



# CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

One Park Place, Main Floor · Albany, NY 12205-2676

[www.cdtcmpo.org](http://www.cdtcmpo.org)

e-mail:[cdtc@cdtcmpo.org](mailto:cdtc@cdtcmpo.org)

Phone: (518) 458-2161

Fax: (518) 729-5764

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June 28, 2022

Draft Scoping Plan Comments

NYSERDA

17 Columbia Circle

Albany, NY 12203-6399

Re: Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan

Dear Ms. Dorren Harris and Mr. Basil Seggos,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan. The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) applauds New York State's ambitious efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts to people and systems that result from the climate crisis. CDTC, like all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), produces three major products: the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). All of these products are essential tools for furthering transportation policies and plans at the local and regional level. These create an opportunity for New York to work with MPOs to include major climate policies and goals in their plans. CDTC's MTP, New Visions 2050, has embraced many of the proposed policies and strategies in the Draft Scoping Plan, such as accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and investing in enhanced transit services.

Based on the MPO's experience working with local governments and planning organizations, CDTC recommends New York strengthen its support for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs and transit. This includes increasing funding, creating financial incentives to coordinate development with transportation through zoning and land use regulations, and updating New York's zoning enabling statutes (Town Law §272-a, Village Law §7-722, and General City Law §28-a) to tighten the criteria for Comprehensive Plans. Within the proposed strategies of increasing vehicle miles traveled and creating first/last mile connections to transit, more detail on how this is accomplished should be provided. The Draft Scoping Plan should be explicit and supportive of mobility infrastructure like multi-use paths, protected bike lanes, and bus lanes as essential for providing people with affordable, low-carbon transportation options and shifting trips away from private vehicles. The proposed transportation strategies should include the integration of technology in the transportation system to improve operations, such as intelligent transportation systems, smart mobility, and congestion pricing/tolling. These technologies can reduce vehicle idling and congestion.

If New York is going to be successful in meeting its climate goals, it should reconsider its "Preservation First" policy in terms of investing in the transportation system. This policy limits the ability of state and local government from redesigning communities to accommodate changing technologies and adapting roadways to meet the needs of new mobility vehicles and services (e.g. electric scooters and bicycles, cargo bikes, etc.).

Additionally, the New York State Highway Design Manual and NYS Supplement to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) should be revised and updated to encourage the implementation of streets and transportation systems that safely accommodate all forms of mobility, especially the most vulnerable users of the system like pedestrians, bicyclists, people with mobility disabilities, older residents, and children. More flexible design standards that prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit before other mobility would accelerate the transition away from combustion engine vehicles.

In recent years, the Climate Smart Communities and Clean Energy Communities programs, have encouraged local governments to adopt more climate-friendly policies and implement clean energy actions. They have provided the right tools and incentives needed by local governments to create change at the local level in support of state climate goals. These programs should be modeled or expanded to assist local governments in implementing the strategies outlined in the Draft Scoping Plan. CDTCC is the MPO for the Albany-Schenectady-Troy and Saratoga Springs metropolitan areas based in Albany, NY.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or for clarification on any comments above via email at [smisiewicz@cdtccmpo.org](mailto:smisiewicz@cdtccmpo.org) or at (518) 458-2161.

Sincerely,



Sandra Misiewicz, AICP  
Executive Director