

## **Appendix D-3**

### **Smart Growth**

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

PIN 3501.60

Prepared By: NYSDOT

## Smart Growth Screening Tool (STEP 1)

**NYSDOT & Local Sponsors** – Fill out the Smart Growth Screening Tool until the directions indicate to **STOP** for the project type under consideration. For all other projects, complete answering the questions. For any questions, refer to [Smart Growth Guidance](#) document.

Title of Proposed Project: Interstate 81 Viaduct Project

Location of Project: The Project involves segments of I-81, Interstate 690 (I-690), Interstate 481 (I-481), and related highway interchanges and local streets within the municipalities of Syracuse, North Syracuse, Cicero, East Syracuse, and DeWitt in Onondaga County, New York.

Brief Description: The Project is to address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse that meets the transportation needs and provides the infrastructure to support long-range transportation planning efforts.

### A. Infrastructure:

#### Addresses SG Law criterion a. –

(To advance projects for the use, maintenance or improvement of existing infrastructure)

1. Does this project use, maintain, or improve existing infrastructure?

Yes ☒

No ☐

N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above – the form has no limitations on the length of your narrative)

The purpose of the project is to address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse that meets the transportation needs and provides the infrastructure to support long-range transportation planning efforts. Highway design features within the Project Area (such as shoulder widths, median widths, interchange spacing, etc.) pre-date current design standards and, coupled with heavy traffic volumes at specific locations, have led to recurring congestion and high crash rates. NYSDOT has the following goals for the project: improve safety and create an efficient regional and local transportation system within and through greater Syracuse; and provide transportation solutions that enhance the livability, visual quality, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse.

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## Maintenance Projects Only

- a. Continue with screening tool for the four (4) types of maintenance projects listed below, as defined in **NYSDOT PDM Exhibit 7-1 and described in 7-4:**  
<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/pdm>
- ➔ Shoulder rehabilitation and/or repair;
  - ➔ Upgrade sign(s) and/or traffic signals;
  - ➔ Park & ride lot rehabilitation;
  - ➔ 1R projects that include single course surfacing (inlay or overlay), per Chapter 7 of the NYSDOT Highway Design Manual.
- b. For all other maintenance projects, **STOP here**. Attach this document to the programmatic [Smart Growth Impact Statement and signed Attestation](#) for Maintenance projects.

For all other projects (**other than maintenance**), continue with screening tool.

## B. Sustainability:

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NYSDOT defines Sustainability as follows: A sustainable society manages resources in a way that fulfills the community/social, economic and environmental needs of the present without compromising the needs and opportunities of future generations. A transportation system that supports a sustainable society is one that:

- ➔ Allows individual and societal transportation needs to be met in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health and with equity within and between generations.
- ➔ Is safe, affordable, and accessible, operates efficiently, offers choice of transport mode, and supports a vibrant economy.
- ➔ Protects and preserves the environment by limiting transportation emissions and wastes, minimizes the consumption of resources and enhances the existing environment as practicable.

For more information on the Department's Sustainability strategy, refer to Appendix 1 of the Smart Growth Guidance and the NYSDOT web site, [www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites/sustainability](http://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites/sustainability)

(Addresses SG Law criterion j : to promote sustainability by strengthening existing and creating new communities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do not compromise the needs of future generations, by among other means encouraging broad based public involvement in developing and implementing a community plan and ensuring the governance structure is adequate to sustain and implement.)

1. Will this project promote sustainability by strengthening existing communities?

Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐

2. Will the project reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

Connectivity between neighborhoods south of I-690—Downtown/Southside and Near Eastside/University Hill—would improve under the Viaduct Alternative, as compared with the No Build Alternative. The Viaduct Alternative would provide reconfigured roadways, new pedestrian and bicycle connections with added design and safety elements (including compliance with PROWAG), and improved lighting below the new viaduct, which would provide safer conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers, strengthening the communities in the study area. There would be no change in connectivity in other areas of improvements, as the viaduct structure would be rebuilt and would continue to be a visual and physical barrier within the communities of the Central Study Area.

Compared with the No Build Alternative, the Viaduct Alternative would result in lower emissions of all modeled criteria pollutants in all analysis years (due to the differences in annual VMT on individual road segments).

## C. Smart Growth Location:

Plans and investments should preserve our communities by promoting its distinct identity through a local vision created by its citizens.

