

# PRT/Automated Transportation - Metropolitan Planning Organization Perspective

**Podcar City 9**

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Mountain View, CA

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# Topics

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- What is an MPO?
- Ithaca's PRT experience
- Observations & Suggestions

# MPOs - Mission

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- Supervises/plans for programming of Federal surface transportation funds
- Metropolitan Planning Process:  
“Continuous, Cooperative and Comprehensive” transportation planning
- Provides technical assistance and planning – analysis, studies, plans, etc.

# MPOs

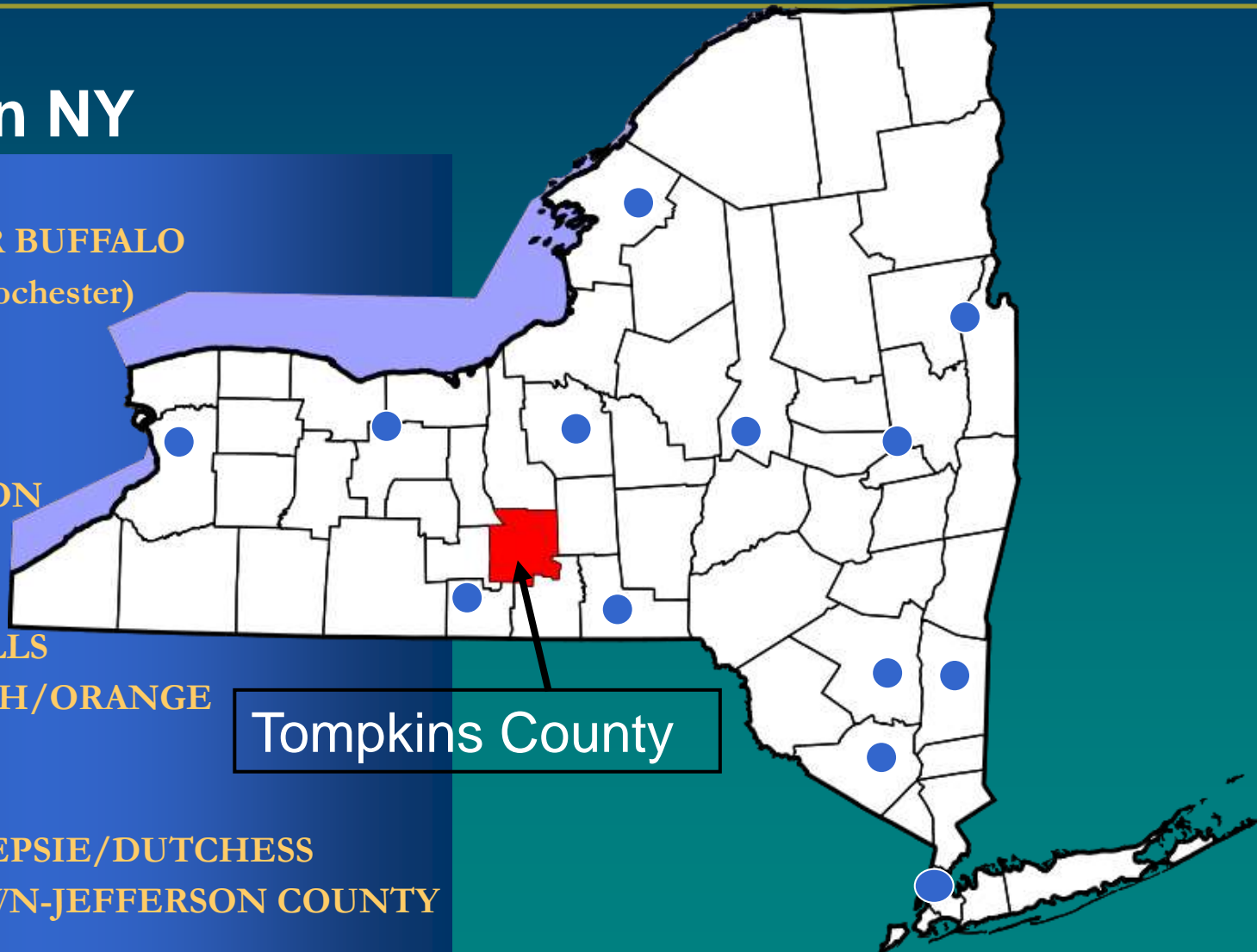
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- Census defined urbanized areas >50,000 population
  - ~420 nationwide (as of 2010 census)
  - ~182 are TMAs (>200,000 pop.)

