

ELMIRA-CHEMUNG TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

SELF-CERTIFICATION 2019-2020

A. Required Agreements

The Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council (ECTC) has completed all necessary agreements to establish the appropriate process for carrying out the required transportation planning and programming activities.

As per CFR § 450.314, ECTC will continue to work with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Chemung County Transit System (C TRAN), which a private company operates under contract to Chemung County, to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These parties cooperatively develop and share information related to the development of financial plans supporting the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). NYSDOT Region 6 and ECTC staff prepare an annual listing of projects. They also work together to maintain performance based planning agreements as needed.

The Host Agency agreement between New York State and Chemung County was approved effective April 1, 2012.

B. Planning /Technical

1. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP describes planning activities that the MPO will perform in the upcoming year. On February 26, 2019, the ECTC Policy Committee approved the most recent UPWP that addresses the program year 2019-20. The six UPWP tasks directly relate to implementing the current LRTP and TIP. The tasks include Transportation Asset Management, Mobility Enhancement, Transit Enhancement, Long Range Planning and Performance Data and Target Setting, Transportation Alternatives, and Public Participation and Program Administration. The goals in the UPWP include using a system-driven approach to ensure the safety and security of the transportation system for all users, invest in the transportation system infrastructure to bring all facilities and modes into a state of good repair, actively operate the transportation system to maximize efficiency and reliability of travel, promote connectivity among all modes of transportation to meet the region's mobility and accessibility needs, and ensure the efficiency of freight movement throughout the region to maximize support of the economy. Additional goals are to Use the benefits of a well-managed transportation program to integrate transportation and land use planning to promote economic development, sustainability, and enhanced livability, and protect and enhance the natural environment, reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Metropolitan Transportation Plan

ECTC's fiscally constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), "Elmira-Chemung Transportation Plan 2035: Challenges and Opportunities," positioned the region to implement the most suitable transportation investments to meet its stated goals and objectives for the next 20 years. ECTC adopted the plan on December 9, 2014. It includes summaries of current conditions, projections of future needs for the transportation system, and recommendations for prioritizing projects and implementing the

plan. The LRTP includes the planning factors that MPOs and states must address. ECTC kicked off the planning process for its next LRTP to be adopted in December 2019, and will forecast transportation needs and opportunities through 2040. The section below, therefore, refers to the current (2035) plan.

The LRTP includes consideration of the impacts on the natural environment, from consumption of land to production of emissions caused by the creation of transportation infrastructure and operation of transportation facilities. One of the Plan's goals is to "Protect and enhance the natural environment, reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions." ECTC will promote environmentally friendly practices that will ensure that the projects, actions, and programs in the plan will work toward minimizing any potential negative impacts.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act say the LRTP shall include consultation with Federal, State, and tribal, wildlife, land management and regulatory agencies. The plan meets this requirement through the membership of the various Federal, State, regional agencies on the ECTC Policy and Planning committees, as well as extensive project-specific outreach. A representative from the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (STC) is a member of both the ECTC Planning and Policy Committees. STC plays a significant regional role in land use and natural resources management, environmental protection, and soil and water conservation. ECTC's Director is a member of the Chemung County Environmental Management Council (EMC). ECTC invites NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) regional representative to its public meetings. Members consult with the DEC regional representative on a project-specific basis. The Federal Soil and Water Conservation District for Chemung County is also regularly involved in planning activities with ECTC, particularly on trail construction or enhancement projects.

The Chemung County Planning Department, of which ECTC is host to, has a significant role in land use regulation, including review of local plans that require State and Federal environmental reviews. Two Planning Department staff also work for the MPO, as the Chemung County Planning Commissioner is also the ECTC Director and the other is senior staff for the Planning Department.

With the completion of major elements of our transportation infrastructure, the ECTC LRTP emphasizes maintaining, optimizing and integrating a transportation system that includes roads, bridges, rail, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The plan also stresses the importance of projects that will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Economic development and the transportation planning process remains strongly linked in Chemung County. ECTC is a participant in the I-86 Coalition, which advocates for the funding to achieve Interstate designation for all of Route 17. ECTC's office is located in the Chemung County Commerce Center along with many of the other regional economic development agencies. The one-stop shop for economic development minimizes duplication of effort while maximizing the efforts of the cooperating agencies.

