

choosing our

future >

New Visions for
a Quality Region



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Capital District Transportation Committee
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)



Choosing our future— a commitment to making it happen

Our region is presented with the opportunity for high quality growth, prosperity with good paying jobs and economic vitality.

The choice is before us.

Do we want to pursue prosperity in a way that allows our children to meet their needs in the future? Are we, as a region, willing to protect our walkable communities and quality spaces while creating new ones? Can we commit to making the *entire* Capital District a vibrant place to live and work for *all* its residents? Is there a commitment to making the kind of transportation investment that has not been seen in over a generation?

The New Visions Plan has been distilled from more than a decade of discussion, analysis and real world experience. It represents a practical framework for experiencing sustainable growth while maintaining a high quality of life. The region has come to agreement on the framework. The challenge now is to make it a reality.

On the cover: The colorized composite satellite image depicts the Capital Region of New York. —2002 Landsat™ satellite data courtesy of Capital District Regional Planning Commission.

Planning for tomorrow, today

A message from the Chairman

The Capital District is at a crossroads of growth and development and the choices we make now will affect our future.

Ten years ago, CDTC issued its first New Visions Plan and presented a regional consensus about the future of the Capital District. That Plan was developed in consultation with residents, businesses, transportation providers and state and local government leaders. New Visions 2030 is the next step in shaping transportation policy and investment in the coming years. We have prepared this summary of New Visions to provide an overview of the Plan for the region and the opportunity to participate in its continued development.

New Visions 2030 represents the collective position of the Capital Region and will have important impacts on regional planning and development. It is a framework that describes how to meet the region's transportation needs in a cost-effective manner while promoting safety, enhancing the environment, building strong communities and improving the overall quality of life.

The New Visions Plan advocates urban investment, concentrated development patterns and smart growth—elements that contribute to economic, educational, social, cultural and recreational opportunities, and that provide safe neighborhood environments and housing choices for all.

Building a quality region requires a sustained commitment from a well-informed and enthusiastic public. We invite you to share your ideas: write a note, attend a meeting, request a presentation on New Visions 2030 for your organization. We look forward to continuing this important collaboration as we choose the future of the Capital Region.



John T. McDonald, III
Mayor, City of Cohoes
Chairman



message from the chair >

A bold outlook for the Capital Region

New Visions asks everyone to look at the region's transportation planning in a new way— to examine our strengths, evaluate our existing resources and imagine implementing big initiatives. This is not a static plan, but a living document whose regional transportation policy recommendations will require continued strong public support and visionary leadership in order for the region to benefit.

Reaching consensus about what we want

New Visions reflects a regional consensus of residents, businesses, state and local government representatives and transportation providers to use transportation and public policy to:

- Promote sustainable economic growth with good-paying jobs
- Revitalize urban areas
- Help build community structure in growing suburbs
- Preserve open space and agricultural land
- Make communities more walkable and livable
- Provide meaningful transit options
- Connect all residents with job opportunities
- Manage increasing traffic congestion and maintain reasonable mobility on the highway system
- Encourage land use and transportation planning

“ Encouraging concentrated growth is a long-term process that demands bold leadership and regional cooperation. The Big Ticket Initiatives are proven methods for guiding growth and creating a more connected region. ”

-- Center for Economic Growth report on Alternative Futures for the Capital Region



a bold
outlook >

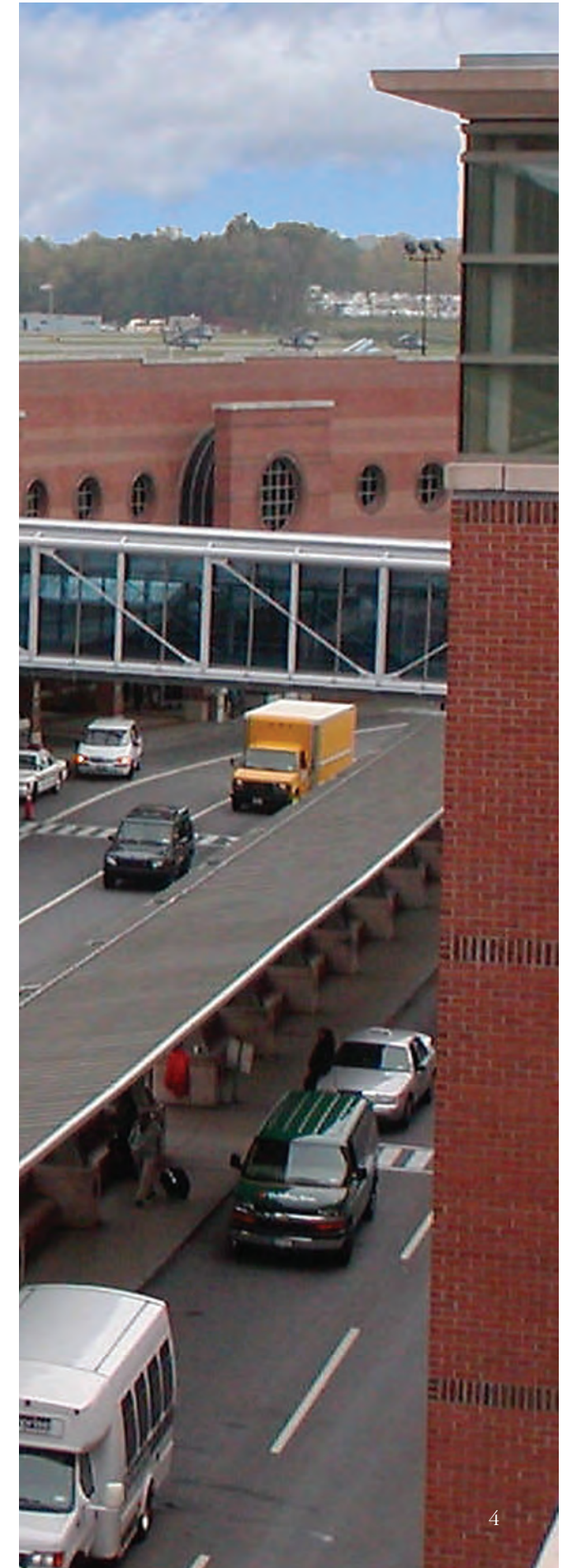
Are we there yet?

