

**BINGHAMTON METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY
CERTIFICATION NARRATIVE
FFY 2020 - FFY 2022**

The Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study Policy Committee is designated by the Governor of New York as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Binghamton NY-PA urbanized area.

Under Federal law, metropolitan planning organizations in metropolitan areas of less than 200,000 population are not subject to direct certification of their program by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). It is jointly the responsibility of the MPO and the State to certify compliance with Federal metropolitan planning regulations and other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements [23 CFR 450.336]. This narrative forms the basis for the certification of the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study by the BMTS Policy Committee and the New York State Department of Transportation.

A. Required Agreements

BMTS MOU (adopted February 11, 2009): establishes the responsibilities and cooperative procedures of the BMTS to ensure that the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out in full compliance with federal regulations.

NYS DOT-BMTS Host Agency Agreement (effective April 1, 2022): reauthorizes the host agency relationship between Broome County and NYS DOT for a period of 10 years.

BMTS Unified Operations Plan (updated June 2017): establishes the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the BMTS, including its voting membership, meeting protocols, decision-making process, and procedures for adding new and changing existing transportation projects on the TIP.

Performance Management Agreement – BMTS, NYS DOT, BC Transit (effective June 14, 2018): establishes the process for coordination BMTS, NYS DOT and BC Transit, to meet performance-based planning and programming requirements in accordance with 23 CFR 450 and established federal guidance.

B. Planning and Technical Studies

1. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The BMTS Policy Committee adopted the 2022-2023 BMTS Unified Planning Work Program on March 3, 2022. It represents a balanced program of technical studies and support services. The UPWP both leads the long range plan by establishing a technical foundation and

exploring new planning issues; and follows it with recommended studies like safety plans, pedestrian feasibility studies and curbside management plans. The Transportation Plan update (see below) is a central element of the UPWP. The technical studies range across modes and include both short range and long range efforts. Collection of system level data, modeling, and GIS form the foundation of the support for the modal studies and the transportation plan. Public participation activities are also funded through the UPWP and are responsive to the environmental justice initiative of the USDOT and the requirements in the final rule for use of the internet and visualization techniques.

2. Transportation Plan. *Moving our Future Forward 2045* was approved by the BMTS Policy Committee in October 2020. The Plan includes summaries of current conditions and projections of future needs for the transportation system, and recommendations for prioritizing projects and implementing the plan. The required planning factors that need to be addressed by MPOs and States are addressed by the goals established for the LRTP. BMTS followed the public involvement procedures set forth in its Public Participation Plan for this update.
3. Transportation Improvement Program. The BMTS 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program was approved on June 13, 2019 and will be in effect until September 30th, 2022. It was incorporated into the New York State STIP as required by law. The STIP was approved by FHWA and FTA in October, 2019.

The TIP is fiscally constrained and reflects the priorities of the long range transportation plan. Included in the TIP is a table demonstrating the fiscal plan for the TIP along with tables describing each project programmed.

BMTS is currently completing the 2023-2027 TIP update. This document will be considered for adoption on the same date as the self-certification, August 23, 2022. The 2023-2027 TIP will go into effect on October 1, 2022. The TIP update process included a 30-day public comment period and outreach per the BMTS Public Participation Plan.

§450.326 addresses the development and content of the TIP. BMTS complied with these requirements in developing the 2023-2027 TIP.

4. Technical Areas. The Unified Planning Work Program identifies technical studies and activities designed to provide timely information for decision-making on relevant current and future issues. Technical studies identified in the current UPWP are generally proceeding on schedule. The process of UPWP development ensures that the work is relevant and will lead to plan and/or program decisions. Examples of technical studies across modes include:

- Local Road Safety Action Plan. BMTS staff will be initiating a Local Road Safety Action Plan. This plan will include crash data analysis, identification of safety emphasis areas and will describe strategies, programs, and policies that local governments can consider for implementation to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes and reduce crash rates on local roads.
- Corridor Safety Assessments. In previous years BMTS has conducted Roadway Safety Assessments. Staff has worked in conjunction with AARP and other community members to conduct pedestrian safety audits at various locations. As part of the current UPWP, staff will be conducting two assessments at locations selected by the BMTS Planning Committee.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning. BMTS has become recognized for expertise in this area, including unique work with public health partners in both the public and private sectors in the area of walkability and active living by design. BMTS completed the pedestrian plan update in the spring of 2013 and the bicycle plan in March 2015. BMTS updated these plans concurrently with the LRTP in 2020. BMTS continues to work with municipalities to implement the recommendations in these plans.
- BC Transit Rider Satisfaction Survey. BMTS staff will be working with BC Transit and Binghamton University to conduct a rider satisfaction survey and analyze data and trends by comparing previous surveys.