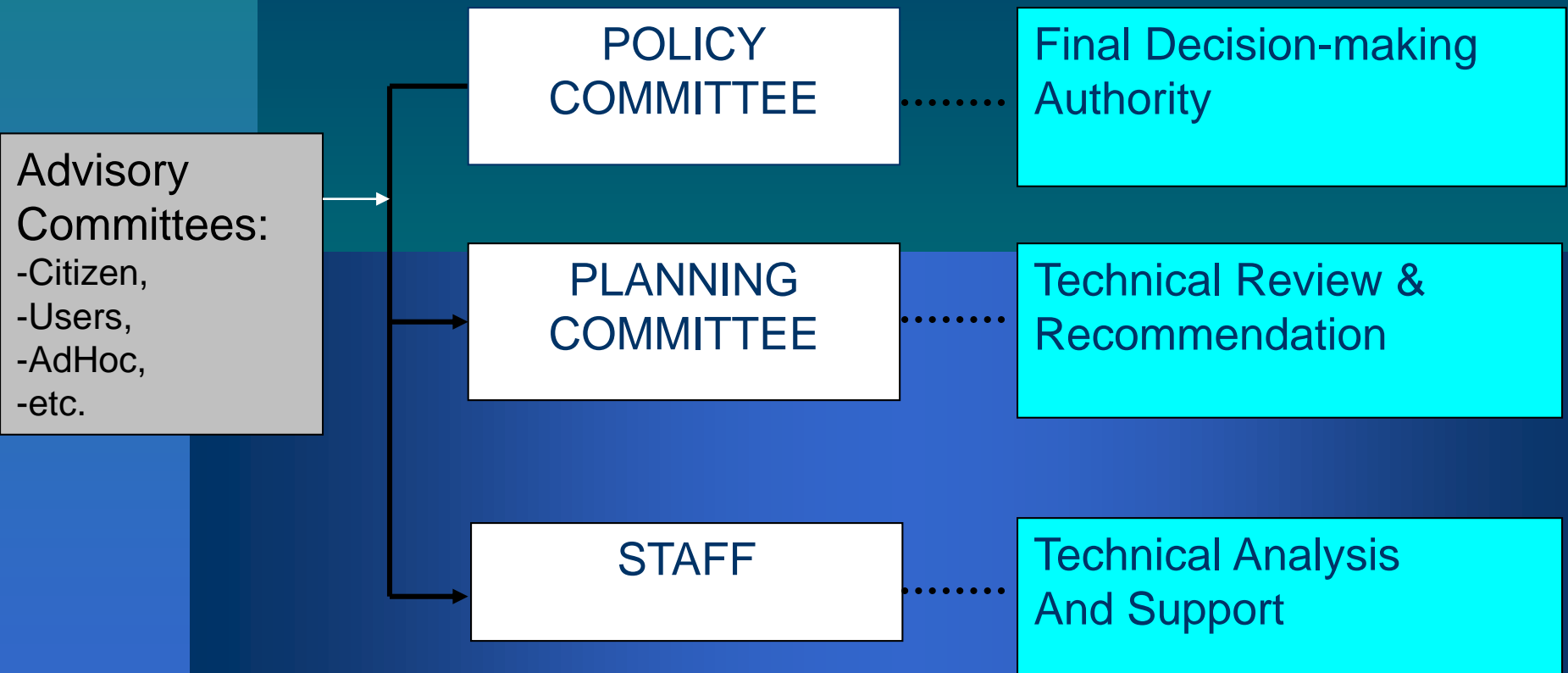
# MPOs in NY

## ■ 14 MPOs in NY

- NGBRTC - GREATER BUFFALO
- GTC - GENESSEE (Rochester)
- SMTC - SYRACUSE
- ITCTC - ITHACA
- ECTC - ELMIRA
- BMTS - BINGHAMTON
- HOCTC - UTICA
- CDTC - ALBANY
- AGFTC - GLENN FALLS
- NOCTC - NEWBURGH/ORANGE
- UCTC - ULSTER
- NYMTC - NYC
- PDCTC - POUGHKEEPSIE/DUTCHESS
- WJCTC - WATERTOWN-JEFFERSON COUNTY

