

Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning in the Genesee- Finger Lakes Region



GENESEE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL



Transportation in our region at a glance **BY THE NUMBERS**

1.2 million people in **191 communities** in **9 counties** drive over **30 million vehicle miles** each day on **12,500 center-line miles of roads** in **900,000 registered vehicles**. Public transit provides **15 million trips** each year covering **50 million passenger miles**. There are **23 airports** in the region. Greater Rochester International Airport serves **2.5 million passengers** annually and over **200,000 tons of freight**. Trucks transport an additional **60 million tons of goods**. **2 major and nearly a dozen shortline railroads** operate in the region. Amtrak trains carry over **120,000 riders** each year. Walker, joggers, and bicyclists use approximately **400 miles of multi-use trails**.



A Resource for You

This guide was written because concerned citizens, like you, play a vital role in identifying needs and developing solutions. We want you to understand how transportation planning works in our nine-county region and actively take part in making key decisions.

A transportation project will not be successful without public support. For this reason, planning for transportation projects in our region is thoughtful and deliberative. The process of gathering public input and building consensus for each project takes many months and involves many steps. And each step of the way provides an opportunity for you to get involved.



This guide is premised on the belief that the more you know and the more you participate, the more you will influence how millions of public dollars get spent on our extensive network of roads, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and public transit.

No one understands a neighborhood or community better than the people who live there. Your involvement in the planning process assures that we will make wise investments.

- *Genesee Transportation Council*

Our Transportation System Affects...

- Economic development and job creation
- Land use
- Community appearance
- Personal and municipal budgets
- Personal health and safety
- Air quality and the environment
- Full and fair participation by all groups

...in other words, the Quality of Our Lives.

Genesee Transportation Council

The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) guides transportation planning in the Genesee-Finger Lakes region, which includes Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates Counties.

By federal law, every urbanized area of the country with over 50,000 people must have a formal planning organization for transportation. The Genesee Transportation Council fills that role in our region. GTC is authorized to conduct transportation planning and oversee transportation investment.

The federal government insists on regional transportation planning because our roads and other transportation facilities cross and connect many communities. For example, traffic congestion in one area can build to congestion in other areas. An expanded highway can carry activity to a community or take it away. Trails and sidewalks can bring people together who otherwise might never have met. Access to air

and rail service can affect an entire regional economy. The Genesee Transportation Council works with all municipalities to achieve regional agreement on transportation investment. Each year, the federal government spends about \$140 million on our roads, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and public transportation system, which leverages additional state and local funds. A regional outlook helps ensure our taxes are spent wisely, our transportation network is efficient and effective, and impacts on our environment are minimized.

The GTC Board is ultimately responsible for making planning and funding decisions. The approval of the Board is required before federal funding can be allocated for many projects.

The Board is made up primarily of local elected officials. The Board meets quarterly and all meetings are open to the public.

