, local administrative and primary survey data were collected as part of the ongoing Linkage study, Railroad Avenue Transportation and Revitalization Plan. Study outreach involved multiple visits to the study area by CDTC staff to invite business owners/tenants to a public meeting, to advertise the weblink for an online business owner/tenant survey and to inform businesses about the study background and purpose. During the visits, staff took anecdotal notes of each business's apparent business or service type. This information was then used to create a more detailed dataset beyond what was available through tax parcel datasets. Using this information in combination with other more detailed datasets (i.e. NAICS/SCTG) commodity flows were identified for each parcel. MPOs and municipalities can use these relationships to target their efforts when collecting data for freight modeling or activity-based modeling.

### **Conclusion**

The New Visions 2035 plan will continue to address opportunities to incorporate freight needs into the planning process. Enhanced approaches for incorporating available improved commodity flow data and other goods movement related information into CDTC's planning and programming processes will be used wherever possible. New areas of participation by the goods movement community will be explored and critically examined as part of the 2040 plan.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 update, CDTC will re-establish a consistent meeting schedule for the Goods Movement Task Force. The main objective will to build and foster relationships with public and private goods movement stakeholders. The 2040 plan should also explore additional mapping and data collection efforts that coincide with the Commodity Flow Survey project mentioned above and re-examine the Goods Movement Priority Network to ensure that the original intent of the description of this network remains valid and to update the data used to identify the network.

**New Visions 2035 Plan Update**  
**Topic: Equitable Treatment**

**Background**

CDTC's Title VI-Environmental Justice (EJ) policies ensure that EJ principles are inherently integrated into the planning process at both the system and project level. The [Environmental Justice Analysis Report](#) drafted in March 2007 documents the equitable distribution of transportation projects throughout the region and provides an evaluation of CDTC's plans, programs and processes in relation to EJ issues. Policies related to public involvement are addressed in detail in CDTC's [Public Participation Policy](#). Additional transportation concerns with Title VI / Environmental Justice aspects (noise, etc.) have been fairly examined in the "big ticket, big initiative" work.

**What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

CDTC's Environmental Justice Report

This report was last updated in March of 2007 and included mapping and analysis of 07-12 TIP Projects and 55 Linkage Projects to identify their distribution and location in relation to EJ population areas based on 2000 Census data on minority populations and populations below the poverty level. CDTC staff is waiting for 2010 Census data to duplicate this effort.

Transit

Improvements to the transit flow within the Route 5 corridor will benefit large numbers of the EJ population, as this is a significant transit corridor within the region and home to a significant concentration of the region's EJ population. Transit type projects enhance the feasibility of utilizing an alternative mode of transportation, much like Bike/Ped Projects. Public transit use is particularly important to the EJ population, as households within EJ areas are more likely to be zero vehicle households.

Linkage Program

CDTC's broad agenda in the New Visions plan provides access to Linkage funds for non-traditional planning efforts. These have included commercial revitalization efforts in Arbor Hill, neighborhood traffic calming in EJ neighborhoods, gateway planning in EJ neighborhoods and improved truck access routing in EJ neighborhoods. Nearly half of the Linkage studies are in the region's cities and over 70% of all Linkage studies have addressed EJ areas.

Social Media

As discussed under the *Public Participation* write up, CDTC has initiated the use of social media; the new CDTC newsletter *In Motion* is published regularly; and the Linkage Program continues as a primary public participation tool that engages the public at the community level. Work has begun on a translator on the website for Limited English Proficiency (LEP), as well as a methodology to create interactive TIP mapping.

## **Conclusions**

The New Visions 2035 plan uses the 2007 Environmental Justice report as its basis for documenting EJ policies and concerns. The general TIP project selection process results in an equitable distribution of projects throughout the region. CDTC's Title VI-Environmental Justice initiative is intended to ensure that EJ principles are included in CDTC's planning process. At all times, CDTC seeks to keep the EJ/Title VI measures integrated into the overall system planning and project-level measures used for decision-making. In addition, the majority of transit projects are located within the region's cities and therefore are also located in EJ target areas. Many of these transit projects consist of improvements to the existing transit network, including transit facilities such as park and ride lots, passenger shelters, bike racks and passenger information systems. CDTA meets or exceeds the requirements of Title VI in terms of service provision, equity of distribution of passenger amenities, fleet deployment, and perceived customer service quality. CDTA intends to continue to improve its service to customers.