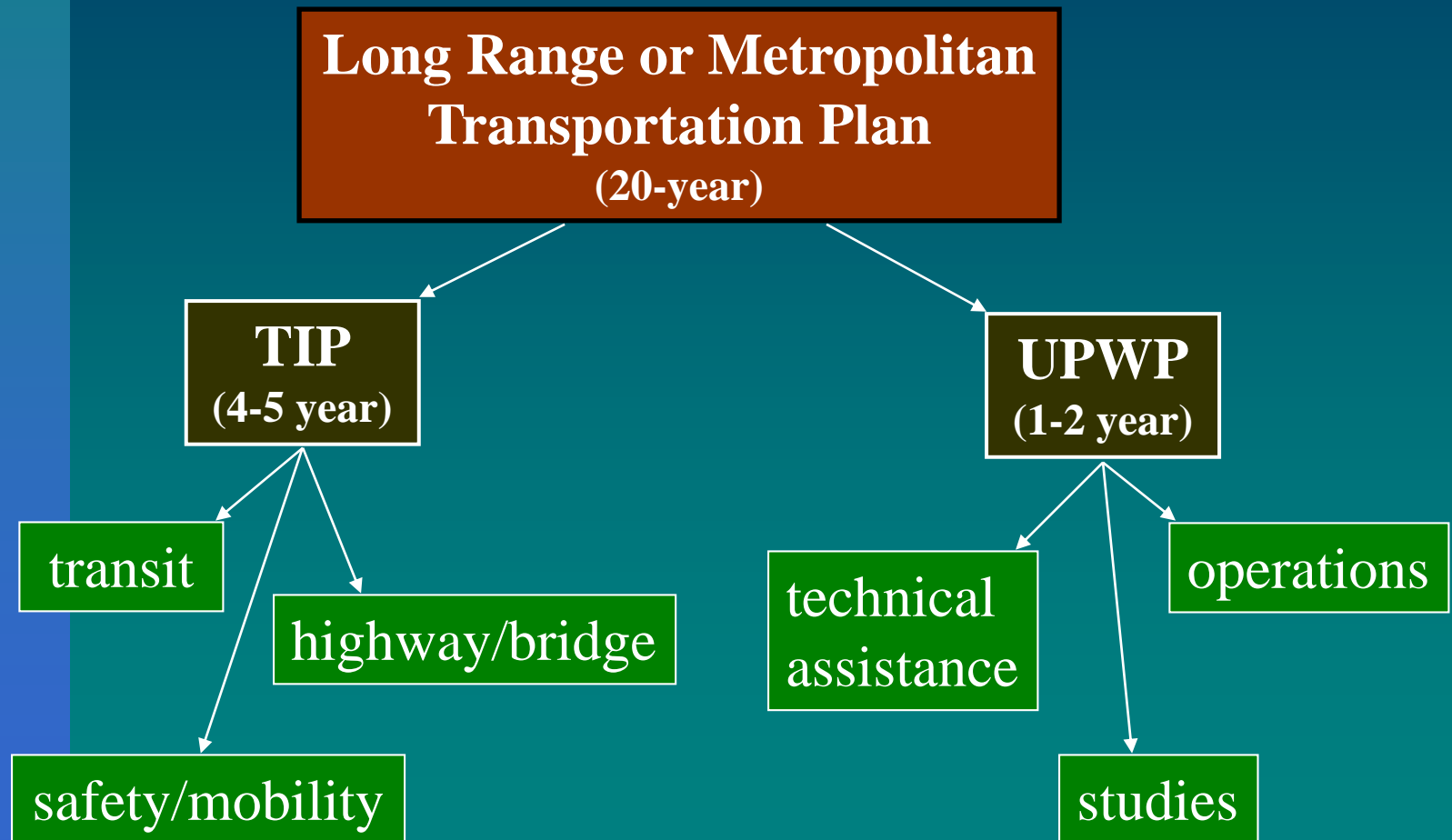


# MPO General Operational Structure



# Metropolitan Transportation Planning

Providing Local Guidance in Programming Federal Surface Transportation Funds



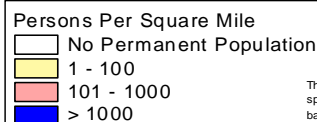
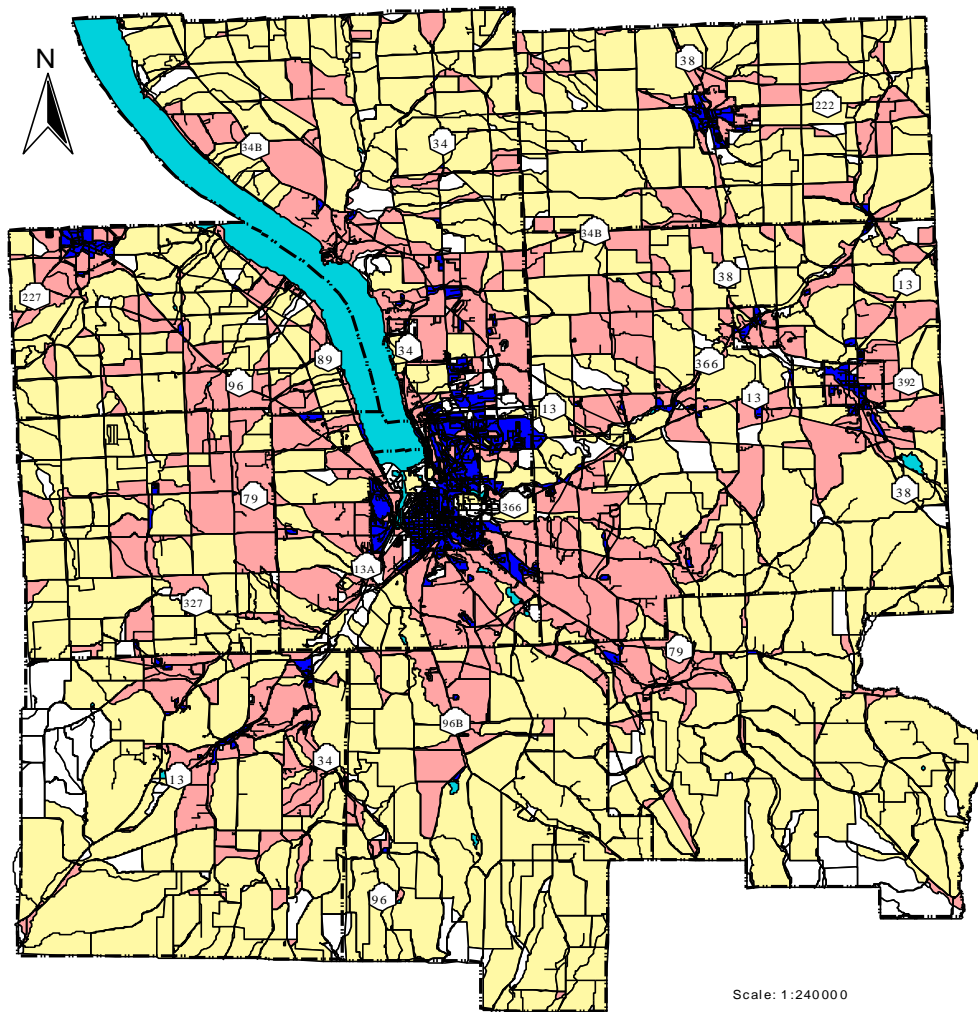
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# Ithaca's Excellent Adventure with PRT





## CENSUS BLOCK POPULATION DENSITY TOMPKINS COUNTY



 Municipal Boundaries

The standard geo-referencing format for Tompkins County digital spatial data is New York State Plane Central coordinate grid system, based on the 1983 North American Datum and GRS80 Spheroid.