The Capital District is a region at a critical crossroads. Decisions about where to locate vital services, such as water, sewer and transportation directly affect regional growth—and future economic vitality.

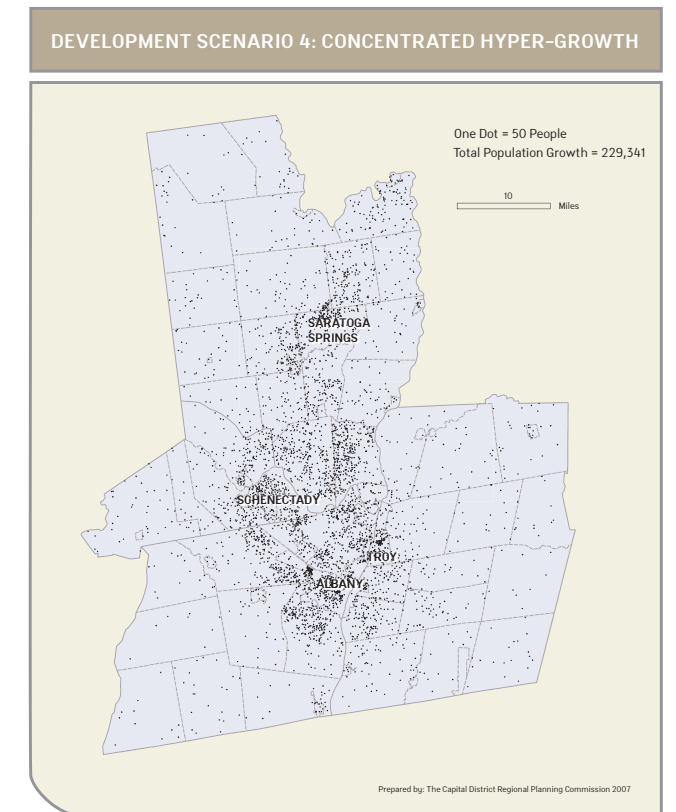
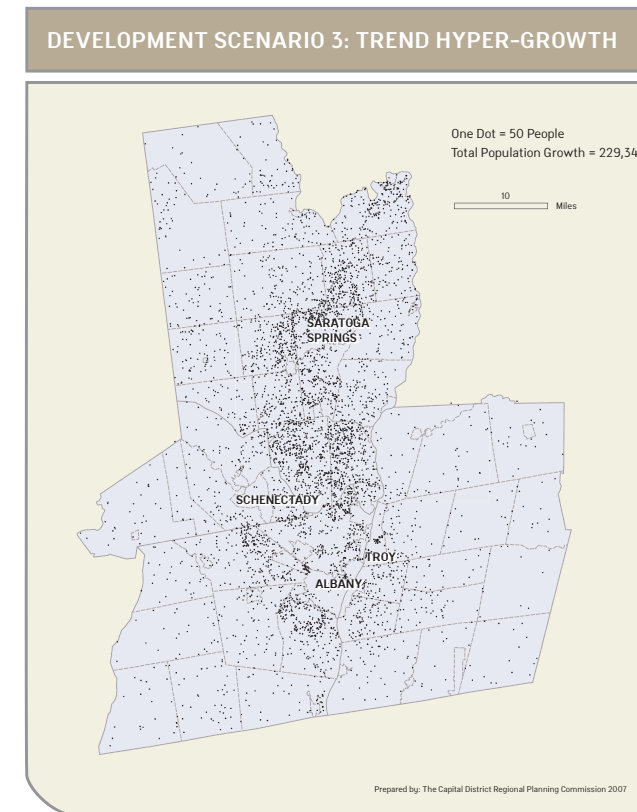
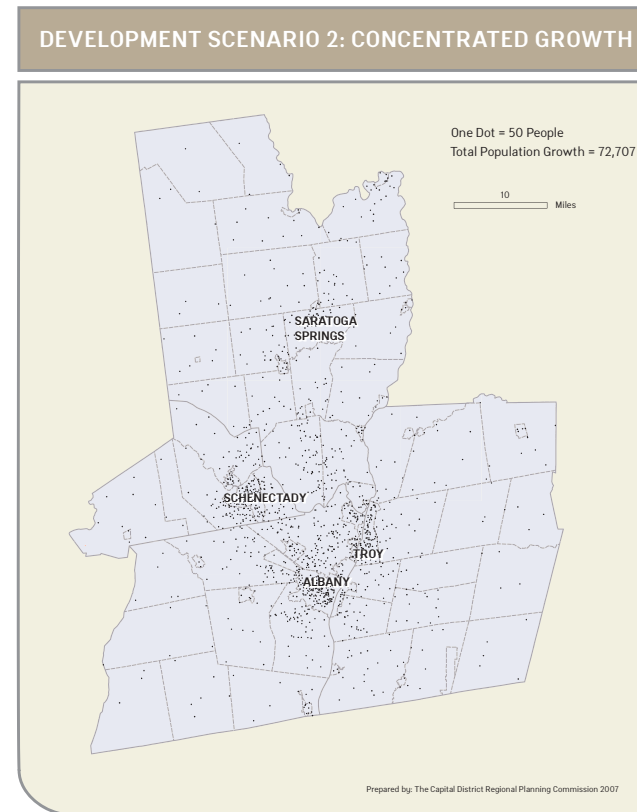
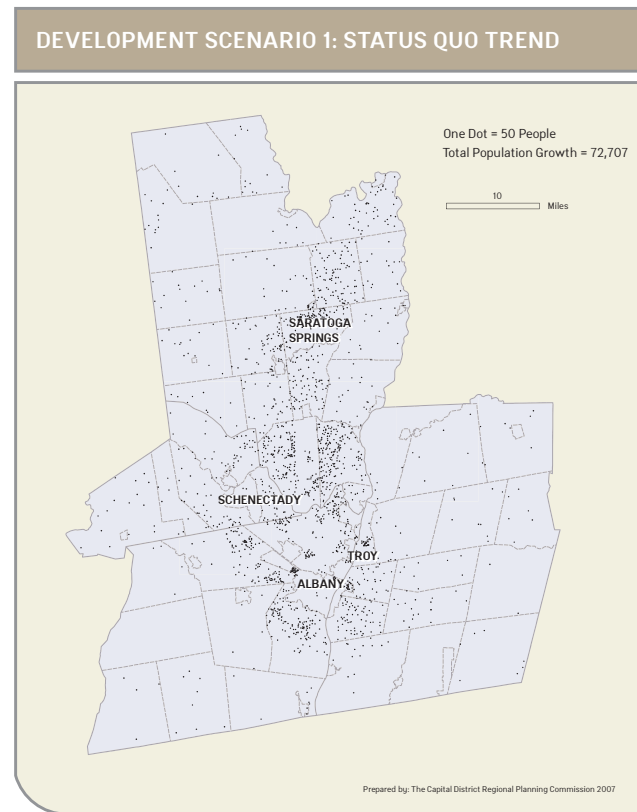
Understanding the likely effects of growth and change on the region is essential to identifying decisions the region's leaders might make to meet the goal of sustainability in the Capital District. To explore the possibilities, CDTC and its partners at the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), SUNY Albany and the Center for Economic Growth (CEG) analyzed four possible growth scenarios based on realistic assumptions about the region.