(Addresses SG Law criteria b and c: to advance projects located in municipal centers; to advance projects in developed areas or areas designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, local waterfront revitalization plan and/or brownfield opportunity area plan.)

1. Is this project located in a developed area?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

2. Is the project located in a municipal center?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

3. Will this project foster downtown revitalization?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

4. Is this project located in an area designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, waterfront revitalization plan, or Brownfield Opportunity Area plan?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

The Viaduct Alternative would not impede or prevent planned development within the Central, I-481 South, I-481 East, and I-481 North Study Areas. The largest portion of the project area is in Downtown Syracuse, a densely developed city center. Local and regional long-range plans, including but not limited to the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040, ReZone Syracuse, and Vision CNY Regional Sustainability Plan, have established goals for land use, economic development, and regional transportation networks. In addition, these plans have identified the I-81 viaduct as an influential feature within Downtown Syracuse and adjacent neighborhoods.

The Viaduct Alternative would not impede or prevent planned development within the I-81 or I-481 Study Areas. However, it is unlikely to induce development in a manner that would meaningfully alter neighborhood cohesion within the Central Study Area, or promote pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive development consistent with the vision established by ReZone Syracuse.

## D. Mixed Use Compact Development:

Future planning and development should assure the availability of a range of choices in housing and affordability, employment, education transportation and other essential services to encourage a jobs/housing balance and vibrant community-based workforce.

(Addresses SG Law criteria e and i: to foster mixed land uses and compact development, downtown revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, the enhancement of beauty in public spaces, the diversity and affordability of housing in proximity to places of employment, recreation and commercial development and the integration of all income groups; to ensure predictability in building and land use codes.)

1. Will this project foster mixed land uses?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will the project foster brownfield redevelopment?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

3. Will this project foster enhancement of beauty in public spaces?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

4. Will the project foster a diversity of housing in proximity to places of employment and/or recreation?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

5. Will the project foster a diversity of housing in proximity to places of commercial development and/or compact development?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

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6. Will this project foster integration of all income groups and/or age groups?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

7. Will the project ensure predictability in land use codes?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

8. Will the project ensure predictability in building codes?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

The Viaduct Alternative would not impede or prevent planned development within the Central, I-481 South, I-481 East, and I-481 North Study Areas. The largest portion of the project area is in Downtown Syracuse, a densely developed city center. Local and regional long-range plans, including but not limited to the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040, ReZone Syracuse, and Vision CNY Regional Sustainability Plan, have established goals for land use, economic development, and regional transportation networks and/or identified the I-81 viaduct as an influential feature within Downtown Syracuse and adjacent neighborhoods.

## E. Transportation and Access:

NYSDOT recognizes that Smart Growth encourages communities to offer a wide range of transportation options, from walking and biking to transit and automobiles, which increase people's access to jobs, goods, services, and recreation.

(Addresses SG Law criterion f: to provide mobility through transportation choices including improved public transportation and reduced automobile dependency.)

1. Will this project provide public transit?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will this project enable reduced automobile dependency?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

3. Will this project improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities (such as shoulder widening to provide for on-road bike lanes, lane striping, crosswalks, new or expanded sidewalks or new/improved pedestrian signals)?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

(Note: Question 3 is an expansion on question 2. The recently passed Complete Streets legislation requires that consideration be given to complete street design features in the planning, design, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, but not including resurfacing, maintenance, or pavement recycling of such projects.)

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

The Project Area is located in Onondaga County, which is currently developing a new Sustainable Development Plan focused on nine areas of interest. These areas include transportation and land use, where the plan points toward Complete Streets policy and practice to incorporate multi-modal design and function for social, economic, and environmental community benefits.

Connectivity between neighborhoods south of I-690—Downtown/Southside and Near Eastside/University Hill—would improve under the Viaduct Alternative as compared with the No Build Alternative. The alternative would provide reconfigured roadways, new pedestrian and bicycle connections with added design and safety elements (including compliance with PROWAG), and improved lighting below the new viaduct, which would provide safer conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Sidewalks would be provided on Almond Street (on one side of the road) and new sidewalks and crosswalks would be installed along MLK, Jr. East.

Under the Viaduct Alternative, I-81, I-690, and the interchanges within the Central Study Area would be rebuilt or modified, improving the connections between these two interstates and increasing access from local roadways. The new roadway design elements would improve safety and operations and allow for faster movement along the viaduct compared with that on the existing viaduct—vehicles would be able to travel more effectively and efficiently than they do today.

