

IN MOTION

Volume 12, Issue 3

March 2020



Newsletter of the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)
Metropolitan Planning Organization for New York's Capital Region

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Quotable Quote

"Goals are dreams we convert to plans and take action to fulfill"

Zig Ziglar-

CDTC's Linkage Program Turns 20!

In April 2020, CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program, commonly referred to as the Linkage Program, reaches a major milestone. For 20 years, CDTC has been fortunate to provide a reliable source of funding to support strategic community planning initiatives that integrate land use and transportation. The Linkage Program has supported planning initiatives in 40 of our region's municipalities on topics that include land use and transportation corridor planning, strategic planning of community subareas, bicycle and pedestrian planning and zoning code revisions.

Over the next year, CDTC will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Linkage Program with a series of newsletter articles highlighting the Program's impact on the region including testimonials, descriptions of implemented projects and programs, discussions of what we learned over the last 20 years and plans for what's next. We hope you enjoy this series and the journey ahead.

The Foundation

In the late 1990's, CDTC adopted its national award winning regional transportation plan known as New Visions. The plan stated that transportation investments must be made in conjunction with significant land use and transportation demand management actions to slow the growth rate of regional single occupant vehicle travel. At that time, transportation planning rarely considered land use proactively and instead reacted to development wherever it was occurring by attempting to accommodate peak demand for motor vehicle travel. This approach led to oversized roadways for much of the day with little consideration for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit vehicles.

A major principle of New Visions was to encourage communities to proactively integrate land use and transportation planning, whether the community was experiencing new development or was seeking to redevelop. The New Visions plan identified several strategies and actions to support pro-actively planning vibrant communities including local planning that encouraged greater use of mixed-use development, access management, improved site design and multi-modal transportation options.

(Continued on Page 3)



CDTC Unified Planning Work Program 2020-22

One of CDTC's federally mandated responsibilities is to develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP identifies transportation planning and programming activities that are to be undertaken in the Capital Region during the upcoming two years, beginning on April 1, 2020 and ending on March 31, 2022. The intent of the comprehensive work plan is to coordinate all federally-funded transportation-related planning activities in the region.

Our UPWP consists of 3 basic sections – the introduction, the task descriptions, and the financial tables. The introduction includes basic information about CDTC and our UPWP, key accomplishments from the previous UPWP, and major themes and highlights of the new UPWP. The task descriptions include descriptions of each task to be performed by task number, task schedules, task budgets, and task resources. Task resources are usually provided by CDTC staff, New York State, consultants, or local project members and sponsors. The finan-

cial tables include budget amounts for each task broken down by what type of funding the task will receive .

Listed below are a few of the new and noteworthy tasks and studies that are included in the 2020-22 UPWP and will be completed by CDTC in the coming years.

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan Assistance
- Local Bridge Preservation Report
- Regional Traffic Signal Timing Program
- Freight and Land Use Study
- Multi-use Trail Feasibility Study
- Bus Lane Feasibility Study

To view the full list of UPWP tasks and budgets please see the Final 2020-22 UPWP at www.cdtcmmpo.org/about/unified-planning-work-program.

Craig-Main Connection Study Complete!

The Craig-Main Connection Complete Streets study is now final! The complete streets study was funded through the CDTC Linkage program and developed in cooperation with the City of Schenectady, with assistance from a consultant project team lead by Place Alliance Northeast, and sub consultants Land Art Studios, Creighton Manning Engineering and River Street Planning. The study evaluated the Craig Street - Main Avenue (Craig - Main) corridor from Albany Street to Crane Street in the City of Schenectady. Currently, due to low vehicle ownership, its proximity to local schools, and its distance to neighborhood and downtown commercial districts, the study area experiences a high level of pedestrian and bicycle activity, but lacks the appropriate infrastructure to safely accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

The study set out with the goal of creating complete streets designs that would create a safer and more inviting environment for all modes, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The project team worked extensively throughout the study to connect with residents of the surrounding neighborhoods and gather input and recommendations on what the preferred future streetscape would look like on the Craig-Main corridor. In total, the project team held over 10 public outreach events, including a study launch party and multi-day day charette event where local food, music, and entertainment was provided to incentivize public participation and feedback. The event was considered a success with over 200 people in attendance and an abundance of community input on preferred designs!