## **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

CDTC's 2007 Environmental Justice report will be updated to reflect Linkage Projects funded since 2007 and the 2010-15 TIP project listings, once the 2010 Census data is available for minority and below poverty level populations. Future EJ analyses will seek to quantify additional aspects of transportation system performance in EJ areas and compare that performance to that elsewhere. Additionally, CDTC will continue to explore improved participation of traditionally under-represented groups in the transportation planning process.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Security**

#### **Background**

In recent years, federal regulations have changed to require MPOs take a more active role in transportation security planning. In 2005, SAFETEA-LU made 'security' a stand alone planning factor. Previously security had always been coupled with safety.

Transportation security has become a major issue being discussed by policy makers and in the ongoing work activities of some MPOs. In the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, the security requirements took on a new emphasis. Federal and state agencies have been created to assess the vulnerability of infrastructure systems and support security strategies and measures. These agencies include the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which includes the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), among others. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have issued draft guidance, which states that this new requirement must be in place prior to MPO and state adoption/approval of transportation plans addressing SAFETEALU provisions.

CDTC will continue to follow the lead of NYSDOT and CDTA with security related issues and continue to provide a forum for operational discussions related the transportation system in the Capital District. If needed, CDTC will assist a security coordinating agency to the extent possible.

The Policy Board approved the security portion of New Visions. The document can be found at <http://www.cdtcmpo.org/rtp2030/materials/s-doc.pdf>

#### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

CDTC has continued to collaborate with the security agencies to the degree possible. The participation by MPOs across the country (including CDTC) has been limited because of confusion over:

- The definition of security
- The distinction between security and safety
- The absence of funding specifically dedicated for security planning at the MPO level
- The indefinable and unexpected nature of terrorist threats
- The perceived competition for funding from other transportation priorities

Source: Incorporating Security into the Transportation Planning Process [NCHRP Report 525, Volume 3] Washington DC: Transportation Research Board pg 47.

A major obstacle to MPO participation is the highly sensitive nature of any data collected. MPOs have an open and transparent process that does not often coincide with the privacy and sensitivity requirements of The Department of Homeland Security.

CDTC, through the Regional Operations Committee, has begun to look at security in terms of incident management. Signal timing and prioritization have been discussed to help ensure the transportation system has limited delay during an incident.

### **Conclusions**

The New Visions 2035 Plan will continue to support CDTC's participation in security level planning. The New Visions 2035 Plan will go through a wide public review. However, based on the strong support the New Visions Plan continues to receive, and because of the short time frame necessary for the maintenance plan development, the public participation process for the maintenance plan will not be as in depth as for the 2030 Plan development. Instead, the development of the 2040 Plan, which will begin at the end of 2011, will offer the opportunity for more in depth dialogue with the public.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

During the 2040 Plan update, further development of the level of participation in security planning can be pursued. CDTC can work with the various agencies to help better define collaborative opportunities. CDTC will also explore security measures that affect data and electronic information as well as the surface transportation system. Integration of air, rail, and water travel should be incorporated.

**New Visions 2035 Plan Update**  
**Topic: Big Ticket Initiatives**

**Background**

The New Visions 2030 Plan calls for consideration of potential “big ticket” initiatives. These initiatives would be supported by higher growth scenarios, yet they could be pursued with trend growth as well. Funding is not identified, yet the plan puts forward the vision of bold investments that could be feasible if the public supports the vision and funding can be found.

The Plan is cautious, because it does not commit to major system redesign or dramatic new services without the funds to support them. The “big ticket” initiatives also represent a creative approach, because the plan empowers CDTC members and others to continually explore big ideas. This innovative approach ensures that the Capital District maintains vision during periods of financial constraint.

The big ticket initiatives represent an investment tool that will help manage growth in a way that will sustain the Capital District as a quality region. Investments in the big ticket initiatives can catalyze a more concentrated development pattern under any growth scenario. The caveat is that the big ticket initiatives are currently unfunded, and by themselves will not induce high growth.