## F. Coordinated, Community-Based Planning:

Past experience has shown that early and continuing input in the transportation planning process leads to better decisions and more effective use of limited resources. For information on community based planning efforts, the MPO may be a good resource if the project is located within the MPO planning area.

(Addresses SG Law criteria g and h: to coordinate between state and local government and inter-municipal and regional planning; to participate in community based planning and collaboration.)

1. Has there been participation in community-based planning and collaboration on the project?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

2. Is the project consistent with local plans?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

3. Is the project consistent with county, regional, and state plans?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

4. Has there been coordination between inter-municipal/regional planning and state planning on the project?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

Nineteen Federal, state, and local planning and regulatory agencies have participated as Cooperating and Participating agencies for the project. Coordination has been conducted through regular and frequent coordination meetings throughout the community. Multiple EIS scoping and public open house meetings have occurred since the start of the process and were well attended by community members. Each of the two scoping meetings was attended by approximately 400 people. Additional open houses, held in 2016 and 2019, were attended by approximately 525 people and 826 people, respectively. Public and community meetings were also held.

The Viaduct Alternative would provide pedestrian and bicycle features consistent with the overall connectivity plans for the City of Syracuse and would be consistent with the City of Syracuse's land use plan for 2040. These changes would further the redevelopment goals of ReZone Syracuse, which promotes pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive development.

## G. Stewardship of Natural and Cultural Resources:

Clean water, clean air and natural open land are essential elements of public health and quality of life for New York State residents, visitors, and future generations. Restoring and protecting natural assets, and open space, promoting energy efficiency, and green building, should be incorporated into all land use and infrastructure planning decisions.

(Addresses SG Law criterion d :To protect, preserve and enhance the State's resources, including agricultural land, forests surface and ground water, air quality, recreation and open space, scenic areas and significant historic and archeological resources.)

1. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance agricultural land and/or forests?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance surface water and/or groundwater?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

3. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance air quality?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

4. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance recreation and/or open space?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

5. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance scenic areas?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

6. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance historic and/or archeological resources?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)



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The project will enhance Wilson Park by adding an additional basketball court and open space. The Viaduct Alternative would result in decreases in VMT, and the improvements in travel speed as well as the predicted shift in traffic between roadways and the associated traffic conditions would result in decreases in annual emissions for all pollutants analyzed. Under the Viaduct Alternative, the removal of the elevated West Street overpass and ramps to and from I-690 would improve community cohesion, as the removal would re-establish connections between Downtown and the Near Westside, provide an opportunity to expand the Creekwalk, and relocate a portion of the trail to be adjacent to Onondaga Creek.

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## Smart Growth Impact Statement (STEP 2)

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**NYSDOT:** Complete a Smart Growth Impact Statement (SGIS) below using the information from the Screening Tool.

**Local Sponsors:** The local sponsors are **not** responsible for completing a Smart Growth Impact Statement. Proceed to **Step 3**.

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### Smart Growth Impact Statement

**PIN: 3501.60**

**Project Name: Interstate 81 Viaduct Project**

Pursuant to ECL Article 6, this project is compliant with the New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act. This project has been determined to meet the relevant criteria, to the extent practicable, described in ECL Sec. 6-0107. Specifically, the project:

- The project will address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse.
- The project will strengthen existing communities by improving the connectivity between neighborhoods south of I-690: Downtown/Southside and Near Eastside/University Hill. New pedestrian and bicycle connections with added design and safety elements as well as improved lighting below the new viaduct would provide safer conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.
- The Viaduct Alternative would result in lower air emissions of pollutants.
- The project has been coordinated with all relevant land use planning and transportation agencies, as well as community groups and local and state government.
- The project will be designed using NYSDOT design criteria.
- NYSDOT has conducted extensive outreach including public meetings and multiple presentations to community boards.

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This publically supported infrastructure project complies with the state policy of maximizing the social, economic and environmental benefits from public infrastructure development. The project will not contribute to the unnecessary costs of sprawl development, including environmental

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degradation, disinvestment in urban and suburban communities, or loss of open space induced by sprawl.

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## Review & Attestation Instructions (STEP 3)

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**Local Sponsors:** Once the Smart Growth Screening Tool is completed, the next step is to submit the project certification statement (**Section A**) to Responsible Local Official for signature. After signing the document, the completed Screening Tool and Certification statement should be sent to NYSDOT for review as noted below.

