

## **Draft Operating Procedures**

### **COMMITTEE PRACTICES**

#### **Background**

The Capital District Transportation Committee has served continuously since 1964 as the public, inter-governmental entity responsible for fulfilling the metropolitan transportation planning provisions of federal law and regulation.

CDTC's existence is built upon the foundation of cooperative agreements between New York State and each municipality in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties. Legal agreements with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) underpin the Capital District Transportation Authority's (CDTA's) role as CDTC's "host agency" for contractual and staff functions.

In addition, staff and financial activities are guided by a number of adopted operating procedures: these include procedures for: Consultant Selection, Financial Reporting and Administrative (staff) activities.

The operating procedures contained in this document pertain to CDTC's activities and actions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Primarily, the document enumerates practices that have been established either in writing through specific actions of CDTC or by precedent over the many years of CDTC activity. Committee Practices are described in terms of: (1) membership; (2) committee and subcommittee responsibility; (3) meetings and actions.

#### **Designation and Membership**

1. Current law and regulation require a "Metropolitan Planning Organization" (MPO) for any urbanized area over 50,000 and requires an enhanced process for "Transportation Management Areas" (TMAs) that exceed 200,000 in population. The Capital District Transportation Committee is the designated MPO for both the Albany urbanized area and the Saratoga Springs urbanized area. The Albany urbanized area is also a TMA.
2. CDTC's planning and programming jurisdiction as an MPO covers an area contained within a defined "Metropolitan Area Boundary" (MAB) which, at a minimum, must cover the geographic area expected to become urbanized over the next twenty years. With the concurrence of NYSDOT and the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), CDTC's current MAB includes the entire four-county area with the exception of the town of Moreau in Saratoga County. Moreau falls within the jurisdiction of the Adirondack - Glens Falls Transportation Council for MPO activity.

3. CDTC's membership structure is modified when appropriate to meet changing circumstances. Membership changes are made through action of the Committee (the Policy Board).
4. CDTC's current membership has emerged from its original 1964 structure and additions from time to time over the past 45 years. Voting membership totals 25 and includes:
  - a. Chief elected officials of Albany County (county executive and chair of the county legislature), Rensselaer County (county executive and chair of the county legislature), Saratoga County (chair of the county board of supervisors) and Schenectady County (chair of the county board of representatives).[total 6]
  - b. An additional member from both Saratoga and Schenectady counties. [2]
  - c. Chief elected officials (mayors) of the region's eight cities: Albany, Cohoes, Watervliet; Rensselaer, Troy; Mechanicville, Saratoga Springs; Schenectady. [8].
  - d. Chief elected officials of all other municipalities over 50,000 in population, as defined by the US Census Bureau. Currently, this list is limited to the supervisor of the Town of Colonie. [1]
  - e. Designated representative of the New York State Department of Transportation.[1]
  - f. Designated representative of the Capital District Transportation Authority.[1]
  - g. Designated representative of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission.[1]
  - h. Designated representative of the New York State Thruway Authority.[1]
  - i. Designated representative of the Albany County Airport Authority.[1]
  - j. Designated representative of the Albany Port District Commission.[1]
  - k. Two at-large representatives of towns and villages located within the MAB, as appointed by action of the Policy Board.[2]
5. Advisory membership is established by action of the Policy Board. Advisory membership is currently provided to a designated representative of the Federal Highway Administration, a designated representative of the Federal Transit Administration, and to the regional director of the New York State Department of Transportation (if he or she is not the NYSDOT voting member).
6. Members identified as "chief elected officials" are members of CDTC automatically upon assuming the duties of their office. Individuals assuming the function in an "acting" capacity due to the departure or incapacity of the chief elected official are automatically members of CDTC.
7. The second voting members from Saratoga and Schenectady counties are to be named by the respective counties in any manner acceptable to those counties; CDTC must be notified in writing of designations.
8. Agencies with "designated representatives" on the Policy Board may name these individuals in any manner acceptable to them; CDTC must be notified in writing of designations.

9. With the exception of the appointed town and village at-large representatives, all other members may designate alternates to represent them, with voting privileges, at Policy Board meetings; CDTC must be notified in writing of designations. Designation of alternates may be for a specific meeting or for a continuous period. Upon change in membership at the Policy Board, CDTC staff will request confirmation of both alternate representation and Planning Committee representation. Existing alternates and Planning Committee representatives will continue to serve until the staff is notified of a change.