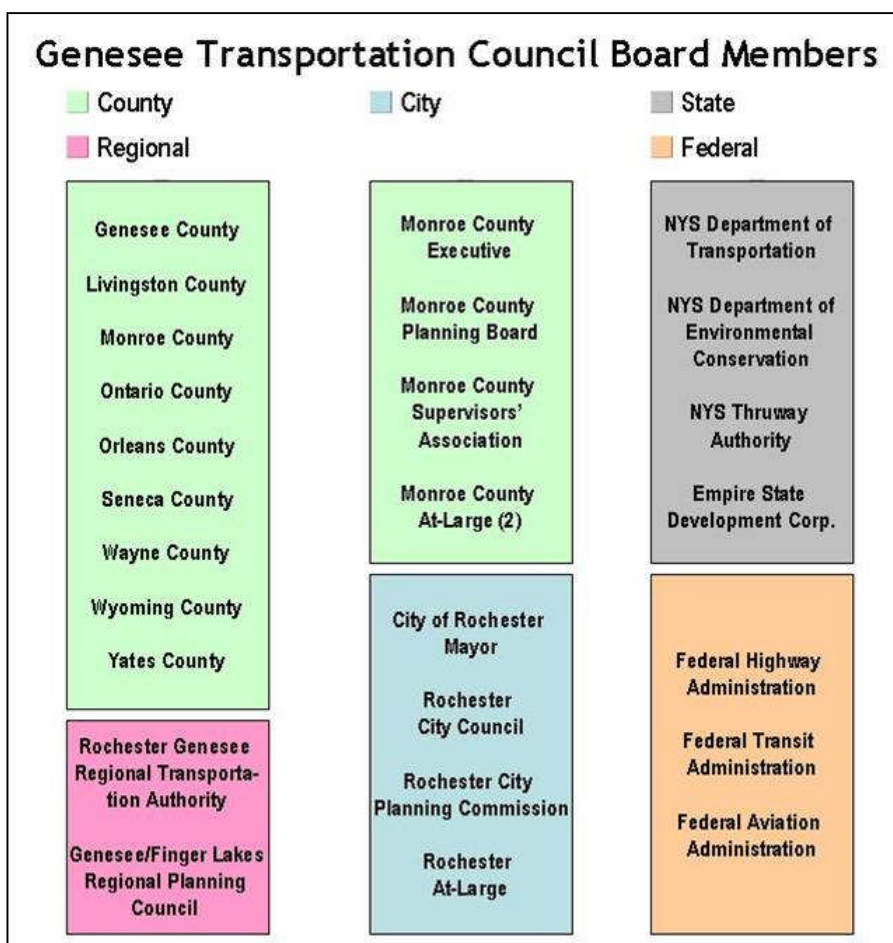
Standing technical committees analyze issues and offer recommendations to the Board. The committees meet regularly. All Planning Committee meetings are open to the public and advertised in the local media. Meeting times, locations, and materials are also found on the GTC website:

www.gtcmpo.org

www.gtcmpo.org

The Genesee Transportation Council Board and standing committees are served by a small staff of employees. The staff analyzes data on the region's transportation system, such as pavement conditions; uses Geographic Information Systems to visually portray relationships, such as how population shifts affect traffic patterns; and develops computer models to forecast future travel conditions, such as how an aging population will affect needs for public transportation.

GTC staff is always available to the public to take comments, answer questions, and furnish information.



The Transportation Planning Process

The process of formulating broad goals and priorities for the region's transportation system and eventually translating them into investments in specific projects is accomplished through three main tasks.