The analysis explored where people might live in the region along with land use alternatives in order to examine the what ifs: what if land use development could be guided so that residential areas and transit were located closer together? What if jobs, services and housing were concentrated in urban centers?

Each scenario was assessed for its potential impacts on the cost of the transportation system, potable water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, primary and secondary education, and fire protection and emergency medical services. A range of trends and related impacts, both regional and national, was also considered. These trends included the aging population, movement of people in and out of the region, technology, uneven development patterns and increased oil consumption despite the threat of dwindling reserves.



Here is what the region might look like in 2030, under each of the possible growth scenarios:



If growth is steady and sprawl into the suburban areas continues:

Scenario 1: Status Quo Trend:
Steady growth in population (9%) and households (15%); development continues in the same dispersed pattern we've been experiencing in the region. This can be considered the most likely based on past trends.

If growth is steady and development is planned to locate people, transit and jobs closer together:

Scenario 2: Concentrated Growth:
Steady growth in population (9%) and households (15%); development follows New Visions recommendations for urban reinvestment and suburban planning.

If growth increases rapidly and sprawl into the suburban areas continues:

Scenario 3: Trend Hyper-Growth:
Rapid growth in population (29%) and households (35%); development continues to be dispersed throughout region.

If growth increases rapidly and development is planned to locate people, transit and jobs closer together:

Scenario 4: Concentrated Hyper-Growth:
Rapid population growth (29%) and household growth (35%); development follows New Visions recommendations for urban reinvestment and suburban planning.

growth
trends >

What does this mean?

If growth continues with sprawl development, as shown in Scenarios 1 and 3, residents and businesses in the Capital Region can expect:

- More congestion: Up to a tripling of traffic congestion can be expected, with worsening conditions in critical corridors, including the Northway.
- Reduced mobility: Although current transit service would remain available, the scattered development pattern will mean more people will be without access to transit.
- Increased travel times: Up to a 22% increase, even with modest travel growth.
- Increased spill-over: More traffic on the region's main roadways will push traffic onto suburban roads, causing congestion and extending travel times for residents in outlying areas.
- Greater costs: There are few efficiencies for providing essential services under these scenarios.
- Less open space: Development sprawl will reduce the availability of open space.