**NYSDOT:** For state-let projects, the Screening Tool and SGIS is forwarded to Regional Director/ RPPM/Main Office Program Director or designee for review, and upon approval, the attestation is signed (**Section B.2**). For locally administered projects, the sponsor's submission and certification statement is reviewed by NYSDOT staff, the appropriate box (**Section B.1**) is checked, and the attestation is signed (Section B.2).

### A. CERTIFICATION (LOCAL PROJECT)

***I HEREBY CERTIFY**, to the best of my knowledge, all of the above to be true and correct.*

Preparer of this document:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Responsible Local Official (for local projects):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

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## B. ATTESTATION (NYSDOT)

### 1. I HEREBY:

☒ Concur with the above certification, thereby attesting that this project is in compliance with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act

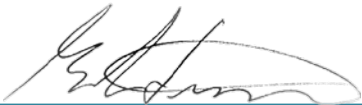
☐ Concur with the above certification, with the following conditions (information requests, confirming studies, project modifications, etc.):

(Attach additional sheets as needed)

☐ do not concur with the above certification, thereby deeming this project ineligible to be a recipient of State funding or a subrecipient of Federal funding in accordance with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.

2. **NOW THEREFORE**, pursuant to ECL Article 6, this project is compliant with the New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act, to the extent practicable, as described in the attached Smart Growth Impact Statement.

NYSDOT Commissioner, Regional Director, MO Program Director,  
Regional Planning & Programming Manager (or official designee):



Signature

12/3/2021

Date

I-81 Project Director

Title

Mark Frechette

Printed Name

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

PIN 3501.60

Prepared By: NYSDOT

## Smart Growth Screening Tool (STEP 1)

**NYSDOT & Local Sponsors** – Fill out the Smart Growth Screening Tool until the directions indicate to **STOP** for the project type under consideration. For all other projects, complete answering the questions. For any questions, refer to [Smart Growth Guidance](#) document.

Title of Proposed Project: Interstate 81 Viaduct Project

Location of Project: The Project involves segments of I-81, Interstate 690 (I-690), Interstate 481 (I-481), and related highway interchanges and local streets within the municipalities of Syracuse, North Syracuse, Cicero, East Syracuse, and DeWitt in Onondaga County, New York.

Brief Description: The Project is to address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse that meets the transportation needs and provides the infrastructure to support long-range transportation planning efforts.

### A. Infrastructure:

#### Addresses SG Law criterion a. –

(To advance projects for the use, maintenance or improvement of existing infrastructure)

1. Does this project use, maintain, or improve existing infrastructure?

Yes ☒

No ☐

N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above – the form has no limitations on the length of your narrative)

The purpose of the project is to address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse that meets the transportation needs and provides the infrastructure to support long-range transportation planning efforts. Highway design features within the Project Area (such as shoulder widths, median widths, interchange spacing, etc.) pre-date current design standards and, coupled with heavy traffic volumes at specific locations, have led to recurring congestion and high crash rates. NYSDOT has the following goals for the project: improve safety and create an efficient regional and local transportation system within and through greater Syracuse; and provide transportation solutions that enhance the livability, visual quality, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse.

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## Maintenance Projects Only

- a. Continue with screening tool for the four (4) types of maintenance projects listed below, as defined in **NYSDOT PDM Exhibit 7-1 and described in 7-4:**  
<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/pdm>
- ➔ Shoulder rehabilitation and/or repair;
  - ➔ Upgrade sign(s) and/or traffic signals;
  - ➔ Park & ride lot rehabilitation;
  - ➔ 1R projects that include single course surfacing (inlay or overlay), per Chapter 7 of the NYSDOT Highway Design Manual.
- b. For all other maintenance projects, **STOP here**. Attach this document to the programmatic [Smart Growth Impact Statement and signed Attestation](#) for Maintenance projects.

For all other projects (**other than maintenance**), continue with screening tool.

## B. Sustainability:

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NYSDOT defines Sustainability as follows: A sustainable society manages resources in a way that fulfills the community/social, economic and environmental needs of the present without compromising the needs and opportunities of future generations. A transportation system that supports a sustainable society is one that:

- ➔ Allows individual and societal transportation needs to be met in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health and with equity within and between generations.
- ➔ Is safe, affordable, and accessible, operates efficiently, offers choice of transport mode, and supports a vibrant economy.
- ➔ Protects and preserves the environment by limiting transportation emissions and wastes, minimizes the consumption of resources and enhances the existing environment as practicable.