The ECTC uses the LRTP goals as screening criterion in the local project TIP development process. Project-specific consultation, as necessary, is undertaken with environmental protection agencies, wildlife management agencies, land management and historic preservation interests and agencies. The lead agency typically determines any necessary environmental mitigation during the project design phase and the selection of project alternatives.

3. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

ECTC and its partners developed the 2019-2024 TIP to be consistent with the ECTC Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as required by the FAST Act. ECTC's Policy Committee approved the draft 2019-2024 TIP on June 18, 2019. The TIP contains a priority list of projects and strategies for five years based on a financial plan and it includes descriptions (type of work, timeline, cost, phases and related information) for each project. The TIP is financially constrained by program year and conforms to the most recent New York State STIP. The TIP projects reflect goals contained in the approved ECTC LRTP. Projects identified in the TIP do not have a disproportionate impact on any specific socioeconomic groups. ECTC continues to process TIP amendments as needed.

Limited funding for soliciting Federal-aid-eligible local projects existed during for this programming cycle. The specific projects, that were selected, along with Bridge New York 2 awarded projects are programmed in the first two years of the TIP. The primary objective of the TIP update process was to continue to advance approved projects while also being cognizant that new asset management procedure may identify critical infrastructure needs that may need to be addressed during the 5 year TIP period. Therefore, the TIP includes ECTC Highway and Bridge Block funding pending future programming decisions.

A minor revision to the TIP is an administrative modification to projects. According to the Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Rule, minor revisions do not require a 30-day public review (72 Fed. Reg. 7224 450.104). Minor revisions are those changes that affect less than 10% of an individual project or \$250,000, whichever is greater. Changes greater than this threshold are considered major amendments (a "TIP Amendment"). A TIP Amendment is a change to the long-range metropolitan transportation plan or TIP that involves a major change in project cost, project schedule, design concept or scope, as well as the addition or deletion of a project. TIP amendments trigger the various planning requirements associated with TIP re-adoption, requiring public review and demonstration of fiscal constraint and/or conformity. The MPO notifies the public of the availability of relevant TIP and TIP Amendment documents on the ECTC website.

4. Technical Areas

ECTC continues to conduct studies and to assist in the progress of other agency studies related to advancing the ECTC LRTP, address transportation issues that are important to the community, improve quality of life and promote economic development. ECTC and its partners conduct studies in a thorough and timely fashion, placing emphasis on the implementation of projects that further support previous work.

The ECTC Director serves on the Chemung County Transit Board and the Transit Specialist provides staff support to the Board.

ECTC continues to strive to provide Chemung County residents and visitors with alternatives to car travel through transit and bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure. The Lackawanna Trail – Riverview Section is now open, which extends the trail from the City of Elmira to Lowman over seven miles of paved trail. It connects to local businesses, neighborhoods, and a major park. ECTC completed a study for a bike-friendly route from the City of Elmira Central Business District to the Big Flats/Horseheads retail area in the north and is planning other trail segments including a connection from Eldridge Park to Elmira Heights.

ECTC coordinates a tri-county Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee that is working to develop a regional bicycle and pedestrian network, to advocate for Complete Streets policies in various municipalities, and to coordinate bicycle and pedestrian safety efforts among various stakeholders including NYSDOT, local schools, local municipalities, and non-profit organizations.

ECTC has created and implemented a marketing program for 511NY Southern Tier Rideshare. The program's goal is to increase the use of the State's 511NY internet-based ridesharing services, and increase carpooling in general.

ECTC is also working with local municipalities to develop and maintain a comprehensive Asset Management System that combines an inventory of the structural and operational characteristics of all federal-aid roadways in Chemung County and identifies potential preferred treatments that maximize the safety and efficiency of the transportation system in the most cost-effective manner.

5. Special Consideration in Transportation Planning Process

a. Title VI

The internal operation of ECTC, its staff and participating agencies, and the UPWP, LRP and TIP are designed to address equal opportunity and accessibility concerns. ECTC formally updated its Title VI, Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency Programs on October 2015. ECTC works with the Chemung County Human Relations Commission to reach out to the local minority population. ECTC is the lead agency for the Chemung County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Committee.

