



Policy framework



3.1 Introduction

Transportation plays a significant role in the daily lives of the region's residents. But transportation does more than simply help us get from point A to point B. We use the transportation system to get to our jobs, see our doctors, buy our groceries, visit friends and relatives, and carry out a number of activities every day. Recognizing this role that transportation plays in our community, *Transportation Outlook 2030 Update* is a policy-driven plan that responds to and supports broad regional goals and objectives.

3.2 Regional Goal

During its development in 2001–2002, *Transportation Outlook 2030* built on the work initiated through *Metro Outlook* to explore and explain our region's ability to solve problems and make progress. *Metro Outlook* established that metropolitan Kansas City has one basic goal: to create a region where the quality of life is continually improving for everyone. Not progress for some at the expense of others, not progress now at the expense of future generations, and not economic progress at the expense of social health and natural wealth.

Create a region where the quality of life is rising for everyone.

3.3 Transportation Goals

For *Transportation Outlook 2030*, the issue was to identify ways our transportation resources could assist in meeting the regional goal. Four areas of influence or impact were identified, and these became the transportation goals for the region. Transportation resources can help support a healthy, strong, regional economy that will allow the region to build the private, public and philanthropic wealth to sustain significant investment and reinvestment in the region; transportation resources can maximize access to opportunity for all area residents, ensuring that everyone can participate in all the community has to offer; transportation resources can support a quality built and quality natural environment to make the region the kind of place that will retain and attract the most important resource of our future economy — educated, innovative people; and, finally, well-managed and operated transportation systems can improve the safety, security and well-being of the traveling public. These goals were re-adopted for *Transportation Outlook 2030 Update*.

Transportation System Goals

1. Support a healthy, strong, regional economy
2. Maximize access to opportunity for all area residents
3. Support a quality built and natural environment
4. Promote the safety and well-being of the traveling public

For each of the goals a number of objectives provide further explanation and definition. Example investments or actions to help achieve the goals and objectives are also identified.

3.3.1 Goal 1: Support a healthy, strong regional economy

Objective 1.1 *Maximize the economic return from the region’s transportation investments*

- Focus transportation expenditures to facilities and services that meet a demonstrated need and are cost efficient.
- Target new roadway capacity investments, in combination with other congestion management strategies, to mitigate existing traffic congestion and serve anticipated travel needs.

Objective 1.2 *Optimize utilization of the existing system*

- Promote the preservation, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the region’s existing transportation infrastructure.
- Promote the safe, effective and efficient operation and management of the region’s transportation infrastructure and services.

Objective 1.3 *Improve access to jobs and labor markets*

- Establish a balanced, multimodal transportation system that provides a range of travel choices.
- Promote balance between housing and employment development.

Objective 1.4 *Improve the region’s connection to local, national and international markets for goods and services*

- Enhance multimodal access within greater Kansas City and to national and international regions (e.g., improving access to Kansas City International Airport and the region’s other multimodal transportation hubs).
- Enhance multimodal connections between the region’s economic centers.
- Support key components of the region’s economy (e.g., manufacturing, warehousing/distribution, life sciences, federal government center) by ensuring that residents of the community have access to job opportunities with livable wages.

Objective 1.5 *Improve efficiency of both people and goods movement*

- Implement a combination of demand reduction programs and facility improvements to manage the growth in traffic congestion in the region.
- Ensure that transportation investments to improve one mode do not degrade safety and mobility for other modes.



Transportation Outlook 2030 included example investments/actions throughout the Policy Framework. This 2005 Update evaluates the progress made in each investment/action item since the 2002 publication of *Transportation Outlook 2030*.

Symbol legend:

● = Achieved and Ongoing ◐ = In Progress ○ = Not Yet Planned/Implemented

Example investments/actions to meet Goal 1:

- ◐ Invest a minimum of 40 percent of highway revenues in rehabilitation and reconstruction of regionally significant bridges and pavements.
- ◐ Implement preferred strategies from Major Investment Studies.
- ◐ Implement congestion management strategies, including roadway capacity improvements, developed through the metropolitan planning process.
- ◐ Deploy phases 1–4 of the Kansas City Scout freeway management system. Phase 1 implemented. System will be expanded “organically” rather than following remaining phases.
- Implement the Operation Green Light arterial traffic signal coordination program.
- Increase regional bus service by 100 percent above 2001 levels.
- ◐ Implement the regional bicycle plan.