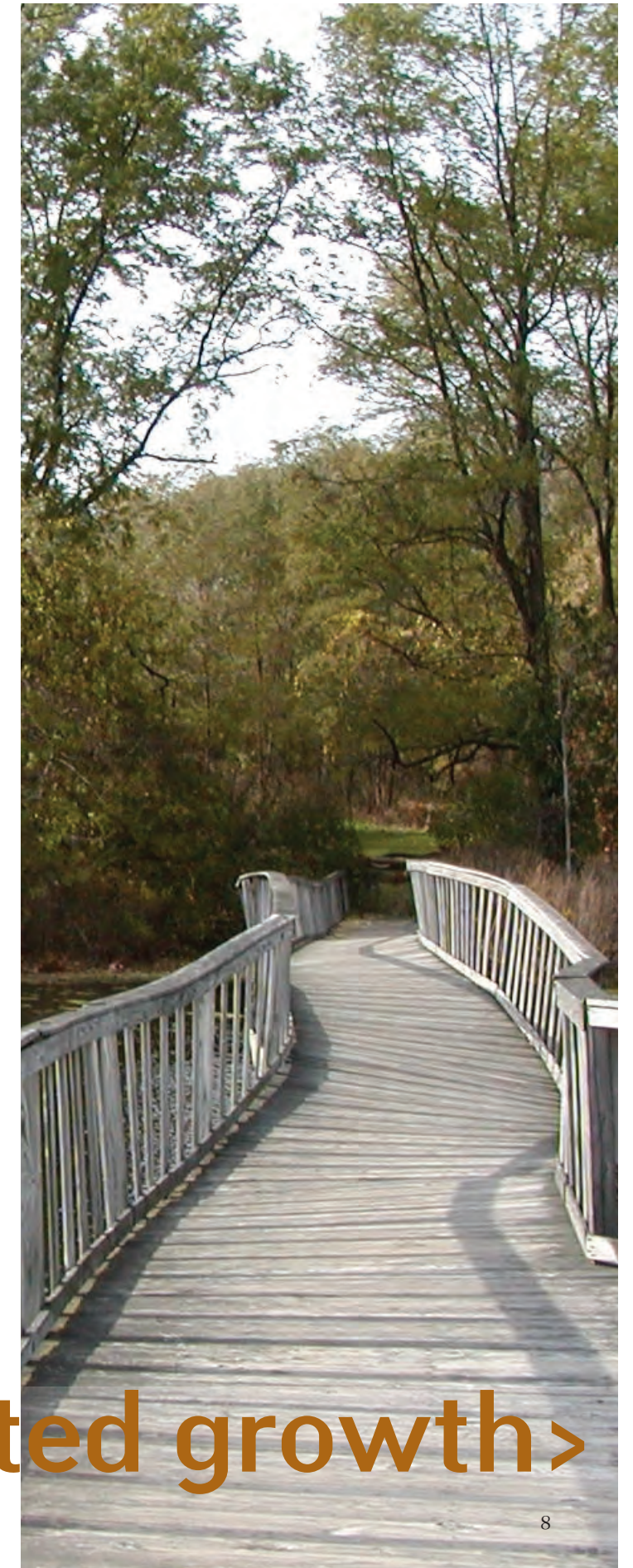
If growth continues under a Smart Growth planning framework, as in Scenarios 2 and 4, which concentrates development in urban centers and around transit, residents and businesses in the Capital Region can expect:

- Manageable congestion: Concentrated growth leads to less traffic congestion than dispersed growth; traffic congestion will be mitigated by other planning decisions.
- Improved transit service: Locating people and jobs closer to transit will promote an increase in transit trips and service.
- Reduced dependence on driving: Transit-oriented development would contribute to a reduction in driving and traffic congestion in corridors where Bus Rapid Transit service is located.
- Improved mobility: A managed lane on the Northway dedicated to bus service and other high-occupancy vehicles will ease commuting.
- More open space: By concentrating growth in urban and suburban centers, open spaces will be preserved, creating the potential for a regional greenway.
- Better access: More compact development encourages walking and bicycling and improves accessibility to services.
- Lower maintenance costs: Concentrated development reduces the need for additional mileage of residential streets, reducing the scale of maintenance requirements.
- Efficiency of services: The delivery of goods and services is eased under the concentrated growth scenario, adding economic advantages.

New Visions recommends a Concentrated Growth pattern, which offers important benefits:

- Managed congestion with more commuting options
- Improved transit service and better access to transit
- Vibrant urban places
- Important job growth in the region's cities
- Increased pedestrian and bicycle access
- Preservation of open spaces
- Improved recreational opportunities
- Significant savings in non-transportation infrastructure costs
- A high quality transportation system

benefits of
concentrated growth >



Big Ticket Initiatives: transportation improvements as catalysts for quality change

The Big Ticket transportation and transit initiatives under consideration could catalyze a more concentrated regional development pattern, regardless of the pace of growth. These exciting initiatives, while currently unfunded, represent an investment tool to manage growth in a way that sustains the Capital District as a prosperous, quality region.

Public participation and support is vital to guiding growth and realizing these initiatives. So is identifying the funding mechanisms for implementing basic elements of the Plan as well as Big Ticket items that will keep transportation improvements on track with inflation and travel growth.





The Big Ticket Initiatives are innovative ideas that can shape the future of the Capital District. They cover a wide range of improvements, from a regional greenway and improved riverfront access to clean vehicle programs, traffic safety improvements and expanded bus rapid transit services. The following chart offers a glimpse of the initiatives and what might be achieved over a 20-year period.

Bus Rapid Transit: a big initiative to move the region

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), now in development along the Route 5 Corridor, between downtown Albany and downtown Schenectady, combines the best features of rail with the flexibility and cost advantages of bus service. BRT buses travel on roadways, making limited stops at regular intervals, with traffic signal priority to assure reliable and competitive operating speeds. Passenger amenities include electronic information, faster fare collection and enhanced stations.

This streamlined approach to transit reduces traffic congestion and contributes to regional mobility. Ideal for commuters, BRT is a transportation improvement that brings economic benefits to the region. The New Visions BRT Big Ticket Initiative expands current implementation plans to cover a total of 100 route miles. It also locates development near transit in order to encourage transit use and reduce dependence on automobiles for mobility.