Source: CDTC

As a result of the public outreach six different projects were recommended that target different portions of the study area. The recommendations are focused around a separated two-way cycle track and expanded sidewalk along of Craig Street from Emmett Street over the Craig Street Bridge. Improvements for this section of the corridor also incorporate added street amenities like trash receptacles, street trees and improved transit amenities. Other major recommendations coming from the study are, intersection improvements at the Crane Street / Chrysler Avenue / Main Avenue Intersection, major improvements to Pleasant Valley Park, the incorporation of public art throughout the corridor, and a more detailed traffic study on Main Avenue to further evaluate impacts of potentially converting adjacent street(s) to one-way, with the possibility of extending the recommended Craig Street improvements all the way through Main Avenue to Crane Street.

The plan also included a series of detailed cost estimates for each improvement, which have already been useful in assisting the City in pursuing funding for the recommended improvements. For more information about the Craig-Main Complete Streets Study and a more detailed description of specific recommendations please visit <https://www.craig-main-connection.com>.

CDTC's Linkage Program Turns 20! (Cont.)

(Continued from Page 1)

The challenge facing the implementation of New Visions was how CDTC could influence regional development trends since land use decisions are almost entirely local in nature. It was determined that an incentive program would best encourage planning for the land use patterns and transportation system that New Visions envisioned, leading to the establishment of the Linkage Program.

The Beginning

In December 1999, CDTC issued its first solicitation for Linkage Program planning projects to be undertaken during the April 2000 – March 2001 State Fiscal Year. The Program initially had three objectives: 1) to help communities integrate land use and transportation decisions by providing staff or consultant support to local planning initiatives; 2) to be responsive to local needs through direct solicitation of candidate planning projects; and 3) to directly connect CDTC's New Visions plan to local planning by assuring compatibility with regional principles and the integration of regional strategies.

Unlike traditional grant programs, Linkage Program projects were treated as joint initiatives between CDTC and the local sponsors. Sponsors were required to contribute a 25% local match to demonstrate their commitment and in return received financial support and technical expertise from CDTC's

staff to help guide the development of the plan. The Linkage Program quickly became a critical component of CDTC's public engagement process as community plans consistently supported and confirmed the principles of New Visions.

The first solicitation resulted in eleven project proposals all of which were funded. In the first five years (Fiscal Years 2000 – 2004) of the Linkage Program, 33 projects were funded representing one-third of the total projects funded to date. CDTC was a little too ambitious in those early years and had not yet had the experience to know how long it would take to get consultants on board, work through the planning processes and develop the plans. This was our first lesson learned and no projects were funded in 2004 to allow CDTC to catch up. That lesson, along with lessons in matching community expectations to limited project budgets led to changes in how consultants were selected, the scale of the scope of work for each project and changes to the types of projects CDTC would fund through the Linkage Program in the future.

Next Time...

In our next newsletter, we'll look back at some of the Linkage Program projects funded in the first five years to share what we learned, what has been implemented and the impact those plans had on their communities.

US 9W / Glenmont Rd. / Fuera Bush Rd. Roundabout

The Town of Bethlehem is currently working on final design of a new roundabout at the US Route 9W / Fuera Bush Road / and Glenmont Road intersection. The project is being pursued by the Town in order to reduce daily congestion at the existing intersection and improve both vehicle and pedestrian safety in the project area.

The key components of the project are the 'Hybrid Roundabout', which is designed with two-lane entrances and single lane exits, and improved pedestrian amenities adjacent to the roundabout, including:

- Sidewalks surrounding the roundabout perimeter, and crosswalks on all four legs
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) at the roundabout crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety
- Sidewalks on the east side of Route 9W between Glenmont Road and Glenmont Elementary, and on the north side of Glenmont Road between Route 9W and Vagele lane
- Two mid-block crossings with RRFBs located on Glenmont Road

- A new crosswalk and pedestrian signals at the Route 9W / Bender Lane traffic signal

The total project cost is approximately \$4.846 Million including project design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Eighty percent of this cost is covered by federal funding programmed through CDTC's Transportation Improvement Program. Construction on the roundabout is expected to begin in the spring of 2020.