3.3.2 Goal 2: Maximize access to opportunity for all area residents

Objective 2.1 *Improve access to jobs regardless of age, race, sex, income or disability*

- Ensure that all members of the community have access to employment opportunities and the opportunity to function independently.

Objective 2.2 *Improve access to education, training, child care and basic services regardless of age, race, sex, income or disability*

- Ensure that transportation investments provide equitable levels of access for all members of the regional community.

Objective 2.3 *Improve access to shopping, entertainment, recreational, cultural and religious facilities for all area residents*

- Ensure that transportation investments provide residents with access to a range of activities that will enhance their quality of life.



Example investments/actions to meet Goal 2:

- Implement the regional Job Access plan.
- Increase regional paratransit service by 100 percent above 2001 levels.
- Implement the Central Business Corridor and I-35 Corridor fixed guideway transit plans. Smart Moves and the I-35 Alternatives Analysis are reevaluating these transit corridors.
- Support the continued development/maintenance of a well-connected network of transportation facilities to provide basic access to a range of activities/destinations.

3.3.3 Goal 3: Support a quality built and natural environmentObjective 3.1 *Encourage more efficient land use*

- Direct transportation investments to serve developed areas or those expected to be developed.

Objective 3.2 *Protect the natural environment*

- Protect existing habitat and natural areas.
- Reduce transportation's contribution to regional air quality problems.
- Reduce impacts of construction and operation of the transportation system on water resources.
- Reduce the energy demands of the transportation system.
- Reduce noise impacts of transportation.

Objective 3.3 *Encourage connected, mixed-use, mixed-income, human-scale development*

- Provide for a quality public realm, including a balanced transportation system and public spaces that will support quality homes, neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Promote balance between housing and employment development.
- Incorporate aesthetic considerations, landscaping and good design practices into the development of transportation facilities.

Objective 3.4 *Improve neighborhood accessibility*

- Establish a balanced, multimodal transportation system that provides a range of travel choices.

Objective 3.5 *Improve neighborhood safety*

- Design and implement facility improvements to ensure low-speed traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Objective 3.6 *Preserve and connect historic, cultural or recreational resources*

- Preserve cultural, scenic and historic resources and provide context-sensitive corrections.

Example investments/actions to meet Goal 3:

- Implement the Creating Quality Places and Transit-Supportive Development principles.
- Implement transportation-related strategies from the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality.
- Implement the regional pedestrian plan. Creating regional pedestrian linkages is part of the MetroGreen Plan.
- Implement the MetroGreen system of trail facilities.

3.3.4 Goal 4: Promote the Safety and Well-Being of the Traveling Public

Objective 4.1 *Improve safety of both people and goods movement*

- Design and implement facility improvements where substandard or inappropriate design contributes to high-accident or other unsafe travel conditions.
- Educate the community about the rights and responsibilities of all users of the transportation system.
- Maintain a visible law enforcement presence in the community. Enforce existing laws governing travel and usage of transportation facilities and services.
- Provide timely response to changing weather conditions that may create unsafe travel conditions. Provide timely response to traffic accidents and other incidents.
- Ensure that transportation investments to improve one mode do not degrade safety and mobility for other modes.

Objective 4.2 *Improve neighborhood safety*

- Design and implement facility improvements to ensure low-speed traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Example investments/actions to meet Goal 4:

- Deploy phases 1-4 of the Kansas City Scout freeway management system. Phase 1 implemented. System will be expanded “organically” rather than following remaining phases.
- Implement the Creating Quality Places and Transit-Supportive Development principles.

The regional goal, transportation goals and objectives set the broad policy framework for *Transportation Outlook 2030*. During the plan’s development in 2001 and 2002, local officials and area residents recommended a priority focus on the development of policies and actions in four areas. These areas reflected opportunities for the region to make the most progress toward the goals and objectives. This focused policy direction guided the region’s planning and programming activities initially conducted under *Transportation Outlook 2030*. The *Transportation Outlook 2030 Update* reviews the progress made in each of these policies.

3.4.1 Policy 1: Increase emphasis on maintaining transportation infrastructure¹

Actions to implement the policy:

- Develop tools for an analytic assessment of current/forecast conditions.
- Develop tools for an analytic assessment of required investment levels.
- Develop regional standards for system condition/service levels.

