

MEMORANDUM**TO: Coordinating Committee****FROM: Tim Teddy, City of Columbia, Community Development Director****DATE: August 23, 2021****RE: Comments on the Long Range Transportation Plan**

This memorandum responds to public comments at the end of the last CATSO Coordinating Committee meeting. Two speakers made comments regarding the need for a major amendment of the Long Range Transportation Plan (minutes of May 27, 2021 Coordinating Committee). My recommendation is that CATSO let the goals and objectives stand until the next scheduled update of the LRTP; consider revisions of the performance measures; compare and contrast the LRTP with the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, and discuss the tension points; and address the expansion of transit in the LRTP.

The comments express general approval of the goals and objectives of the plan. The critique focuses on the performance measures, for which pertinent data either has not or perhaps will not be gathered; the plan (of projects) and budget (i.e., the LRTP financial projections) which is criticized as poorly aligned with the goals and objectives; and the need for more constructive engagement with the public. The transportation system represented by the plan is thought to be at variance with the system that the public wants.

Public comment suggests the following:

- A community driven process to review the plan and see if the goals and objectives are what the public wants;
- Slim the performance measures down to a few that can actually be measured;
- Set in place a program of measurements;
- Make sure the plan aligns with Columbia's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan;
- Align the plan and its budget (i.e., financial projections) with the goals and objectives

The goals and objectives are part of the plan.

Goals and objectives are stated in section 6.5 of the plan. While it is fair to ask if the particular plan of transportation investments expresses the same priorities as the goals and objectives, it should not be overlooked that roadway corridors and pedestrian networks in the plan are intended to be developed in keeping with the goals. When projects are considered for implementation, the lead agency, City, MoDOT, or County, should invoke the goals and

objectives. Development of a road corridor or a capacity upgrade to an existing corridor is not antithetical to the goals and objectives. Roadway corridors can be developed to create networks more conducive to multi-modalism; and roadway cross-sections and intersections ought to be designed to accommodate safe bicycle and pedestrian movement, maximize accessibility, and facilitate the movement of transit.

Performance measures. Should they be reevaluated and revised?

The performance measures are stated in Section 10.10, beginning on page 134. CATSO members should review the goals and then the performance measures. There are 86 distinct performance measures, corresponding to eight goals and 2-4 objectives for each goal.

Review of the goals will be part of the next LRTP plan cycle. Perhaps we should address ourselves during this interim period to convene a review of the performance measures. Some measures may need to be explained in greater detail, particularly how we expect to proceed; others might be reconsidered.

A program of measurements

The program of measurements suggestion is where we must engage the public and planning partners. Plan implementation requires follow-through by staff and the CATSO committees, but not exclusively. Plan recommendations are available to others as well. The plan is meant to be a resource for all concerned with transportation. Identification of the sources of data for measurement, and description of data limitations, might be improvements to the existing framework.

Alignment with the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

The City of Columbia Climate Action and Adaptation Plan was adopted by the City Council in June of 2019 while the draft of the Long Range Transportation Plan was in preparation; the LRTP was adopted by the Coordinating Committee in December 2019. The CAAP goals regarding transportation recognize that motor vehicles are a major constituent of greenhouse gases and therefore it behooves us to plan and design transportation to reduce the environmental cost of mobility. The CAAP mode share path recommends a target of 40 percent of trips multi-modal (i.e., transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes combined), an increase from a baseline of seven percent, by 2035. Is our system moving us in that direction? There are two CAAP transportation goals, T-1 Reduce travel by car, and T-2 Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from vehicles, as well as associated strategies that the committee should review.

Alignment of plan and budget (financial projections) with the goals and objectives

More work can be pursued in this area, particularly on the growth of the transit system, but the plan of physical improvements is a cumulative effort of several decades of planning. CATSO is not a budget agency. The expenditures in the long-range plan are financial projections of the costs of transportation investments and the revenues available for transportation based on present revenue sources. This analysis is required to show that the metro area lives within its fiscal means. Planned transportation infrastructure is fiscally constrained. The member agencies make the determinations when, where, and how to make investments in transportation. They also run public processes on how the improvements should be built. A good many of the roadway corridor costs are recovered from private development, notwithstanding the cost estimates for planning purposes. Safety and major maintenance can be prioritized over system expansion in CATSO member agency budget decisions. Indeed this has been the recent trend.

Community driven process

Committee members have discussed increasing public engagement in transportation plan-making and that is a continuing discussion. CATSO follows its Public Participation Plan for actions requiring public hearings. The CATSO staff also engages with citizen groups such as the City Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission and the PedNet Coalition on their initiatives. The staff had drafted an RFP for a consultant to assist with public meeting facilitation in the context of a transit-focused major amendment to the Long Range Transportation Plan. It is also worth noting that the City Community Development staff are preparing a public engagement strategy for the next City comprehensive plan, which will include the Metro area in its geographic scope. These efforts may be coordinated with the ramp-up to the next Long Range Transportation Plan, which is due for a major update to be completed in 2024.

This report is offered for discussion purposes at the next CATSO Coordinating Committee meeting.