The NYS DOT Title VI Program, Environmental Justice program and Limited English Proficiency Program and the specific ECTC programs that supplement those programs constitute the ECTC programs. Staff attend training on these elements as required.

The ECTC and Chemung County provide information to the public regarding their Title VI obligations and protections against discrimination. The information is also on the ECTC website and available in ECTC's offices.

i. Environmental Justice

ECTC has developed a process to assess the impacts of the transportation planning process, the LRTP, and the TIP on underserved populations. The MPO uses GIS to map the low-income and minority population within the County, along with locations of the projected State and local capital projects for the planning period. ECTC services and plans for the urbanized area during the reporting period have had a uniform impact on the entire urbanized area.

ii. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Chemung County has limited diversity in its population and only a small percentage of persons with Limited English Proficiency. The percentage with linguistically isolated households is around one-half of one percent. Further, a disproportionate share of those with LEP do not reside in the community or use the transportation system or transit system on a regular basis. Those persons are located in the two New York State and one County correctional facility in the County. For the general population, in most cases English-speaking family members are likely to be available to help with translating the information needed to use the transportation system (streets and highways) or the Chemung County Transit System when needed by LEP persons. ECTC has conducted an analysis using the four factors identified in the DOT LEP Guidance. Due to the limited numbers of LEP needing assistance, the small size of our agency and limited resources, ECTC focuses its language measures on extending access for persons speaking Spanish. This population is a significant segment of the LEP with a unifying language need and the only anticipated growth.

iii. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

ECTC's offices are ADA accessible. Most of the MPO's meetings occur in the building, and all public meetings take place in other accessible buildings. Upon request, ECTC will accommodate persons with hearing disabilities or limited English proficiency at public meetings. Chemung County Transit (C TRAN) has produced a plan that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. C TRAN's buses and the Chemung County Transportation Center are fully accessible.

iv. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

ECTC submits Disadvantaged Women Minority Business Enterprise (D/W/MBE) reports to NYSDOT Main Office on a timely basis. The ECTC Policy Committee has agreed to abide by the NYS DOT D/W/MBE Plan.

b. Private Operators

Chemung County oversees Chemung County Transit; however, a private company operates the system. The private operator serves as a voting member on the ECTC Planning Committee. Its member is involved in TIP development and UPWP tasks.

c. Planning Factors

The planning factors under 23 USC 134, as modified by the FAST Act are as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;

2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation; and
10. Enhance travel and tourism.

ECTC's planning activities adequately address the ten factors. A table on page six of the UPWP provides a crosswalk of how the planning factors are addressed in the planning process including the TIP and LRTP.

ECTC staff helps to coordinate the tri-county Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BACPAC) and leads the group's Chemung County efforts. BACPAC brings together mode advocates, planners, human services agencies, seniors, and department of public works officials to guide planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian improvements in Chemung, Schuylers, and Steuben Counties.

ECTC continues to serve on the Chemung County Age-Friendly Community Advisory Council and Coalition Committee to provide assistance with implementing the Transportation Action Plans parts of the Chemung County Age-Friendly Community plans.

d. Congestion Management Process (CMP)

The Congestion Management Process is not applicable to ECTC as the population does not exceed 200,000.

e. Participation Plan

In August of 2018, ECTC policy committee formally adopted its current Public Participation Plan. ECTC's Public Participation Plan addresses topics including meeting notification, information access, public involvement in the planning process and TIP update, methods to enhance public participation, social media, ECTC's website, the Chemung County Transportation guide, visualization, review and coordination.

ECTC disseminates the draft TIP for public review and comment for a period of 30 days. ECTC will host a public meeting per the public participation policy and receive comment via mail, fax and email. Following the conclusion of the public review, ECTC staff will make any necessary changes and submit the TIP to the Policy Committee. The Public Participation Plan is reviewed periodically to determine effectiveness.

The Chemung County Transportation Guide provides the public with information about the MPO and local transportation options. It solicits public inquiries regarding the transportation planning process by providing the ECTC purpose and its contact information. The guide, which was updated in 2016, is widely distributed throughout the County. There are two widely distributed brochures that provide the public with the ECTC contact information. The Get Active in Elmira and Get Active in Chemung County brochures refer people to the ECTC if they have any transportation planning questions.