10. It is CDTC's practice to rotate participation as at-large town and village representatives to give many interested town supervisors and village mayors an opportunity to serve on the Policy Board. The term is intended to be one year as an alternate member, followed by one year as voting member. There is no automatic rotation or prohibition against individuals serving more than once.

11. A Nominating Subcommittee is appointed by the Chair to supply nominations of at-large town and village representatives for consideration by the Policy Board on an annual basis. Every effort is given to filling alternate member positions and voting member positions with town supervisors or village mayors that provide coverage of all four counties. (That is, one "slot" for each of the counties.)

12. The Nominating Subcommittee also supplies nominations for officers of the Policy Board for consideration by the Policy Board on an annual basis. Nominations are provided for chair, vice-chair and secretary. There is no required rotation. Tradition has the regional director of the NYSDOT serve as CDTC secretary; this is reviewed annually as part of the election of officers.

13. The role of CDTC chairman or chairwoman is to preside over Policy Board meetings; preside over Administrative & Financial Standing Subcommittee meetings; annually appoint members of the A & F and Nominating Subcommittees; and represent CDTC in various meetings and forums. The role of CDTC vice-chairman or vice-chairwoman is to serve in place of the chairman or chairwoman as necessary. The role of the CDTC secretary is to submit the minutes of the Policy Board meetings.

### **Committees, Subcommittees and Responsibilities**

1. The Committee, or Policy Board, with the members defined above, is in the strictest sense the "Capital District Transportation Committee". All plans, policies and actions of CDTC require Policy Board action, either explicitly or by virtue of explicit delegation of authority to the Planning Committee, Administrative & Financial Standing Subcommittee, staff or others.

2. The Planning Committee serves as the technical counterpart to the Policy Board. Its role is to meet and discuss issues that will be brought to the Policy Board for consideration; and to meet, discuss and take action on issues for which MPO authority has been delegated by the Policy Board to the Planning Committee. The extent of standing delegated authority over the Unified Planning Work Program is contained in adopted UPWP Operating Procedures; the extent of standing delegated authority over the Transportation Improvement Program is contained in the adopted TIP narrative. It is the role of each Planning Committee member to contribute to the

deliberations of the Planning Committee from the perspective of his or her agency or municipality while also representing the needs of stakeholders not present and seeking the wisest action by the CDTC to address the needs of the entire region.

3. Membership on the Planning Committee parallels that on the Policy Board. Voting membership totals 20 and includes:

- a. Designated representative from each county (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady).
- b. Designated representative from each city (Albany, Cohoes, Watervliet; Rensselaer, Troy; Mechanicville, Saratoga Springs; Schenectady.)
- c. Designated representative from any other municipality over 50,000 in population as defined by the US Census Bureau. Currently, this list is limited to the town of Colonie.
- d. Designated representative of the New York State Department of Transportation.
- e. Designated representative of the Capital District Transportation Authority.
- f. Designated representative of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission.
- g. Designated representative of the New York State Thruway Authority.
- h. Designated representative of the Albany County Airport Authority.
- i. Designated representative of the Albany Port District Commission.
- j. An at-large member representing other towns and villages within the MAB.

4. Planning Committee members representing chief elected officials are designated in writing by those Policy Board members. Agencies with “designated representatives” on the Policy Board may name Planning Committee members in any manner acceptable to them. In the case of Albany County and Rensselaer County, the Planning Committee designation must address the interests and concerns of both the executive and legislative Policy Board members.

5. Advisory membership is established by action of the Policy Board. Advisory membership is currently provided to a designated representative of the Federal Highway Administration, a designated representative of the Federal Transit Administration, a designated representative of the New York State Department of Conservation, and the CDTC staff director.

6. With the exception of the appointed town and village at-large representative, Planning Committee members may designate alternates to represent them, with voting privileges, at Planning Committee meetings; CDTC must be notified in writing of designations. Designation of alternates may be for a specific meeting or for a continuous period. Upon change in membership at the Planning Committee, CDTC staff will request confirmation of alternate representation. Existing alternates will continue to serve until the staff is notified of a change.