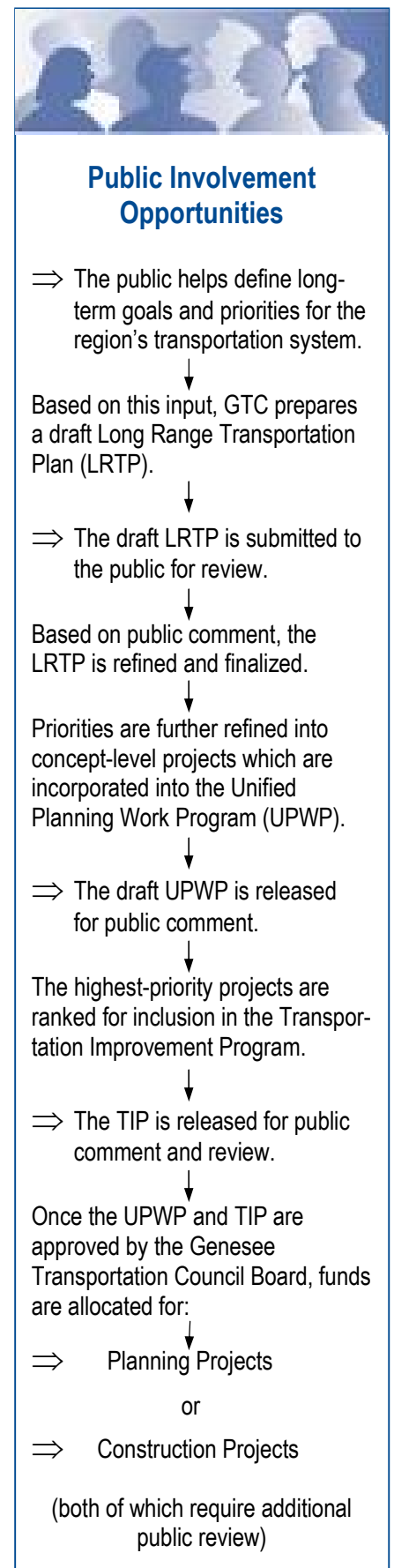
1. *The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*. The LRTP is the "big picture." It establishes goals for our region and identifies and prioritizes needed transportation improvements over the next 20 years to meet these goals. The Long Range Transportation Plan is updated every 4 years based on regional population and economic growth projections. The plan must be fiscally constrained, which means that money must be identified to pay for each recommended improvement; nothing is pie-in-the-sky.
2. *The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)*. The UPWP is the Genesee Transportation Council's transportation planning work program for the upcoming year. It summarizes the transportation planning activities that GTC will undertake during the year on behalf of local municipalities and agencies. Examples of projects in the UPWP include: studies of public parking and private freight movement; market research for bus service; plans to improve traffic flow and land use in village centers and along major highways; and the identification of opportunities for bicycle facilities and new trails. The Unified Planning Work Program is updated annually.
3. *The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*. The TIP is our region's spending and implementation plan for transportation improvements over the next 4 years, at a minimum. The TIP not only lists specific projects, but spells out the anticipated schedule and cost for each phase of a project — thus providing a year-by-year accounting of how federal funds are spent on behalf of taxpayers in our region. The Transportation Improvement Program is typically updated every two years.

Opportunities for Public Involvement

Public involvement for each phase of the planning process begins when the appropriate GTC committee starts its review of goals, plans, or projects. As noted, all committee meetings are open to the public, and all relevant meeting documents are posted on the GTC website. The committees prepare drafts of the LRTP, UPWP, and TIP. Your input on each draft is solicited during public review periods. The committees then revise the drafts according to your comments, and prepare final drafts for review and approval by the GTC Board.

Individual planning and policy studies conducted by, or on behalf of, the Genesee Transportation Council require an additional public input component — typically, the formation of a steering committee and two public workshops, which are publicized in advance.

Individual construction projects are managed, not by GTC, but by the jurisdiction that owns and operates the transportation facility. Public input is sought during the design and environmental review stages of a construction project.



Contact Information



Genesee Transportation Council:

The offices of GTC are located in downtown Rochester at:

50 West Main Street
Suite 8112
Rochester, New York 14614

Your comments are always appreciated. We need your help to ensure our transportation system serves you:

Phone: 585-232-6240
Fax: 585-262-3106
E-mail: contactgtc@gtcmpo.org

Please visit our website for transportation resources and meeting information:

www.gtcmpo.org



For potholes, cracked sidewalks, ditch cleaning, snow removal, pavement markings, traffic signs, dead animals, bridge damage, railroad crossings, and other maintenance issues:

The Genesee Transportation Council is a planning agency. It does not own, operate, or maintain transportation facilities.

Please contact your municipality to find out who is responsible for the road or other facility in question.



For bus service:

Please visit the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority's website at www.rgrta.com for schedules, fares, and other information about bus service in Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties.

For information on bus service in Ontario County, please visit the County Area Transit System's website at www.co.ontario.ny.us/transit.

Participation is Key

Public participation is the key to successful transportation planning, and there are many ways you can get involved.

- Educate yourself on sound transportation planning techniques that are applicable to your community. The GTC website is a good place to start.
- Learn who is involved in transportation planning in your community.
- Attend public meetings and contribute thoughtfully with the good of your community and region in mind.
- Participate in community surveys and transportation studies.
- Ask transportation officials to speak about transportation planning at community meetings.
- Remain informed and involved throughout the transportation planning process.



PHOTO CREDITS

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