

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Genesee Transportation Council Members & Alternates  
**FROM:** James Stack, Executive Director JS  
**DATE:** August 30, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** FHWA/FTA Joint Certification Review

Per Title 23 Section 134 and Title 49 Section 5303 of the United States Code, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with a Transportation Management Area (TMA) no less than once every four years to ensure that the process meets federal requirements.

FHWA – New York Division and FTA – Region II have completed their joint certification review of the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) transportation planning process. FHWA – New York Division served as the lead agency for the joint certification review which included a desk audit of materials produced via the transportation planning process since the last joint certification review and a field visit that was conducted March 22, 2017 through March 24, 2017.

FHWA – New York Division staff will present and discuss the findings and key points of the joint certification review at the September 7, 2017 GTC Board meeting. GTC staff will be prepared to discuss activities being undertaken and planned as a result of the findings of the joint certification review.

The following item is provided for your information:

- 1. Executive Summary of Genesee Transportation Council – 2017 FHWA - FTA Certification Review document**

# Executive Summary

## Main Conclusions

The transportation planning process in the Rochester, NY urbanized area, as carried out by Genesee Transportation Council Metropolitan Planning Organization (GTC MPO) is a very professional endeavor but due to the need to address corrective actions it is hereby certified with condition.

## Background

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration reviewed the GTC transportation planning process in accordance with the requirement of '23 CFR 450.336' that all urbanized areas over 200,000 be reviewed at least every four years to assure that the planning process is in accordance with federal regulations.

The review included a desk audit, a site visit to Rochester (March 22 – 24, 2017), discussions with member agencies, the GTC central staff, and a published 30-day public commenting period.

## Noteworthy Practices

There are many examples of good transportation planning practices that GTC executes. We note in the report, for example, GTC's development of the *Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Bridge Network Needs Assessment and Investment Strategy*, their involvement with the *Inner Loop Infill* project which has received national attention, carrying out studies to assess health impacts of transportation decisions, carrying out road safety audits for bicycle and pedestrian crashes, GTC's leadership in the Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) group, and exploring creative public outreach efforts. We also noted the excellent working relationship of all those involved in the planning and programming process, especially the GTC Policy Board and Planning Committee. We specifically commend the professional work of the GTC Staff and Executive Director James Stack for his dedication.

## Recommendations And Concerns

Besides the frequent commendations of existing practices, the report offers a few recommendations for consideration in furthering program excellence. These areas include the Long Range Transportation Plan's (LRTP) Financial Plan and the abbreviated coverage of details provided; the sizeable carryover balances of funds available for planning activities indicated in the



Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); the percentage of obligated projects in the year they were programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) compared to the initial number of projects. In addition, it was not clear how GTC's planning process was coordinated with Rochester Genesee Regional Transit Authority (RGRTA). We have also identified two items that the GTC needs to attend to concerning the TIP Financial Plan and TIP Fiscal Constraint.

#### **Corrective Actions**

The Federal Team has issued 3 corrective actions in the following areas:

1. Unified Planning Work Program (1)
2. Transportation Improvement Program (2)

#### **Recommendations**

The Federal Team has issued 10 recommendations in the following areas:

1. Long Range Transportation Plan (1)
2. Unified Planning Work Program (3)
3. Transportation Improvement Program (1)
4. Transit Activities – Human Services Transportation Plan (1)
5. Title VI, Environmental Justice (2)
6. Environmental Mitigation (PEL) (1)
7. Safety / Security in the Planning Process (1)

#### **Commendations**

The Federal Team has provided 6 commendations in the following areas:

1. Unified Planning Work Program (1)
2. Non-motorized - Bicycle/Pedestrian (1)
3. Public Involvement (1)
4. ITS Architecture / ITS Operations (2)
5. Safety / Security in the Planning Process (1)