## Tompkins County and Ithaca Urban Area

- County  $\approx$  105,000+
- Urbanized areas  $\approx$  55,000
- Classic college town  $\approx$  28,300 students in urbanized area
- Regional employment center
- Over 15,000 in-commuters per day to county – most to urban area

# Chronology - Ithaca PRT

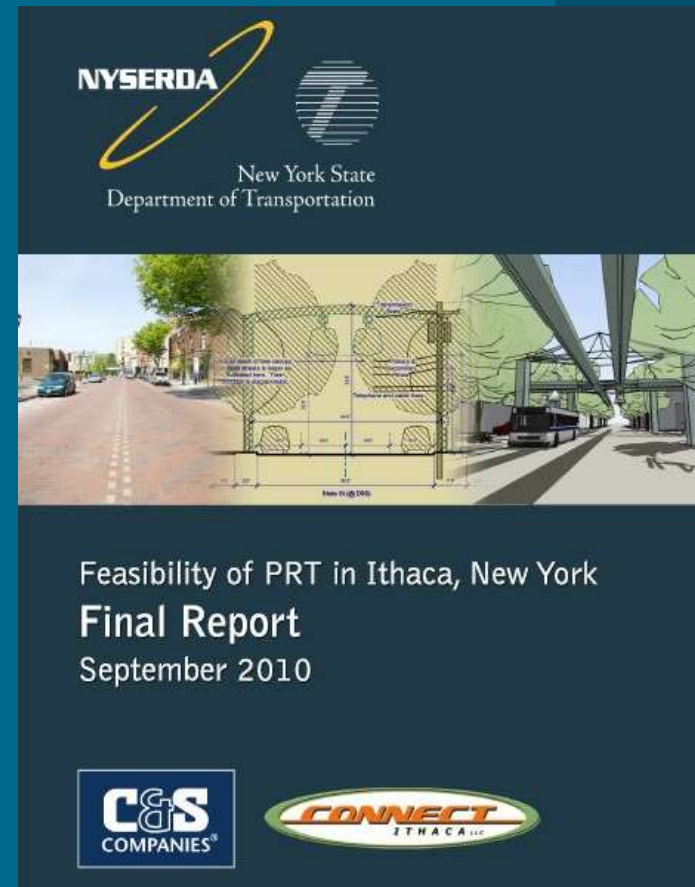
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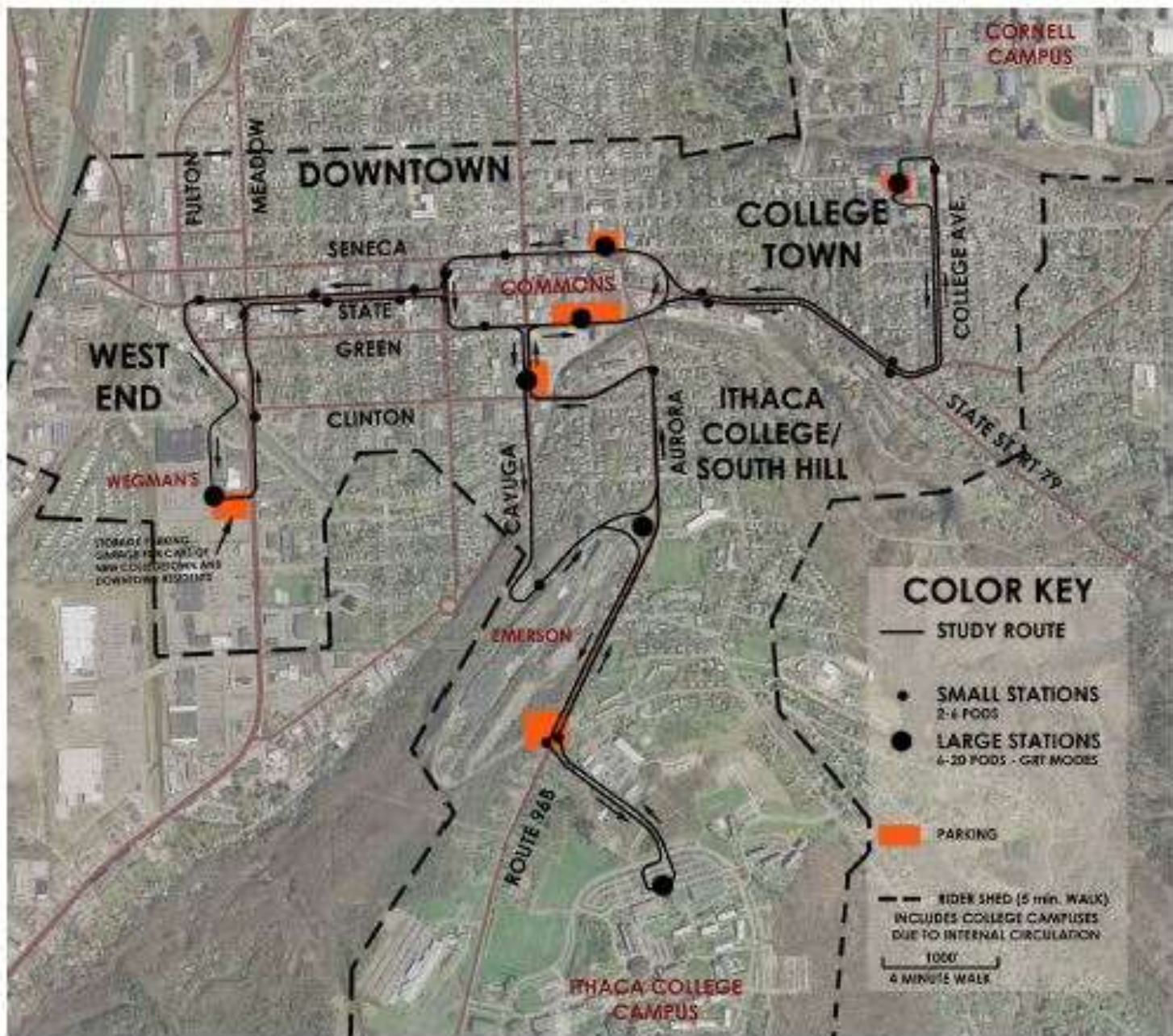
- Civic interest – transportation/land use
  - Problem with Congestion
  - Interest in Densification
  - Connect Downtown with Colleges+
- Champions – land developer, architect, activist
- Connect Ithaca, LLC
- NYSERDA Grant for PRT Study