7. The Nominating Subcommittee of the Policy Board also supplies nominations for the at-large Planning Committee member (and alternates) for consideration annually by the Policy Board. There is no required rotation of at-large Planning Committee representation. There is no limit to the number of alternate town and village representatives; practice has been to extend alternate membership to all towns and villages who wish to actively participate in Planning Committee activities.

8. Officers of the Planning Committee are chair, vice-chair and secretary. The chairman or chairwoman and vice-chairman or vice-chairwoman is elected annually by means of nominations and action from the floor of the Planning Committee. There is no required rotation. By tradition, the CDTC staff director serves as Planning Committee secretary.

9. The role of Planning Committee chairman or chairwoman is to preside over Planning Committee meetings and represent CDTC in various meetings and forums. The role of CDTC vice-chairman or vice-chairwoman is to serve in place of the chairman or chairwoman as necessary. The role of the CDTC secretary is to submit the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings.

10. The Administrative & Financial Standing Subcommittee (A & F) is a formal subcommittee of the Policy Board and serves a role regarding CDTC staffing and staff operations similar to the role the Planning Committee serves regarding CDTC's plans, policies and programs. The A & F's role is to meet and discuss issues that will be brought to the Policy Board for consideration; and to meet, discuss and take action on issues for which MPO authority has been delegated by the Policy Board to the A & F. Based on other adopted operating procedures, the A & F's delegated responsibilities include: annual staffing plans; annual review of CDTC staff titles, salaries and other compensation; and approval of administrative and task-specific contracts.

11. As noted earlier, members of the A & F are appointed by the Policy Board chair; there is no required rotation. Officers on the Policy Board also serve as officers of the A & F.

12. The role of the Nominating Subcommittee has been described above; namely, to supply nominations for consideration by the Policy Board regarding Policy Board officers, Policy Board at-large representation, and Planning Committee representation.

13. Other committees, subcommittees, task forces and working groups have been established by the Policy Board or Planning Committee for continuous or task-specific purposes. Additional ones may be established in the future. Each such group is established either to help CDTC carry out adopted plans and policies or to explore issues and articulate choices for consideration for action by CDTC. These groups are not authorized to establish CDTC policy or speak for CDTC except to the extent that authority has been explicitly delegated to them. Such groups serve to extend the public outreach and technical and policy competency of the Planning Committee in order to better highlight issues and enumerate policy choices for CDTC. Typically, the products of such groups are integrated into other products of CDTC through Planning Committee recommendations to the Policy Board.

## **Meetings and Actions**

1. CDTC desires to honor open meetings laws and federal requirements for public access to all meetings.

2. CDTC maintains an adopted public participation policy that describes its specific outreach and public access practices.
3. CDTC meetings are guided by Robert's Rules of Order. Deviation from these rules requires consent of members present at the meeting.
4. CDTC will take an action through means other than at a public meeting only to address emergency circumstances in which the time required to organize and hold a meeting would cause significant financial burden or risk public health and safety. Determination of the presence emergency circumstances is made by the CDTC chair or Planning Committee chair, as appropriate.
5. CDTC works to ensure that all its actions are consistent with the set of adopted planning and investment principles contained in its regional transportation plan. The adopted principles serve as a "yardstick" against which to measure the merit of candidate actions.
6. At all meetings, a quorum is provided by the presence of greater than 50% of current members or designated alternates. (Unfilled membership slots are not considered members for the purpose of this calculation.) Informal meetings can be conducted without a quorum, but no official action may be taken without a quorum.
7. At all meetings, CDTC operates by consensus, defined as unanimity of all affected voting members. When unanimity is not present, action is deferred and the matter is further explored to resolve the issues or identify an alternative action. Abstentions do not necessarily prevent consensus, but the presence of many abstentions may indicate lack of consensus. The presence or absence of consensus is determined by the chair.
8. A consensus requirement is a backbone of CDTC's process. It successfully avoids the pitfalls of majority voting, proportional voting and other voting methods and successfully integrates the concerns of local government officials with those of transportation providers by assigning significant importance to the concerns of all members.
9. CDTC holds Planning Committee meetings on a regular published schedule with additional meetings added as necessary to produce recommendations in advance of scheduled Policy Board meetings.
10. The Administrative & Financial Standing Subcommittee meets as necessary throughout the year.
11. The Nominations Subcommittee typically meets only once.