5. Special Considerations

a. Title VI

- Civil Rights and DBE Involvement. BMTS was found to be in compliance in its last Title VI Compliance Review by the NYSDOT Office of Equal Opportunity Development and Compliance, with no corrective actions required. Broome County, as the host agency of BMTS Central Staff, maintains a DBE Plan, and approves contract opportunities. There have been no discrimination complaints filed against BMTS. DBE reports are submitted to NYSDOT semi-annually to be compiled and submitted to FHWA and FTA.
- Americans with Disabilities Act. Broome County has an approved ADA Plan for Public Transportation that was prepared by BMTS. Broome County maintains paratransit services for persons with disabilities that are fully compliant with ADA requirements. BMTS also works with advocates for both visually and mobility impaired people to ensure ADA requirements are met in roadway and intersection project design. In this context, BMTS requires the installation of accessible pedestrian signals (APS) where applicable. BMTS has assisted many member agencies with the development of their ADA Transition Plans.

- LEP. BMTS updated and adopted their Limited English Proficiency Plan in March of 2017.
 - Environmental Justice. As required, BMTS completes an environmental justice analysis of the TIP and Transportation Plan whenever an update occurs. The Transportation Plan was updated in 2020 and an analysis was just performed for the 2023-2027 TIP. The analysis uses US Census data and GIS to identify the location of low income and minority populations. Because of the modest size of the Binghamton metropolitan area, no special methodology is needed to relate the location of TIP and Plan projects to these populations. The analysis yields a determination that (1) EJ populations have access to transportation facilities and services; and (2) EJ populations do not experience disproportionate negative outcomes from the investments represented by TIP and Plan projects.
- b. Private Operators: BMTS makes an effort to involve private operators of transportation services in the metropolitan planning process. They are notified early in both the Plan and TIP development process and provided an opportunity for input.
 - c. Planning Factors: BMTS has been explicit in addressing Planning Factors in our long range plan and related planning activities. Our current plan, *Moving our Future Forward 2045* was adopted in October 2020. All planning factors were reevaluated and addressed in the context of the long range plan update.
 - d. Congestion Management Process: This does not apply to non-TMA MPOs.
 - e. Public Participation Plan: In accordance with §450.316, BMTS updated and adopted its public participation plan in March of 2022.

BMTS has always had a robust public involvement program. BMTS maintains a Web site, www.bmtsonline.com in cooperation with the Broome County Department of Information Technology, expanding its public access avenues. Meeting notices, draft and final reports, and project information is routinely posted on the site. BMTS also established a presence on Facebook, noting the importance of social network media in attracting input from those less likely to participate in traditional efforts. In the Public Participation Plan update, virtual public engagement was included as a means to allow a greater number of people to participate in meetings and public outreach.

- f. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan: An update to BMTS' Coordinated Plan will take place in 2022. The plan was developed with the guidance of an advisory committee that is broadly representative of both the human service agency and transportation provider communities.

This committee continues to meet quarterly to oversee plan implementation and identify additional service issues and opportunities. The Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Committee is actively involved with the update of the plan.

C. Administrative and Management Issues

1. Progress Reports: Reports are filed with FHWA, FTA, and NYSDOT on a semi-annual basis.
2. Bills: BMTS bills quarterly on behalf of Broome County, its host agency. Bills are typically submitted to the County Finance Department for approval within 45 days of the end of the quarter.
3. Audits: BMTS participates in Broome County's Federal Single Audit.
4. Annual Program: It is anticipated this year's closeout will occur on schedule.
5. Budget: The BMTS grant budget, as specified in the UPWP is managed through the quarterly bills.
6. Consultant Selection: BMTS uses a standard consultant selection process, in which the RFP includes evaluation criteria. Proposals are evaluated on the basis of content and qualifications. For planning studies, cost is considered after proposals are scored on technical merit.
7. Central Staff; Host Agency Relationship: In general the relationship between Broome County and BMTS Central Staff is positive. The County Executive and County Legislature have been willing to abide by the UPWP Staffing Plan adopted by the BMTS Policy Committee in conjunction with the UPWP. They have also accepted the proposed operating budget (which matches the UPWP grant budget) without modification.

BMTS currently has a Director, Traffic Engineer, a Sr. Transportation Planner, a Senior Transportation Planner II and a Senior Account Clerk. The Transportation Analyst position is currently vacant.

8. Decision Making: The Planning and Policy Committees are appropriately structured, as provided for in the BMTS Unified Operations Plan. Level of participation is high, and consensus is typically achieved on all decisions. Decisions have been reached on the intended schedule.

9. Governance: The Planning and Policy Committee operate according to the Unified Operations Plan that was approved in June of 2017. There is a MOU with Broome County to house BMTS through SFY 2032. Members of both the Planning and Policy Committees are given a “Member’s Guide” that outline their role as a member of BMTS. BMTS staff has a good working relationship with all members and their respective municipalities.

10. Procurement: BMTS staff is aware of the FTA procurement requirements. BMTS rarely makes procurements with FTA funds. If there are any FTA procurements in the future BMTS will comply with the FTA Circular Guidance 4220.1F, Third Party Contracting Requirements and the current FTA Master Agreement. FTA related expenditures are documented.