<http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc/links>

# Ithaca PRT Study

- PRT History & State of the Industry (2010)
- PRT Description
- Application of PRT in Ithaca
  - Technical feasibility
  - ROW assessment
  - Ridership forecast
  - Cost estimates
  - Potential routes →





Proposed Route

5.75 miles

# Outcomes – Lessons Learned

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- PRT in Ithaca-Connect Ithaca strategy:
  - Ithaca as PRT academic hub
  - Ithaca as demonstration site
    - ❖ Topography & Weather
    - ❖ Willing land owners
    - ❖ Short distance O's & D's
- No Takers

# Lessons Learned

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- Need for top down support.
- Technology and implementation too big for bottom up grassroots effort (particularly in a small city)
- Need champions at all levels.

# Four Observations/Suggestions

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- Concern: ATN/PRT Remains a non-option when considering projects for funding
- Insert ATN/PRT in Federal Transportation Legislation – Define and Fund ATN/PRT

# Observations and Suggestions

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- Sell it: Get & maintain ATN/PRT front & center
  - Capture the Imagination
  - ATN/PRT as real option
  - Attention to: Message and Public Perception

NPR:

2009-hope and opportunity;

2015—has PRT's time come and gone?



# Observations and Suggestions

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- Search for strategic allies in leadership & decision makers
  - Federal and State level – big public money
  - Private sector – corporate leaders
  - Public sector – Fed./State/Local - Potential natural allies: planners, mobility managers, sustainability advocates, even transit....



# Thank You....

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