For more information on the Department's Sustainability strategy, refer to Appendix 1 of the Smart Growth Guidance and the NYSDOT web site, [www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites/sustainability](http://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites/sustainability)

(Addresses SG Law criterion j : to promote sustainability by strengthening existing and creating new communities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do not compromise the needs of future generations, by among other means encouraging broad based public involvement in developing and implementing a community plan and ensuring the governance structure is adequate to sustain and implement.)

1. Will this project promote sustainability by strengthening existing communities?

Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐

2. Will the project reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

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The Proposed Action would enable the potential for better community cohesion with the demolition of the viaduct structure within the Central Study Area. The dispersion of traffic under the Community Grid Alternative, the removal of the viaduct structure between neighborhoods, and the introduction of enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities would balance the vehicular transportation character of Almond Street with other uses by making it a “complete street” (vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian) and better connect the uses on either side. In turn, this may allow for more cohesion between neighborhoods. The removal of the West Street overpass and creation of a signalized, surface intersection at that location would include improved pedestrian crossings and result in improved visual connections and improved vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity.

The Community Grid Alternative would maintain the existing highway corridor through the South, East, and North I-481 Study Areas. It would also maintain transportation uses in the Central Study Area, except that a section of the highway would be removed, with traffic redirected to local streets. Where the highway would remain, it would not be substantially expanded beyond its current footprint, and, therefore, would not impede continuation or development of land uses in these areas. Where the highway would be removed and replaced with a surface street, the Community Grid Alternative would be supportive of land use plans that cite the need to reconnect neighborhoods by removing the barrier that I-81 creates; it could also result in an indirect benefit to land uses (both current and proposed) in these areas.

For all of the analysis years, the Community Grid Alternative would result in decreases in VMT. The improvements in travel speed as well as the predicted shift in traffic between roadways and the associated traffic conditions would result in decreases in annual emissions for all pollutants analyzed. In addition, construction under the Community Grid Alternative would not be anticipated to result in substantial air quality impacts.

## C. Smart Growth Location:

Plans and investments should preserve our communities by promoting its distinct identity through a local vision created by its citizens.

(Addresses SG Law criteria b and c: to advance projects located in municipal centers; to advance projects in developed areas or areas designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, local waterfront revitalization plan and/or brownfield opportunity area plan.)

1. Is this project located in a developed area?  
Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐
2. Is the project located in a municipal center?  
Yes ☒      No ☐      N/A ☐
3. Will this project foster downtown revitalization?  
Yes ☐      No ☐      N/A ☒



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4. Is this project located in an area designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, waterfront revitalization plan, or Brownfield Opportunity Area plan?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

The Community Grid Alternative would not impede or prevent planned development within the Central, I-481 South, I-481 East, and I-481 North Study Areas. The largest portion of the project area is in Downtown Syracuse, a densely developed city center. Local and regional long-range plans, including but not limited to the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040, ReZone Syracuse, and Vision CNY Regional Sustainability Plan, have established goals for land use, economic development, and regional transportation networks and/or have identified I-81, particularly the I-81 viaduct, as an influential feature within Downtown Syracuse and adjacent neighborhoods.

Where the highway would be removed and replaced with a surface street, the excess transportation right-of-way would consist of multiple sites near Almond Street where the I-81 and I-690 ramps would be removed and a larger parcel near MLK, Jr. East. These sites are not large and/or contiguous, and it is unlikely that their redevelopment would induce new land use patterns or development trends in the Central Study Area. However, the conversion of these parcels to active residential, commercial, and institutional uses could induce an overall improvement in community cohesion by enlivening areas that are desolate today, including increasing pedestrian activity on local sidewalks and increase bicycle usage with new shared-use paths.

## D. Mixed Use Compact Development:

Future planning and development should assure the availability of a range of choices in housing and affordability, employment, education transportation and other essential services to encourage a jobs/housing balance and vibrant community-based workforce.

(Addresses SG Law criteria e and i: to foster mixed land uses and compact development, downtown revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, the enhancement of beauty in public spaces, the diversity and affordability of housing in proximity to places of employment, recreation and commercial development and the integration of all income groups; to ensure predictability in building and land use codes.)