BIG TICKET INITIATIVES IN THE CAPITAL DISTRICT 2010-2030

	Hypothetical Big Ticket Initiatives	What is this?	Why is this important?	What could we do in 20 years?	The estimated cost over 20 years
	Regional greenway program	A system of bike-hike trails connecting parks, natural areas, neighborhoods and retail areas	Enhances bicycling, walking and recreational opportunities; an investment in sustainability	10 miles installed per year; 280 miles total	\$150 million
	Riverfront access and urban development program	The successful implementation of waterfront revitalization plans along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers	Creates walkable communities; vital urban areas	Implementation of a majority of existing plans	\$1.0 billion
	Street reconstruction and reconfiguration	A plan to reconstruct pavements, incorporate boulevard treatments, streetscaping, sidewalks, amenities, street lighting	Enhances community character and safety; encourages walking, bicycling and transit; restores pavement	40 lane miles per year; 800 miles total	\$2.4 billion
	Roadway widening and connections program	Strategic widening, extensions and connections of roadways to offer drivers a safety benefit and to add capacity	Strategic improvements to traffic flow, safety and system flexibility for emergency situations	10-15 lane miles per year; 200 total	\$1.0 billion







catalysts for quality change >

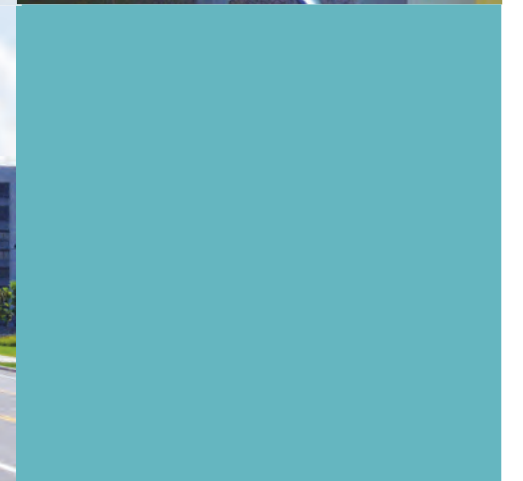
BIG TICKET INITIATIVES IN THE CAPITAL DISTRICT 2010-2030

	Hypothetical Big Ticket Initiatives	What is this?	Why is this important?	What could we do in 20 years?	The estimated cost over 20 years
	Suburban town center development	Implementation of town plans to create town centers	Creates stronger communities with a sense of place, mixed use development and walkability	5-10 lane miles per year of new town center streets	\$175 million
	Bus service expansion, BRT program with transit-oriented development	A high performance transit service that incorporates elements such as limited stops and high quality stations	Provides a flexible, sustainable transportation system for the region while improving access to jobs and education for many residents	100 route miles total, including NY 5	\$200 million capital; \$400 million additional for operation
	Guideway transit system with transit-oriented development	Innovative mass transportation technologies that operate on an exclusive right-of-way	An investment the region could grow into; it is only appropriate with rapid growth and regional commitments to transit oriented development	50 route mile guideway with 50 route miles of non-guideway BRT	\$2.1 billion capital; \$1.5 billion additional for operation
	Managed lane program	New expressway travel lanes that have their traffic flow managed; Example: High-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes: Pay a toll to bypass congestion - preferred treatment for carpools and transit	Reduces traffic congestion; encourages transit and carpooling; protects Interstate function for through traffic	50 route miles total	\$750 million, \$10 million for operation





BIG TICKET INITIATIVES IN THE CAPITAL DISTRICT 2010-2030


	Hypothetical Big Ticket Initiatives	What is this?	Why is this important?	What could we do in 20 years?	The estimated cost over 20 years
	Highway noise program	Construction of noise barriers (sound walls, land berms) by expressways	Reduces road noise in neighborhoods	40 locations on the expressway system	\$40 million
	Travel demand management program	Encourages commute alternatives- transit, carpools, flextime, telecommuting, etc.	The least-expensive and most cost-effective strategy to manage traffic, conserve energy and reduce pollution	40,000 participants	\$50 million
	Clean, efficient vehicle program	Financial incentives to encourage the use of "clean fuel" vehicles in public and private motor vehicle fleets (cars, trucks, transit buses and personal vehicles)	Reduces petroleum reliance, increases energy diversity	Public transit fleets, private vehicle incentive to double hybrid sales (2010), declining incentive to 2030	\$550 million
	Intelligent traffic management program	Using technology to improve traffic flow, to improve response time to incidents and to provide drivers with reliable information on traffic conditions	A bold initiative to take the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) program in the Capital District to the next level	Full ITS deployment on priority network; including real-time traffic info on entire system	\$135 million