Source: Town of Bethlehem

Complete Streets Education & Technical Assistance Workshops

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is pleased to announce the availability of technical assistance through the 2020 Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshop Series. The primary purpose of the Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshop Series is to assist local governments in developing and implementing Complete Streets policies. Many communities in the Capital District have developed, and/or are in the process of developing, Complete Streets policies. Also, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the Complete Streets Act (Chapter 398, Laws of New York) on August 15, 2011, requiring state, county, and local agencies to consider the convenience and mobility of all users when developing transportation projects that receive state and federal funding.

Despite local and state regulations favoring Complete Streets, many of our local governments have faced challenges when developing and implementing their policies. The educational and technical assistance workshops help our transportation planning practitioners and decision-makers identify and overcome barriers to implementation.

CDTC, through this competitive selection process, is partnering with local governments, including local planning and public works directors and engineering staffs, elected officials, the region's public transit agency, appropriate state and county transportation staff, nonprofit organizations, businesses, community groups, and interested residents to ensure that all those with a stake in the outcome are actively involved in the Complete Streets Workshops. CDTC is offering four (4) different types of workshops, tailored to individual community's needs, and current Complete Streets policy or implementation status. The proposed 2020 workshop types are Basics, Policy Development, Policy Implementation, and County/Region-wide. Local governments will propose a workshop type as part of the selection process. There is no local cash share,

however, communities will be required to assist with meeting logistics, including securing meeting space and ensuring key stakeholders will be in attendance.

Before each workshop, pre-workshop meetings will be held with the consultant (previously selected through a competitive solicitation process for a consultant with strong experience in providing Complete Streets training/workshops), representatives from the local jurisdiction and CDTC staff to adequately prepare for the workshop, to review draft workshop materials, and to identify key workshop participants. Following each workshop, the consultant will draft a workshop summary for distribution to CDTC and the workshop participants.

The application process will begin in early April 2020, pending Planning Committee approval. CDTC will be mailing more information and program details to our members and posting information on the Complete Streets page of the CDTC website. Applications will be due in May 2020. For more information please contact Chris Bauer at cbauer@cdtcmpo.org.



Source: CDTC

CDTC Senior Transportation Updates

The joint CDTC/Albany Guardian Society Senior Transportation Guide will soon be available! It will first be published electronically, and is expected to be printed over the summer. The online version will be continuously updated. It will be available online at www.albanyguardiansociety.org and www.cdtcmpo.org.

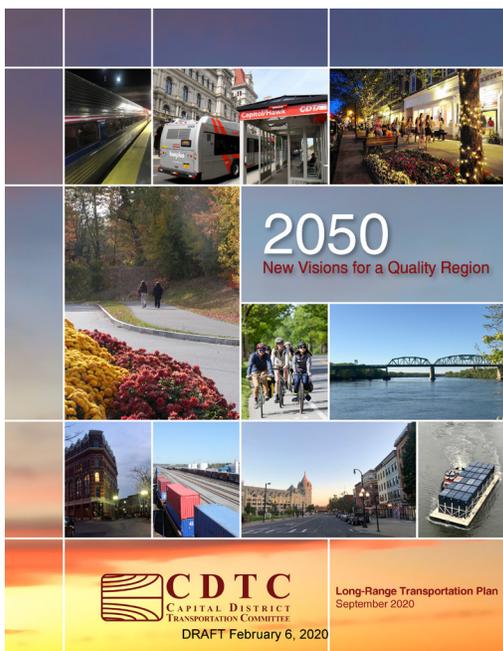
Often transportation options for seniors are highly dependent on where the senior lives, including the county or municipality of residence; the ability to pay for the transportation services; and what type of adaptive equipment the rider needs, such as a wheelchair or walker.

This directory provides the name, contact information, specific services provided, hours of service, accommodations, and fees for senior transportation options in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties.

In addition, CDTC is putting together its third biennial "Tools of the Trade" workshop for human services organizations that provide transportation. This year's event will be held on April 2nd. Topics of discussion are planned to include CDTA's FLEX curb-to-curb transit program, Ithaca's Mobility-as-a-Service pilot, how isolation impacts people, and motivating volunteers. Attendance will be by registration. Contact Carrie Ward at cward@cdtcmpo.org or call 518-458-2161 to register.

New Visions 2050 Update!