1. Will this project foster mixed land uses?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will the project foster brownfield redevelopment?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

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3. Will this project foster enhancement of beauty in public spaces?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

4. Will the project foster a diversity of housing in proximity to places of employment and/or recreation?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

5. Will the project foster a diversity of housing in proximity to places of commercial development and/or compact development?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

6. Will this project foster integration of all income groups and/or age groups?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

7. Will the project ensure predictability in land use codes?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

8. Will the project ensure predictability in building codes?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

The Community Grid Alternative would not impede or prevent planned development within the Central, I-481 South, I-481 East, and I-481 North Study Areas. Local and regional long-range plans, including but not limited to the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040, ReZone Syracuse, and Vision CNY Regional Sustainability Plan, have established goals for land use, economic development, and regional transportation networks and/or have identified I-81, particularly the I-81 viaduct, as an influential feature within Downtown Syracuse and adjacent neighborhoods.

## E. Transportation and Access:

NYSDOT recognizes that Smart Growth encourages communities to offer a wide range of transportation options, from walking and biking to transit and automobiles, which increase people's access to jobs, goods, services, and recreation.

(Addresses SG Law criterion f: to provide mobility through transportation choices including improved public transportation and reduced automobile dependency.)

1. Will this project provide public transit?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will this project enable reduced automobile dependency?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

## Smart Growth Screening Tool

3. Will this project improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities (such as shoulder widening to provide for on-road bike lanes, lane striping, crosswalks, new or expanded sidewalks or new/improved pedestrian signals)?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

(Note: Question 3 is an expansion on question 2. The recently passed Complete Streets legislation requires that consideration be given to complete street design features in the planning, design, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, but not including resurfacing, maintenance, or pavement recycling of such projects.)

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

The Project Area is located in Onondaga County, which is currently developing a new Sustainable Development Plan focused on nine areas of interest. These areas include transportation and land use, where the plan points toward Complete Streets policy and practice to incorporate multi-modal design and function for social, economic, and environmental community benefits.

The dispersion of traffic under the Community Grid Alternative, the removal of the viaduct structure between neighborhoods, and the introduction of enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities would balance the vehicular transportation character of Almond Street with other uses by making it a “complete street” (vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian) and better connect the uses on either side.

The Community Grid also promotes the use of the street grid and the reconnection of streets (e.g., the extension of Irving Avenue to I-690 and the restoration of Oswego Boulevard and Pearl Street to their historical alignments), providing improved vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access, including to Almond Street away from existing viaduct ramps. Improvements to Clinton Street would also include new sidewalks, pavement, and curbside parking, as well as improved vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle amenities.

## F. Coordinated, Community-Based Planning:

Past experience has shown that early and continuing input in the transportation planning process leads to better decisions and more effective use of limited resources. For information on community based planning efforts, the MPO may be a good resource if the project is located within the MPO planning area.

(Addresses SG Law criteria g and h: to coordinate between state and local government and inter-municipal and regional planning; to participate in community based planning and collaboration.)

1. Has there been participation in community-based planning and collaboration on the project?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

2. Is the project consistent with local plans?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

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3. Is the project consistent with county, regional, and state plans?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

4. Has there been coordination between inter-municipal/regional planning and state planning on the project?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

Nineteen Federal, state, and local planning and regulatory agencies have participated as Cooperating and Participating agencies for the project. Coordination has been conducted through regular and frequent coordination meetings throughout the community. Multiple EIS scoping and public open house meetings have occurred since the start of the process, and were well attended by community members. Each of the two scoping meetings was attended by approximately 400 people. Additional open houses, held in 2016 and 2019, were attended by approximately 525 people and 826 people, respectively. Public and community meetings were also held.

The Community Grid Alternative would provide pedestrian and bicycle features consistent with the overall connectivity plans for the City of Syracuse and would be consistent with the City of Syracuse's land use plan for 2040. These changes would further the redevelopment goals of ReZone Syracuse, which promotes pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive development.

## G. Stewardship of Natural and Cultural Resources:

Clean water, clean air and natural open land are essential elements of public health and quality of life for New York State residents, visitors, and future generations. Restoring and protecting natural assets, and open space, promoting energy efficiency, and green building, should be incorporated into all land use and infrastructure planning decisions.

(Addresses SG Law criterion d :To protect, preserve and enhance the State's resources, including agricultural land, forests surface and ground water, air quality, recreation and open space, scenic areas and significant historic and archeological resources.)

1. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance agricultural land and/or forests?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

2. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance surface water and/or groundwater?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

3. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance air quality?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

4. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance recreation and/or open space?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

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5. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance scenic areas?

Yes ☐

No ☐

N/A ☒

6. Will the project protect, preserve, and/or enhance historic and/or archeological resources?

Yes ☐

No ☐

N/A ☒

**Explain:** (use this space to expand on your answers above)

The project will enhance Wilson Park by adding an additional basketball court and open space. The Community Grid Alternative would result in decreases in VMT, and the improvements in travel speed as well as the predicted shift in traffic between roadways and the associated traffic conditions would result in decreases in annual emissions for all pollutants analyzed. In addition, the removal of the elevated West Street overpass and ramps to and from I-690 would provide an opportunity to expand the Creekwalk and relocate a portion of the trail to be adjacent to Onondaga Creek.

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

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## Smart Growth Impact Statement (STEP 2)

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**NYSDOT:** Complete a Smart Growth Impact Statement (SGIS) below using the information from the Screening Tool.

**Local Sponsors:** The local sponsors are **not** responsible for completing a Smart Growth Impact Statement. Proceed to **Step 3**.

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### Smart Growth Impact Statement

**PIN: 3501.60**

**Project Name: Interstate 81 Viaduct Project**

Pursuant to ECL Article 6, this project is compliant with the New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act. This project has been determined to meet the relevant criteria, to the extent practicable, described in ECL Sec. 6-0107. Specifically, the project:

- The project will address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse.
- The project will strengthen existing communities through an increase in community cohesion, resulting from the removal of the viaduct structure in certain parts of the City. In these areas, the removal of the viaduct would balance the transportation character of the areas and better connect the uses as well as pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.
- The Community Grid alternative would result in decreases in vehicle miles traveled and improvements in travel speed, thereby reducing air emissions of pollutants.
- The dispersion of traffic under the Community Grid Alternative, the removal of the viaduct structure between neighborhoods, and the introduction of enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities, would balance the vehicular transportation character of Almond Street with other uses, making it a "complete street" (vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian) and better connect the uses on either side.
- The project has been coordinated with all relevant land use planning and transportation agencies, as well as community groups and local and state government.
- The project will be designed using NYSDOT design criteria.
- NYSDOT has conducted extensive outreach including public meetings and multiple presentations to community boards.

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# Smart Growth Screening Tool

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This publically supported infrastructure project complies with the state policy of maximizing the social, economic and environmental benefits from public infrastructure development. The project will not contribute to the unnecessary costs of sprawl development, including environmental degradation, disinvestment in urban and suburban communities, or loss of open space induced by sprawl.

# Smart Growth Screening Tool

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## Review & Attestation Instructions (STEP 3)

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**Local Sponsors:** Once the Smart Growth Screening Tool is completed, the next step is to submit the project certification statement (**Section A**) to Responsible Local Official for signature. After signing the document, the completed Screening Tool and Certification statement should be sent to NYSDOT for review as noted below.

**NYSDOT:** For state-let projects, the Screening Tool and SGIS is forwarded to Regional Director/ RPPM/Main Office Program Director or designee for review, and upon approval, the attestation is signed (**Section B.2**). For locally administered projects, the sponsor's submission and certification statement is reviewed by NYSDOT staff, the appropriate box (**Section B.1**) is checked, and the attestation is signed (Section B.2).

### A. CERTIFICATION (LOCAL PROJECT)

**I HEREBY CERTIFY**, to the best of my knowledge, all of the above to be true and correct.

Preparer of this document:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Responsible Local Official (for local projects):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name



# Smart Growth Screening Tool

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## B. ATTESTATION (NYS DOT)

### 1. I HEREBY:

☒ Concur with the above certification, thereby attesting that this project is in compliance with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act

☐ Concur with the above certification, with the following conditions (information requests, confirming studies, project modifications, etc.):

(Attach additional sheets as needed)

☐ do not concur with the above certification, thereby deeming this project ineligible to be a recipient of State funding or a subrecipient of Federal funding in accordance with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.

2. **NOW THEREFORE**, pursuant to ECL Article 6, this project is compliant with the New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act, to the extent practicable, as described in the attached Smart Growth Impact Statement.

NYS DOT Commissioner, Regional Director, MO Program Director,  
Regional Planning & Programming Manager (or official designee):



12/3/2021

Signature

Date

I-81 Project Director

Mark Frechette

Title

Printed Name