While analytical assessment is being conducted, develop “interim” measures to increase maintenance emphasis, such as:

 - Increasing the off-the-top set-aside for maintenance,
 - Creating a scoring “bonus” for projects that emphasize maintenance. System Preservation criteria is part of new scoring system for STP/Bridge funds.
 - Leaving funds unspecified for use in the plan until the analytical assessment is concluded, and/or
 - Using federal funds as an incentive to encourage better maintenance rather than spending federal funds directly on maintenance activities.
 - Acknowledge the existing differences in roadway condition on each side of the state line and consider a possible differential between Kansas/Missouri roadway maintenance requirements.

3.4.2 Policy 2: Increase modal choice

Actions to implement the policy:

- Pursue dedicated transit funding to implement regional plans for expanded/enhanced bus service and rail transit or other fixed-guideway facilities.
- Initiate a dialogue between the Total Transportation Policy Committee and MARC’s programming committees on federal fund flexibility to encourage project sponsors to propose projects that address more modes of transportation (e.g., capacity projects that include appropriate accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users).
- Encourage local governments to develop and implement bicycle and pedestrian plans.
- Develop and adopt regional design guidelines for on-road and off-road bicycle facilities.
- Develop and implement regional policies to improve safe bicycle travel and for bicycle accommodation as part of selected transportation investments, including roadway and transit projects.²
- Develop and implement regional policies in the design and funding of various transportation investments to address pedestrian accommodation.³
- Use technology to better inform the public of real-time travel options.

¹ Maintaining infrastructure includes rehabilitation, reconstruction and preservation of all transportation facilities, and maintenance and replacement of transit vehicles.

² Policies would be developed, with appropriate committee input and review, to ensure that bicycle accommodation is addressed for those transportation corridors identified as bicycle corridors in the LRTP Bicycle Element, and are consistent with local plans for bicycle facilities. These policies might include considerations for bicycle parking for transit centers along certain routes, on-road bicycle improvements, and safe crossing for bicyclists at major intersections. The policies also might address hazard elimination for bicyclists on roadways where bicycles can legally operate.

³ Policies would be developed, with appropriate committee input and review, to ensure that pedestrian accommodation is considered and addressed as various transportation investments are planned, designed and programmed. These policies could offer guidance on the circumstances under which local or state agencies might include pedestrian accommodation such as sidewalks as part of a roadway project, pedestrian access as part of a transit project, or pedestrian accommodation as part of an intersection improvement.

3.4.3 Policy 3: Better integrate projects into the community

Actions to implement the policy:

- Clarify MARC’s policies and processes for Major Investment Studies and transportation corridor studies to ensure that the preferred strategies resulting from these studies reflect a broad range of community and transportation goals that address access and mobility issues.
- Give priority to transportation-related air quality strategies from the State Implementation Plan.
Develop and implement policies and mechanisms that will provide a clearer linkage between transportation decisions and land use, such as:
 - Project design guidelines that encourage transportation projects to include design elements that reflect and connect the projects to their adjacent surroundings, as appropriate.
 - Creating a scoring “bonus” for projects tied to transit/pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use developments. Transit projects now scored independently of other modes. Multimodal Level of Service criteria now part of new scoring system for STP/Bridge funds.
 - Using federal funds as an incentive to encourage private developments to relate to public investments in alternative modes of travel.
- Expand/enhance community outreach/customer service related to transportation plans, programs, and projects.

3.4.4 Policy 4: Better manage roadway capacity

Actions to implement the policy:

- First emphasize system management and demand management strategies.
 - Use technology to increase the safety, effectiveness and efficiency of existing infrastructure
 - ⊖ Develop and implement effective public information and education programs as tools to promote the safe and efficient use of transportation facilities and services
- Develop, articulate and implement a clear set of strategies for capacity investments that should consider:
 - Incorporating the Congestion Management System toolbox into the development of capacity projects (solution choice),
 - Developing/deploying capacity triggers that examine a range of factors such as existing and projected traffic volumes (solution timing),
 - ⊖ Accounting for impacts of roadway capacity projects on other modes of travel (such as positive and negative impacts to bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users),
 - ⊖ Differences between adding capacity to existing roadways versus building new roadways, and/or
 - Developing policies to ensure that the role of proposed projects in meeting regional needs is taken into account in MARC processes to select new capacity projects for future Transportation Improvement Programs.