The Big Ticket Initiatives include:

- Regional Greenway Program
- Riverfront Access and Urban Development Program
- Street Reconstruction and Reconfiguration
- Roadway Widening and Connections Program
- Suburban Town Center Development
- Bus Service Expansion, BRT Program with Transit Oriented Development
- Guideway Transit System with Transit-Oriented Development
- Managed Lane Program
- Highway Noise Program
- Demand Management Program
- Clean, Efficient Vehicle Program Intelligent Traffic Management Program
- Video Surveillance and Enforcement Program
- Comprehensive Traffic Safety program

**What’s Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

- CDTC sponsored *Tech Valley Trails: A Greenway Concept Plan for the Capital Region*. This plan was an exploration of one of the Big Ticket Initiatives—the Regional Greenway Program. The plan is intended to generate interest and develop concepts that will help make a greenways system feasible if our region’s growth and economic and political climates change. The proposed trail system will help make it possible for more people to travel in the Capital Region by

walking, bicycling, and other sustainable forms of transportation. Funding was recently sought for components of the regional Greenway Plan in an application submitted by a partnership between Albany and Rensselaer Counties for USDOT's TIGER II program. Components for which funding was sought included the Albany County Rail Trail, the Patroon Creek Trail, and the Mickey Mahar Trail. The grant was not awarded, however, partners continue to seek funding from various sources. Lands for the Albany County Rail Trail were secured by Albany County in 2010, with project development proceeding; current funding on the TIP will not cover the entire cost. The Rensselaer County Alliance for Trails received a grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway to explore the feasibility of an extended Greenway system throughout Rensselaer County, including the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail which would follow an old trolley line from Nassau through Schodack and East Greenbush to the Hudson River.

- CDTA further developed a concept plan for 100 miles of BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) and published *An Assessment of Capital Region North/South Corridors to Improve Access to Emerging Employment Centers*, which evaluated light rail, commuter rail, and BRT in the Northway and Hudson River corridors. CDTA finished a study of BRT in the Washington-Western corridor.
- The City of Albany in partnership with NYSDOT has requested CDTC to conduct a planning study for the I-787 Corridor. This effort would be intended to answer questions regarding: (1) the short term and long term infrastructure needs for this facility; (2) the opportunities for alternative designs to reduce long term infrastructure costs and/or improve transportation-community compatibility; and in the context of long term needs, (3) near-term access improvements to support the City's downtown and waterfront economic development initiatives. Some of the recommendations which emerge from this study could fall into the category of "Big Ticket Initiatives", bold investments that could be feasible if the public supports the vision and funding can be found.
- The New York State Department of Transportation initiated the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Project. CDTC has long supported high speed rail in Empire Corridor from New York City to Niagara Falls. High speed rail can be considered a big ticket initiative with component projects located in the Capital District. High speed rail is an example of a bold investment that until recently was unfunded. New York State received funding from The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for significant passenger rail improvements in the Empire Corridor. In the Capital District, these improvements included
  1. Livingston Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation, Albany:
  2. Rensselaer-Schenectady Double Track:
  3. Albany Rensselaer Station Installation of a fourth passenger track
  4. Albany Rensselaer Station Track Realignment.
  5. Western Gateway Transportation Center, Schenectady Station Rehabilitation.

CDTC is participating in the Project Advisory Committee for the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Project lead by NYSDOT.

### **Conclusion**

The big ticket initiatives were developed as visionary proposals for which funding was not identified. As discussed under the Financial Plan, financial circumstances and future prospects have experienced significant – and mixed – changes over the past three years. Nevertheless, the New Visions 2035 Plan puts forward the vision of bold investments that could be feasible if the public supports the vision and funding can be found.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

The development of the New Visions 2040 Plan will begin in the Fall of 2011 and will be a multi year effort that will give CDTC the opportunity to engage the public and stake holders in a broad and comprehensive dialogue about the Plan. The timing of the 2040 plan update will allow for more comprehensive analysis and more extensive discussions with regional stakeholders, and will also afford us the opportunity to make the plan consistent with a new federal transportation reauthorization act, which is not expected until after 2011. Further consideration of the big ticket initiatives can be included in the 2040 Plan Update.