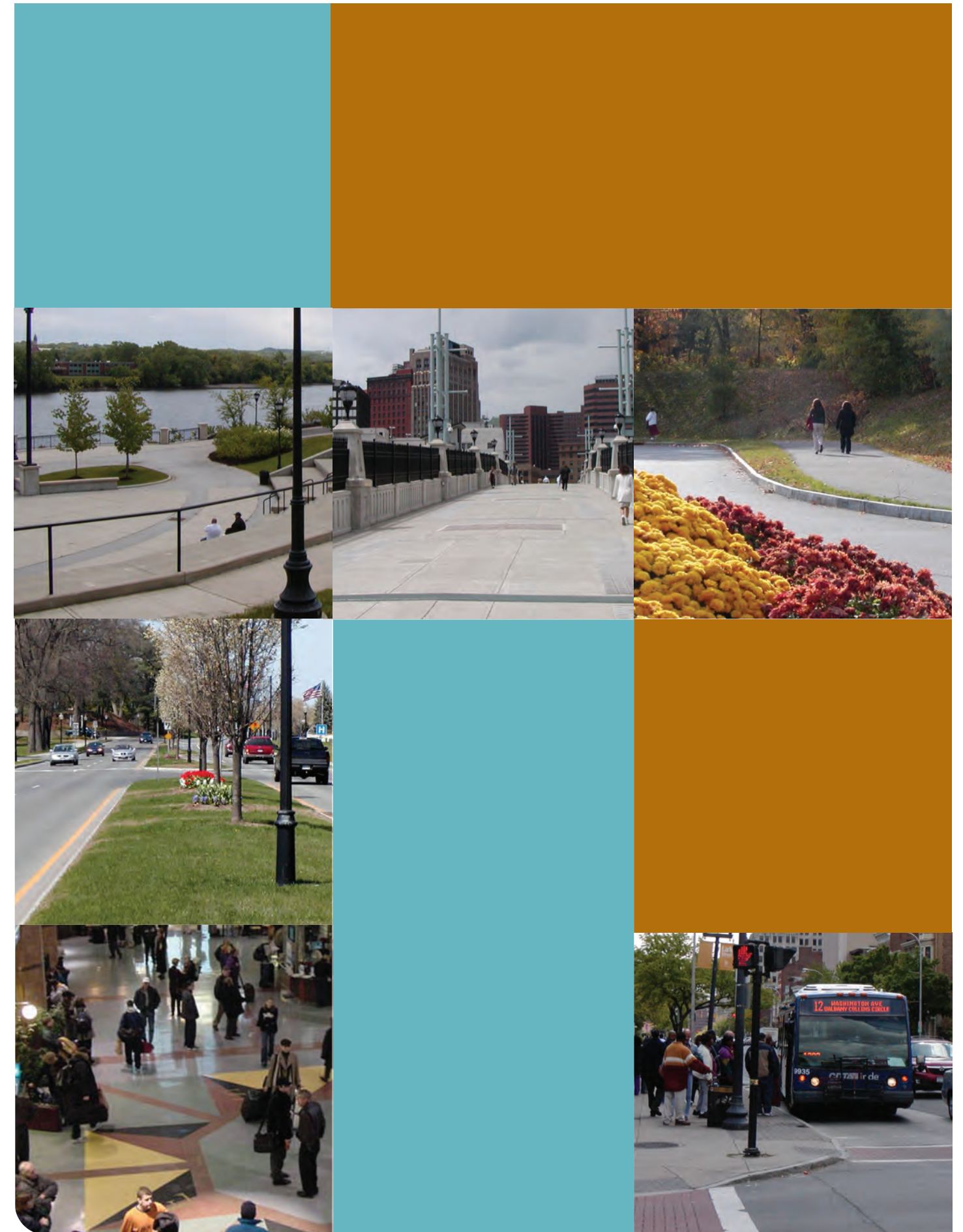


BIG TICKET INITIATIVES IN THE CAPITAL DISTRICT 2010-2030

	Hypothetical Big Ticket Initiatives	What is this?	Why is this important?	What could we do in 20 years?	The estimated cost over 20 years
	Video surveillance and enforcement program	Safety enforcement using red light running cameras, and possibly, speed enforcement cameras	Provides motorist, bicyclist and pedestrian safety benefits	Full deployment on priority ITS network	Supported by fines
	Comprehensive traffic safety program	The introduction of traffic calming features, improved site designs and structured street systems; lowering speeds in residential and commercial areas	A major commitment to a comprehensive safety program in the Capital District; provides safe neighborhoods, safe streets, safe travel and recreation and quality spaces	Capital investment several times the set aside in SAFETEA-LU; plus other features	\$200 million

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PLAN

	Hypothetical Big Ticket Initiatives	What is this?	Why is this not included in the Plan?	What was evaluated?	The estimated cost over 20 years
	Major highway system construction	Major new highway construction was examined and rejected by the New Visions Plan. Such a “build our way out” initiative would be inconsistent with adopted regional and state congestion management policy	Not consistent with community values or public policy (such as the State Energy Plan, State Transportation Plan and the New Visions Plan); and not consistent with encouraging sustainable, concentrated development	Approximately 20-25 arterial and 5-10 lane miles of expressway annually	\$3 billion to \$5 billion



What makes a quality region?

A quality region considers health, the economy and the environment within an overall framework of land use planning and transportation policies. Creating and sustaining a quality region in the Capital District is central to the direction of New Visions toward urban investment, concentrated development patterns and smart economic growth.

People agree that a quality region:

- Develops and sustains healthy urban, suburban and rural communities that function interdependently and readily adapt to change
- Creates economic, educational, social, cultural and recreational opportunities
- Provides safe neighborhood environments and housing choices for all
- Protects sensitive environmental resources
- Fosters community identity and "a sense of place" in all parts of the region



New Visions principles follow four themes:

- **Preserve and manage** the existing investment in the region's transportation system.
- **Develop the region's potential** to grow into a uniquely attractive, vibrant and diverse metropolitan area.
- **Link transportation and land use** planning to meet the Plan's goals for urban investment, concentrated development patterns and smart economic growth.
- **Plan and build for all modes** of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, cars and trucks.

making a quality region >

New Visions addresses issues that affect everyone

Transportation Safety

New Visions offers an integrated approach to reduce risk and enable safe access for everyone using the transportation system—especially bicyclists, pedestrians, children and the elderly.

Transit Service

New Visions incorporates CDTA's Transit Development Plan, which will improve and grow a variety of transit services for the Capital District, increasing mobility and supporting economic development and smart regional growth. One example is CDTC's investment in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on the Route 5 corridor.

Highways and Bridges

New Visions makes a strong commitment to keeping the region's highway and bridge system in good condition, providing \$3.4 billion for highway rehabilitation, reconstruction and design and \$1.8 billion in bridge maintenance, repair and replacement by 2030.

Traffic Congestion

New Visions explores ways to manage congestion, by using incident and traffic information technology to ease daily commutes. The Plan also encourages support for more transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel, which reduces vehicle traffic.

Arterial Management

New Visions endorses corridor transportation plans that call for a well-designed network of connected streets featuring pedestrian and bicycle treatments and transit access.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

New Visions encourages development that incorporates bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into highway construction as well as city, village and town plans and

provides for recreational opportunities through creation of bike/hike trails.