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) like CDTC are tasked with certain responsibilities in accordance with federal transportation legislation. The FAST Act requires CDTC to produce three major products: (1) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); (2) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and (3) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). CDTC began updating its RTP, New Visions, in the summer of 2019. This update is a major undertaking of staff, members, and interested parties that participated and provided input through one or more of CDTC's 9 New Visions task forces. The draft New Visions 2050 Plan also reflects public input received on key policy questions and transportation concepts through Transportation and Community Linkage Program outreach events. There will be two phases of public involvement and consensus building before a final plan is adopted in September 2020.



Planning & Investment Principles

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

Unlike the TIP, New Visions doesn't contain a list of projects expected to be built over the next 20 years. New Visions is a statement of principles, strategies, and budgetary emphasis to guide more detailed project decisions as the region invests in a next generation transportation system. The 15 Planning and Investment Principles are the centerpiece of the New Visions Plan and demonstrate a comprehensive and holistic approach to transportation planning. It shifts the emphasis on routing transportation projects like highway and bridge repaving to a structured balance between actions that reduce congestion and improve safety, increase access to transportation choices like transit, walking, or bicycling, and benefit economic development efforts. The plan calls for investments that are consistent with local growth, encourage smart land use, and simultaneously improve transportation for all ages, abilities, or modes of transportation. This means prioritizing investments in the existing system of roads and bridges while continuing to invest in high quality transit service, bicycle facilities, pedestrian infrastructure that improves safety, and technology to help manage traffic congestion.

Full implementation of New Visions 2050 will achieve national and state transportation goals and performance measures. The 14 technical papers have common themes of Safety, Resiliency, Accessibility, Technology, and Equity, and touch on many goals and actions to meet the economic, social, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the region. *(Continued on Page 7)*

Bike to Work Day 2020

CDTC is organizing the region's seventh annual Bike to Work Day Challenge to be held this spring. Last year over 670 people pledged to bike to work as part of the Challenge. This year we're aiming to register at least 750 participants.



Source: Parks and Trails NY

The Challenge involves participants from workplace teams that compete for a trophy for the highest participation rate (small and large employers) and largest team in each county (Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, and Saratoga). Past years have also offered a trophy to the Longest Commute in each county. However, this year a trophy will instead be awarded to the volunteer commuter convoy leader with the largest group of commuters that ride with them on their route. Check CDTC's website and social media for more event announcements such as the event date, registration, and other details like commuter convoys, free t-shirts, volunteering to staff a pit stop, competition rules, and more.

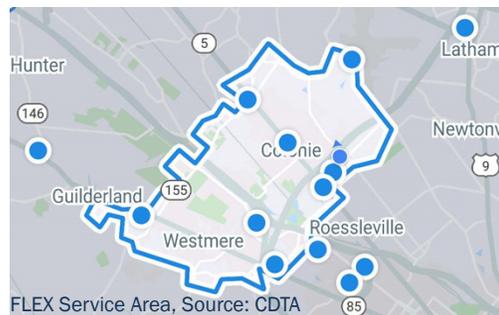
CDTA FLEX & Electric Bus Pilots

CDTA FLEX Pilot



Source: CDTC

CDTA has launched FLEX, a new pilot on-demand transit service that is the public transportation version of ride-hailing companies such as Uber and Lyft. FLEX utilizes a mobile phone App from TransLoc for customers to request a trip in a defined service area. The pilot service area is focused on a section of Guilderland, Colonie and Albany generally adjacent to Western Avenue, New Karner Road, Albany Shaker Road and Wolf Road, including nearby residential areas and businesses. Crossgates Mall, Albany International Airport, Latham Farms, Corporate Woods and Colonie Center are all within the service area.



FLEX Service Area, Source: CDTA

CDTA is promoting FLEX not only as an alternative to ride-hailing companies but as a way to offer greater convenience to customers in areas that have more limited traditional scheduled bus services. FLEX will run during the pilot period on Monday to Friday 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM and on Saturday from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. For more information, visit CDTA's webpage for FLEX at <https://www.cdta.org/flex>

CDTA Goes Electric



Source: CDTC

CDTA has also recently received the first battery electric powered buses in Upstate New York. Four New Flyer buses are being rolled out in a pilot program to test both the engine and charging infrastructure technology. CDTA plans to monitor the range, charging timelines, electricity usage and performance of the vehicles throughout its route network as it considers expanding in the future. The buses will be rotated to operate in all types of conditions including different weather conditions, terrain, passenger loads and speeds.