## **New Visions 2035 Plan Update**

### **Topic: Transportation Improvement Program**

#### **Background**

One of CDTC's primary responsibilities is to prepare and adopt a financially balanced Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that assigns approximately \$100 million in annual federal highway and transit funds to specific projects in the Capital Region. All projects on CDTC's five-year TIP must be consistent with and help implement the New Visions 2030 plan.

CDTC has followed innovative and effective TIP practices to ensure that federal funds build a transportation system that reflects the priorities of the New Visions 2030 plan. Project proposals from the state, localities or others are "screened" for compatibility with all of CDTC's principles. Funding is directed to projects that improve the balance of investments by project type (pavement, bridge, bike, pedestrian, transit, economic development, system operation, and the like) to match the budgetary priorities of the plan. Projects are also ranked in terms of cost effectiveness and overall user, community and environmental value.

#### **What's Changed Since the 2030 Plan was approved in 2007**

Since 2007, CDTC faced a number of unusual challenges regarding federal funds and TIP practices. The New Visions 2035 papers on infrastructure and the financial plan describe many of the funding and infrastructure condition challenges facing the region. These challenges resulted in a number of tests of TIP practices since New Visions 2030 was adopted. CDTC was able to respond and move forward on the next program of transportation projects due to its innovative and effective TIP practices that are supported by the adopted policies of New Visions 2030. Notable changes and achievements related to TIP practices since 2007 include:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA): The passage of ARRA in 2009 by Congress put additional federal funding on the table for transportation projects. CDTC agreed that the best way to spend the ARRA funds quickly was to focus on ready-to-go TIP projects and routine infrastructure projects that could be designed quickly (i.e. simple resurfacing projects). Roughly \$80 M in roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, rail and port projects were funded with local (non-state) federal-aid eligible projects strongly represented. In addition, a commitment was made to projects in economically distressed areas of the region. CDTC's principle of equitable access to federal funds directly contributed to the inclusion of these local projects.
- Project Selection, Fiscal Constraint: CDTC adopted new project selection procedures as a direct result of the fiscal constraint rules set forth by NYSDOT which require the TIP to be balanced by year and by fund source. The changes allow more flexibility in moving projects among the four years of the TIP and refine the authority of NYSDOT and project sponsors to switch between Title 1

fund sources. Changes from any fund source to Interstate Maintenance and changes between the various STP fund sources can now be approved by NYSDOT while any other fund source change between any other fund source need to be approved by CDTC's Planning Committee.

- eSTIP and Website: Changes to the TIP listings in the STIP are now made directly by CDTC staff through the use of eSTIP. NYSDOT can no longer internally change the project listings in the STIP that are a part of CDTC's TIP. In addition, CDTC added more detail to the TIP listings available on its website including links to project fact sheets utilized in the project programming process.
- 2009-2014 TIP Update: In 2008, CDTC initiated the update process for the 2009-2014 TIP. Due to statewide delays caused by the passage of the ARRA, NYSDOT opted to delay the Statewide TIP update (STIP) for one year. Because CDTC had already made substantial progress on the TIP update, the CDTC Planning Committee approved changes to the 2009-10 and 2010-11 TIP listings of the draft 2009-14 TIP by Amendment into the 2007-2012 TIP. These changes were incorporated into the STIP. The later years of the draft 2009-14 TIP would serve as building blocks for the 2010-15 TIP.
- Regional Set-asides: In 2008, CDTC solicited for projects in several regional set-asides: Alternative Fuel Retrofit, Bicycle/Pedestrian Network Set-Aside, Intersections, Queue Jumpers & Roundabouts and Safety Set-Aside for Non-State Roads. A creative project solicitation process was utilized that honored the traditional TIP approach but was tailored to the specific data requirements for the individual set-asides. Projects were evaluated and programmed utilizing CDTC's traditional procedures resulting in the programming of sixteen innovative projects valued at over \$12 M dollars.
- 2010-2015 TIP Update: CDTC's Policy Board decided to undertake a broad anticipatory solicitation for new candidate projects for the 2010-2015 TIP as such a solicitation had not occurred since 2002. CDTC set a rough funding target of \$150 M for new projects. CDTC received 83 project applications totaling roughly \$500 million. Roughly \$108 M of projects in the categories of highway rehabilitation, regional set-asides (highway/bridge maintenance, goods movement, Linkage engineering and ADA), safety and bridges were funded in round one and a partial round two through June 2010. As Congress had not approved a new federal transportation bill, CDTC opted to put any additional new project programming on hold and adopted the TIP in June 2010. CDTC's Planning Committee will resolve the completion of the programming process in the early part of 2011.
- Update of the TIP Project Solicitation and Evaluation Process: CDTC staff undertook a comprehensive review of the TIP project evaluation process to ensure that it matched New Visions 2030 principles and policies, especially with respect to regional quality of life, environmental issues, and compatibility of