Environmental Quality

New Visions supports energy conservation and air quality in the region by advocating sustainable development patterns and site design, urban reinvestment and community-based land use planning, along with transit, bicycle and pedestrian investments and strong participation in the Clean Cities program.

Local Communities

New Visions acknowledges the critical importance of land use and development. CDTC sponsors 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.

Economic Development

New Visions articulates regional economic development needs and the transportation investment needed to support sustainable regional economic growth.

Freight Movement

New Visions advocates congestion management and infrastructure investments that will support the movement of goods throughout the Capital District.

Public Participation

New Visions seeks public participation in the planning process. Collaborating on the Plan are the Quality Region Task Force, five working groups, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, the Goods Movement Task Force and the Finance Task Force as well as public involvement in the dozens of Linkage Studies at the local level.

Security

New Visions follows the lead of NYSDOT and CDTA with security-related issues in transportation planning. CDTC provides a forum for operational discussions related to the safety and security of the Capital District transportation system.

Can we afford it?

The scenario study was designed to explore what the region might look like under different patterns of growth, without imposing restrictions related to funding and policy. The next step in advancing the vision is implementation: how can the results of the scenario study be integrated into planning decisions, and where will the funding come from for greater investment in transportation?

There are fiscal impacts to growth, regardless of the decisions that are made—or not made—to manage that growth.



investing in the future >

Invest now to reduce future costs

If growth continues unchecked, the demand on the infrastructure will continue to be dispersed throughout the region, increasing maintenance and repair costs, while adding no improvement to mobility, recreation and economic vitality. On the other hand, investment in the transportation infrastructure today will pay off over the long term by increasing transit use, encouraging economic growth in urban areas, adding to our recreation inventory and preserving open spaces.

The high cost of doing nothing

For many regions across the nation, growth brings unsustainable sprawl and choking congestion. If the traditional, unplanned, ways of developing growth are allowed here, our quality of life could decline. By implementing New Visions, we can avoid the mistakes of other fast-growing regions, where residents are stranded with long, expensive commutes, decaying cities, suburbs with no identity and overwhelming infrastructure costs. Doing nothing also leaves the Capital Region heavily dependent on the automobile and vulnerable to the full impacts of continued escalation in the cost of gasoline; namely, serious economic inefficiencies and likely regional economic decline.

Clearly, funding needs to be maintained at adequate levels. Traditional funding sources have been declining at the state and federal levels while costs have increased. Discussion of Big Ticket Initiatives must

occur simultaneously with a discussion of budget gaps for the basics. Without regular increases in funding, the physical and service condition of our infrastructure will decline, making even the most modest improvements difficult and costly to accomplish.

Keeping people and jobs in the region will require an investment to rehabilitate and improve the transportation system in order to avoid escalating infrastructure costs and tax increases that could make the region less attractive to families and employers. CDTC, its members, and partners continue to work with federal, state and local agencies and officials to secure the funds that are needed to implement New Visions.



Choosing our future

Local communities play an important role in the planning process. They are on the front line in choosing and developing a quality region through the local level planning decisions they make every day. Their decisions directly affect the link between land use and transportation. Where and how the region's communities plan and design the places we work, live and shop have a direct impact on the region's network of streets, the ability to reach destinations by walking, bicycling or riding transit, and related quality-of-life issues.

To involve local communities and inform them about planning for a quality region, CDTC sponsors the **Linkage Planning Program**. This program provides funding for cities, towns and villages to prepare community-based transportation and land use plans consistent with New Visions principles.

Local communities work in partnership with CDTC, NYSDOT, CDTA, CDRPC and our county partners on Linkage Studies that:

- Support urban revitalization and redevelopment of existing commercial/residential areas
- Improve street connectivity and reduce driveway conflicts through access management
- Enhance and develop activity centers and town centers
- Enhance and develop transit corridors and environments that support transit
- Encourage a greater mix and intensity of land uses
- Develop bicycle and pedestrian-friendly design standards
- Create an integrated multimodal transportation network



Local communities... are on the front line in choosing and developing a quality region through the local level planning decisions they make every day.

CDTC has sponsored 59 "Community and Transportation Linkage" joint planning studies in 34 municipalities with over \$3,000,000 in funding since it began in 2000. It's a great start, and the need grows as more communities face critical development decisions.

Has your community participated in a Linkage Study? These resources are available to enable your community to plan proactively and offer a better quality of life for residents. Contact CDTC or visit www.cdcmpo.org for more information.

How can I make a difference?

Get Informed

Learn more about New Visions and what a quality region can mean to you by visiting www.cdcmpo.org or contacting:

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Senior Transportation Planner
CDTC
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518.458.2161

For more detailed information about the Plan and its associated costs, read the complete New Visions 2030 Summary Document, available online.



Get Involved

Public participation is essential to this effort—the more people, the better the result. We encourage you to get involved: Join our mailing list. Attend community planning meetings. Request a New Visions presentation for your organization. Join neighborhood and business associations. Call or write your elected officials.

Find out the answers to these questions:

- Is the local planning board considering the regional impact of local development decisions?
- Is there a comprehensive plan that deals with growth and its impacts?
- Do existing land use regulations accommodate compact, connected, mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented design?
- Is the community participating in the Capital District Transportation Committee's Linkage Program or other financial incentive programs?

Create Change

Together, we can all make a difference for ourselves, our children and our environment. By supporting New Visions for a Quality Region, we will choose a future that offers vital urban centers, vibrant communities, sustainable economic growth, improved air and water quality and a strong transportation system that connects us all.