Draft and final LRP, other transportation plans and studies, the TIP (including the TIP solicitation letter and application), and UWPW, as well as relevant ECTC information, are posted in the ECTC website in a manner such that the public has the appropriate amount of time to submit comments to the ECTC. The ECTC responds to all inquiries from the public in a timely and appropriate manner. For many years the ECTC has encouraged in study scopes that the public participation process to progress specific projects include various visualization techniques to illustrate project options. The ECTC requires that study project scopes include visualization techniques to illustrate project options whether done by consultants or by ECTC staff. Recent projects that included the extensive use of visualization techniques include the Northern Arterial Update and the North-South Bicycle Friendly Corridor projects.

The local media frequently interviews ECTC staff. The ECTC web site is an important outreach tool and it is updated on a regular basis.

ECTC staff attends various public outreach events such as the annual Juneteenth Event, the East Market and Wisner Market annual farmers markets, Creating Healthy Schools and Communities, Chemung County Summer Cohesion Program, the Chemung River Friends group, and other organizations and opportunities where ECTC can display and discuss its programs and projects.

f. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Agency Transportation Plans

ECTC works with the Chemung County Transit Board, transportation providers and human service agencies (and non-profit agencies) to implement the mandated Chemung County Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan. ECTC formally updated the Plan in 2018. The Mobility Manager hired as a result of the identification of that need, coordinates plan and actions with the transit system, other private transportation providers, County agencies, and private non-profit agencies that provide or fund transportation. The Mobility Manager performs outreach to all of these groups as well as other groups and individuals. In 2015 the Transit Specialist developed and helped C TRAN implement a new demand responsive transit service designed to serve the seniors and persons with disabilities to medical and employment destinations. This service is intended to meet a need identified in the “Coordination Plan”.

C. Administrative Management

Progress Reports

ECTC compiles and submits progress reports documenting the MPO's activity to FHWA and FTA on time and as needed.

Bills

Chemung County submits payment requests to NYSDOT promptly and pays bills on time.

Audits

As a County department, ECTC and its program are audited annually with no deficiencies noted.

Annual Program

ECTC closes out its PL and FTA grants in a timely fashion.

Budget

ECTC maintains current budgets that reflect the County's budget and UPWP. The MPO processes budget amendments as needed.

Consultant Selection

The consultant selection process and procedures of Chemung County as the host of ECTC are utilized. ECTC determines an evaluation process for consultant selection in conjunction with member agencies for each project. Depending on the funding source, ECTC encourages the use of M/WBE and DBE firms.

Central Staff/Host Relations

Chemung County has been the host agency for the MPO since April 1996. Staff support from the county remains important to MPO operations.

Decision Making

Committee structure and membership are adequate. ECTC has TIP and Transit Subcommittees that meet as needed and function well. The MPO forms and utilizes ad hoc advisory or steering committees as needed to make decisions in a timely manner.

Governance

ECTC staff and NYS DOT periodically review and update the foundation documents for the MPO to maintain their relevance to current operations. The members of ECTC have a clear understanding of their roles as the MPO. They execute their roles in a way that is supportive of the independent and unbiased work of MPO staff and sound MPO decisions and follow procedures outlined in the ECTC Operations Plan (updated 2018). ECTC has strong working relationships with many of the local government entities and a wide range of community agencies.

ECTC staff is a member of the Chemung County Traffic Safety Board, which works to improve traffic safety throughout the county area. ECTC is both a member and staff to the Chemung County Transit Board, a governing body for Chemung County Transit System. ECTC staff facilitates the Transit Riders Advocacy Group that helps to improve the transit experience and gives input to any issues with the daily transit experience. ECTC staff provides technical support to the Chemung County GIS Consortium, a multi-jurisdictional group that works to progress GIS and related services, such as asset management in the County, City of Elmira and neighboring localities.

Procurement

As hosted by Chemung County, ECTC follows County procurement policy. ECTC has addressed the FTA procurement requirements applicable to FTA subrecipients to the extent required. ECTC uses FTA planning funds for staff costs and travel reimbursement only. For any FTA-funded procurements in the future, ECTC will:

- Comply with FTA Circular Guidance 4220.1F, Third Party Contracting Requirements and the most current FTA Master Agreement,
- Maintain a written history of all FTA-funded procurements, and
- Incorporate clauses and certifications required for FTA program assistance funding.