transportation with adjacent land use. This led to the update of the project justification package and the TIP project evaluation criteria prior to the solicitation for the 2010-2015 TIP. Workshops were held in each county to explain the changes to potential project sponsors.

- Major Project Status: CDTC comprehensively reviewed the status of major project commitments in early 2010 and reaffirmed its commitment to these projects as regional priorities. Highlights include the funding of the Batchellerville Bridge (CR 98) Replacement project, which began construction in 2010, the continued commitment to implementing Bus Rapid Transit on NYS Route 5 (which is further described in the New Visions 2035 transit paper) and the possible rehabilitation of the Patroon Island Bridge rather than reconstruction, potentially saving the region millions of dollars.

### **How the Maintenance Plan Addresses the Changes**

CDTC has reaffirmed its established TIP practices, supported by numerous adopted New Visions principles, through its actions in the years since the New Visions 2030 Plan was adopted. Recent circumstances have bolstered CDTC's role as the decision-making forum for the use of federal aid but has also challenged TIP practices. However, the unique, strong tie between the long-range plan and CDTC's TIP has survived those challenges, validating the high level of effort put into the TIP by CDTC's members and staff. Therefore, the New Visions 2035 Plan will continue to guide funding decisions at CDTC.

### **Proposed Further Treatment for the 2040 Plan**

The New Visions plan has been and will continue to be directly tied to the TIP, allowing for investment in important, cost-effective projects that are well coordinated with land use plans and regional objectives. The Capital District's track record for plan implementation has few equals and New Visions 2040 will continue to support this strong foundation.

If new federal policy is adopted as part of the next federal transportation legislation, New Visions 2040 will likely need to expand on existing subjects or respond to new ones which may result in the identification of new or updated principles, strategies, actions or even budgetary priority. Regardless of federal policy changes, CDTC staff has identified the following items that will need further consideration by CDTC and its members in New Visions 2040.

- Priority Networks: While the use of priority networks as part of the TIP project evaluation process has been reaffirmed, the principles behind the networks and their use in evaluating projects need to be updated. In particular, what constitutes a project that addresses a priority network needs further articulation. A comprehensive review of these networks through working groups should be undertaken as part of New Visions 2040.

- Refined Safety Benefit Calculations: The TIP evaluation process for new projects utilizes a benefit/cost ratio as a key consideration and safety benefits are one of the input values. As mentioned in the Safety writeup CDTC staff will continue to refine this benefit calculation methodology as updated datasets and approaches become available.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Evaluation Methodology: New Visions articulated a methodology for evaluating bicycle and pedestrian projects that is based on safety, market potential and cost effectiveness. The bicycle and pedestrian task force has noted that alternatives now exist to this methodology. New Visions 2040 should explore these alternatives.
- Major project commitments. Concerns have been raised by the CDTC Planning Committee regarding the slow implementation of some of the major projects. Options to expedite the project development process should be considered utilizing tools such as FHWA's environmental streamlining process and FHWA's Everyday Counts Initiative (see the New Visions 2035 paper on Environmental Impacts/Sustainability). If funding continues to remain uncertain, continued commitment to these projects may need to be seriously explored.
- Alternative Funding Resources: As noted in the Financial Plan summary, if resources to support the TIP remain uncertain, New Visions 2040 will need to explore alternative funding resources for transportation projects such as public private partnerships, user fees, sales taxes, etc. as have been adopted in other regions throughout the country.