According to marketing material provided by New Flyer of America, the Xcelsior CHARGE 40-foot buses will eliminate up to 175 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually. The buses will not only produce zero emissions but will also be quieter and are expected to yield lower operating costs than both diesel and natural gas buses. Four Siemens direct current depot chargers were installed at CDTA's 110 Watervliet Avenue facility to support the pilot which also required an upgrade in electrical capacity. The entire cost of the pilot project is \$3.9 million.



Source: CDTC

New Visions 2050 Update! (Cont.)

(Continued from Page 5)

New Visions Public Outreach and Review

CDTC wants your voice to be part of the conversation about the future of our region. Make sure you are heard in your local community. CDTC's goal is to reach people where they are and make it easy for everyone to give feedback and ask questions. Below are examples of how you can get involved in the New Visions 2050 Plan.



Online at www.cdtcmpo.org/NV2050

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



In person

Invite us to attend your event or present to your group by contacting our community outreach staff.



Become a citizen planner

Participate in CDTC's Citizen Planner training, plan & hold your own New Visions 2050 meeting with your friends, family, or other community in the Capital Region. A "meeting-in-a-box" will be provided to citizen planners with all the tools & information needed to present & collect comments on the New Visions 2050 Plan.



On social media

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



Request Printed Material

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

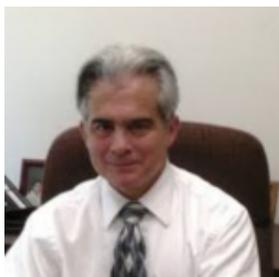


Questions?

Contact our community outreach staff at NewVisions@cdtcmpo.org or by phone at (518) 458-2161.

Other CDTC News & Updates

Executive Director Elected to AMPO Board of Directors!



Congratulations to CDTC Executive Director Michael Franchini on his national election to the AMPO Board of Directors. AMPO, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, is a nonprofit organization established to advocate for metropolitan transportation planning nationwide. AMPO offers its member MPOs technical assistance, training opportunities, research, and serves as a forum for transportation policy development. Michael will serve a three-year term on the nine-member AMPO Board of Directors.

CDTC Technical Assistance Program Solicitation

CDTC and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) are seeking applications for the 2020 Community Planning Technical Assistance Program. The program is intended to offer CDTC and CDRPC staff time and expertise to local governments undertaking small scale community planning initiatives. For more information, and application materials please visit www.cdtcmpo.org/what-we-do/technical-assistance.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Municipalities - get Technical Assistance for your local planning needs:

- Land Use Planning and Implementation
- Project Development
- Data Analysis, Trends, Mapping

Applications are due by Friday, April 3, 2020 at 4pm

This is a joint initiative between CDRPC and CDTC





Capital District Transportation Committee

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Mayor Patrick Madden

City of Watervliet

Mayor Charles V. Patricelli

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Paula A. Mahan

Towns and Villages

Louis Esposito, Princetown

Edward Kinowski, Stillwater

Alternates

Nancy Perry, Sand Lake

Megan Grenier, Village of Menands

Albany County Airport Authority

Philip F. Calderone, Esq.

Albany Port District Commission

Patrick K. Jordan, Esq.

Capital District Regional Planning Commission

Craig M. Warner

Capital District Transportation Authority

Carm Basile

New York State Dept. of Transportation, Region 1

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New York State Thruway Authority

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CALENDER

Please call CDTC to confirm.

3/5/20 CDTC Policy Board Meeting @3:00 PM, CDTC Office

3/10/20 CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee @9:00 AM, CDTC Office

4/1/20 CDTC Planning Committee Meeting @9:30 AM, CDTC Office

4/20/20 CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee @9:00 AM, CDTC Office

5/6/20 CDTC Planning Committee Meeting @9:30 AM, CDTC Office

5/12/20 CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee @9:00 AM, CDTC Office

5/20/20 CDTC Freight Advisory Committee Meeting @9:00 AM, CDTC Office

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Comments and requests to be added or deleted from the mailing list or to receive the newsletter electronically are welcome and should be sent to:
newsletter@cdtcmpo.org