Many voices are already part of the conversation. Make sure yours is heard in your local community. With your commitment, we can make this happen.

make a
difference >

CDTC's 31 Adopted Planning and Investment Principles

PRESERVE AND MANAGE IMPROVE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

1. CDTC is committed to the maintenance, repair and renewal of the existing highway and bridge system in a cost-effective manner that protects and enhances rideability, public safety and accessibility.
2. Funding for appropriate repair and renewal will be based on the function and condition of the facility – not ownership.
3. Encouraging bicycle and pedestrian travel is a socially, economically and environmentally responsible approach to improving the performance of our transportation system.
4. In addition to supporting desired land settlement patterns, transit service helps meet multiple regional objectives in the Capital Region.
 - Transit contributes to congestion management, air quality and energy savings
 - Transit offers an alternative travel mode, reducing auto dependence
 - Transit provides essential mobility for those who do not operate a private vehicle
5. Improve the safety of the regional transportation system by creating a travel environment that is consistent with the community context and that provides a reasonable range of risk for all users of the system.
6. Transportation planning and implementation in the Capital Region includes examination of security issues and incorporation of security actions that: protect lives and coordinate the use of resources and manpower through established plans and protocols; provide services during and after disaster emergencies to aid citizens and reduce human suffering resulting from a disaster; and provide for recovery and redevelopment after disaster emergencies.

7. The needs of the older driver will be considered as transportation facilities are maintained and rehabilitated.

8. Increased efficiency in current vehicles/programs is preferable to fleet expansion to provide for special transportation needs.

MANAGE CONGESTION

9. Management of demand is preferable to accommodation of single-occupant vehicle demand growth.
10. Cost-effective operational actions are preferable to physical highway capacity expansion.
11. Capital projects designed to provide significant physical highway capacity expansion are appropriate congestion management actions only under certain conditions.
12. Significant physical highway capacity additions carried out in the context of major infrastructure renewal are appropriate only under certain conditions.
13. Incident management is essential to effective congestion management.
14. Any major highway expansion considered by CDTC will include a management approach.
15. In project development and design, other performance measures, such as pedestrian, bicycle and transit access, community quality of life and safety will be considered along with congestion measures.
16. The New York State Department of Transportation guidelines for roundabouts will be used for all CDTC federal aid projects that involve intersection improvements.

PROTECT OUR INVESTMENT

17. Managing traffic flows on the Capital Region expressway and arterial system is critical for both economic and social reasons.
18. Major capital projects must have a plan for operating budgets for the life of the project.
19. Maintaining the health and improving the efficiency of the existing freight facilities in the region through public/private partnerships is a high priority.

DEVELOP THE REGION'S POTENTIAL

BUILD UPON OUR STRENGTHS

20. The transportation system of the Capital Region is an important part of the region's attractiveness.

21. Transportation investments will help preserve and enhance the Capital Region's existing urban form, infrastructure and quality of place.

USE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT AS A TOOL

22. Transit facilities and services can be an essential element of the social, economic and cultural fabric if supportive policies and investments are in place.

23. Neighborhood-based local planning efforts are important to the success of an overall regional plan that emphasizes livable communities.

LINK TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

24. Land use management is critical to the protection of transportation system investment.

25. Design of street layout and location of complementary uses creates a pedestrian scale and provides increased accessibility without compromising the attractiveness of development.

LINK TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS TO LAND USE PLANNING

26. Transportation investments will encourage residential and commercial development to locate within an Urban Service Area defined for the Capital Region.

27. Environmental stewardship is one of CDTC's emerging roles and is crucial to the success of and quality of life in this region. Transportation investments must improve or preserve the region's cultural and natural environment.

28. Transportation investments will not encourage development in environmentally sensitive areas and will help to preserve rural character.

29. Arterial management guidelines will be flexible enough to deal with the Capital Region's various roadway types and the specific land use patterns surrounding them.

PLAN AND BUILD FOR ALL MODES

30. CDTC's planning efforts will be comprehensive enough to encompass all modes, including air, water, freight, intercity and local transit, pedestrian and bicycle.

31. Possible bicycle/pedestrian-related improvements will be considered from the perspective of developing a system – not just based on whether a particular facility is currently used.



CDTC Policy Board

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Photos courtesy of CDTC, CDTA, Creighton Manning Engineering, Mike Wyatt/NYSDOT and John Thomas/Alta Planning (pg 12, Canal Fest photo)

Terms to know

BRT

Bus Rapid Transit

A transit option combining some of the service quality of rail with the cost savings of bus transit.

CDRPC

Capital District Regional Planning Commission

A regional planning and resource center serving the four counties that promotes intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration by providing objective analysis of data, trends, opportunities and challenges relevant to the region's economic development and planning communities

CDTA

Capital District Transportation Authority

The public transit authority for the four-county Capital District that operates fixed route bus service, STAR paratransit, the upcoming BRT service and the region's train stations.

ITS

Intelligent Transportation Systems

The use of advanced information and communications technologies to enhance transportation safety and mobility.

MPO

Metropolitan Planning Organization

The forum for state and local officials to discuss and reach consensus on transportation plans and specific programs or transportation projects for the region. Makes sure that projects using federal funds are the products of a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative planning process.

NYSDOT

New York State Department of Transportation

The agency responsible for coordinating and developing comprehensive transportation policy in New York State and for assisting in the development and operation of transportation facilities and services for highways, railroads, mass transit systems, ports, waterways and aviation facilities.

RTP

Regional Transportation Plan

A comprehensive long range (20 year) plan for the metropolitan transportation system produced by CDTC. The RTP includes goals, objectives and policies as well as recommendations for specific transportation improvements.

SAFETEA-LU

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

Federal legislation authorizing \$286.4 billion in guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs for the six year period from 2004 to 2009.

TOD

Transit Oriented Development

A type of land use development that encourages transit use by being pedestrian "friendly" and having mixed-land uses such as residential, retail and office within walking distance of each other and frequent transit services.