

# Chapter 4: Vision, Goals and Objectives

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### ► Overview

This section provides an overview of the visions, goals, and objectives that have guided the entire long range transportation planning process. Paying deference to existing principles set by the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, the MPO has utilized two sets of guiding principles for the 2040 LRTP: the Regional Mobility Goals, and the Eight Planning Factors. These standards were not only used to guide general decision-making throughout the process, but to analyze specific planning scenarios in their ability to achieve the ideals set out by the MPO.

### ► City and County Plans

Long-range planning for the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO is conducted with input from both City and County representatives and stakeholders, as well as with deference to existing goals and objectives within each of their comprehensive and master plans. The following provides an overview of City and County goals which informed the Visions, Goals, and Objectives outlined later in this Chapter.

#### Charlottesville

The most recent version of the Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council on August 19, 2013. The City's overall Transportation System goal is to develop a safe, equitable, and efficient transportation system that provides a range of transportation choices for all roadway users; reduces single occupancy vehicle travel; enhances residents' health, safety, and quality of life; facilitates development in appropriate locations; supports a strong, diverse economy; and conserves natural resources and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The transportation chapter lists nine transportation goals aimed at accommodating competing demands for finite resources.

##### ***The goals are:***

1. Complete Streets: increase safe, convenient, and pleasant accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists and people with disabilities that improve quality of life within the community and within individual neighborhoods.
2. Land use & community design: improve transportation options and quality of life through land use and community design techniques.
3. Arterial roadway network: improve mobility and safety of the arterial roadway network.

4. Efficient mobility: maintain an efficient transportation system that provides the mobility and access that supports the economic development goals of the City.
5. Parking: provide parking to adequately meet demand and support economic vitality without sacrificing aesthetics, while minimizing environmental impacts and accommodating pedestrians, bicycles, transit users and disabled individuals.
6. Transit system: create a transit system that increases local and regional mobility and provides a reliable and efficient alternative for Charlottesville's citizens.
7. Regional transportation: continue to work with appropriate governing bodies to create a robust regional transportation network.
8. Sustainable transportation infrastructure: develop a sustainable transportation infrastructure by designing, constructing, installing, using and maintaining the City's transportation assets and equipment in efficient, innovative and environmentally responsible ways.
9. Infrastructure funding: identify and seek new sources of sustainable funding protocol and mechanisms for the maintenance of existing infrastructure and facilities and future development of the transportation system.

#### Albemarle

Albemarle County published its latest draft Comprehensive Plan on January 23, 2014. In this plan, the County outlines its overall transportation goals: to become multimodal, environmentally sound, well maintained, safe and reliable. The County strives to create an efficient and affordable transportation system that offers travel

choices that are functional and will minimize harm to the community and natural environment. The County has outlined a list of 11 objectives and corresponding strategies in its transportation section.

**The objectives outlined are:**

1. Continue to plan transportation improvements in accordance with the County's Growth Management Policy.
2. Continue to fully participate in State, regional, and local transportation planning efforts.
3. Continue to improve, promote, and provide regional multimodal and accessible transportation options.
4. Strengthen efforts to complete a local transportation system that includes access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
5. Continue to plan for and implement access management strategies to preserve the functionality of the roadway systems in Albemarle County.
6. Continue to provide safe, effective, and improved urban roads in the Development Areas while recognizing that multimodal opportunities help to improve road functions.
7. Continue to provide safe and effective transportation options while preserving the character of the Rural Area.
8. Continue to improve public transit service.
9. Continue to implement travel demand management strategies.
10. Continue to support air transportation planning and participation in the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Authority.
11. Continue to support rail service for passengers and freight.

While land use plans and decisions are made in the context of governmental boundaries, transportation needs and networks cross those jurisdictional boundaries. Careful coordination of transportation planning with land use planning at a State, regional, and local level is essential, and is why the City and County participate in regional transportation planning.

## ► Joint Livability Project for the MPO

A Joint Livability Project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant spurred the creation of Charlottesville & Albemarle's Joint Vision and Goal language. The grant of \$999,000 awarded to the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) was provided for the region to develop a Livability Implementation Plan for the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO area. The process to develop this plan, referred to as the Livable Communities Planning Project (Livability Project), builds upon the region's 1998 Sustainability Accords and other area planning documents to integrate cross-cutting strategies for land use, transportation, housing, economic vitality, air and water quality, and energy use. The Livability Project was launched in April 2011 in conjunction with the kick off to the Charlottesville & Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan and Long Range Transportation Plan updates, and the Joint Vision and Goal language was adopted on February 19, 2013. The visions and goals are broken up into several planning categories. Specific to transportation, The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County plan to promote regional multi-modal and accessible transportation options. To do this, the City and County have agreed to:

- Coordinate transportation planning between Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia through the Metropolitan Planning Organization by;
  - Storing transportation data in the same format.
  - Coordinating collection of transportation data to facilitate sharing information among Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the University of Virginia, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Increase and expand transit network efficiency and use.
- Coordinate building the sidewalk network across City-County boundaries and addressing barriers to pedestrian connectivity.
- Provide community education regarding transportation options.
- Collaborate to strengthen intrastate and interstate rail and air transportation opportunities.

- Coordinate to provide and enhance multimodal connections between employment centers and areas of high residential density.
- Create dedicated bike-pedestrian connections across physical barriers within community, including:
  - Rivanna River
  - Route 250 – East and West
  - Interstate 64
  - Railroad network
  - City and VDOT system connection
  - Route 29

### ► Regional Vision

Using the both City and County transportation goals, and the Joint Vision and Goals as a reference, the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan outlines its own vision for the region's transportation system. This vision is to build a comprehensive transportation system for the Charlottesville-Albemarle region, consonant with good land-use planning, socioeconomic cost-effectiveness, and sound financial practice. The purpose of the Regional Vision is to provide safe, sustainable, efficient, and attractive multimodal choices; to support the movement of people, goods, and services; and to protect the environment, communities, and quality of life while addressing regional and statewide transportation needs. The 2040 LRTP is based on two sets of guiding principles that complement one another, and reflect the Regional Vision described above.

### ► Regional Mobility Goals

The first set of principles that shaped the 2040 LRTP are the Regional Mobility Goals, which focus specifically on the transportation needs for Charlottesville-Albemarle region. The Regional Mobility Goals were based on the Goals outlined in the UnJAM 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, and revised throughout 2012 with assistance from the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) and the MPO Technical Committee. They were approved by the MPO Policy Board in January 2013. The following section describes each goal and its components.

### Goal: A multimodal transportation network

#### » System-wide

- i. Plan for a fully integrated transportation system that allows people to choose from an array of modes to meet their mobility needs.
- ii. Enhance and utilize technology to maximize efficiency and convenience for planning trips and choosing modes; know before you go.
- iii. Design a streetscape that is not only useful but enhances the community's local aesthetics; including: better lighting, signage, landscaping and signals.
- iv. Engage the public in options and priorities for transportation development.

#### » Roads

- i. Support improvements to the existing roads for balanced, interconnected multimodal performance and safety.
- ii. Work with VDOT on flexible roadway designs for a more balanced, multimodal performance.
- iii. Keep the existing transportation network properly maintained for the safety and convenience of all who use it.

#### » Transit

- i. Develop enhanced bus, bus rapid transit (BRT), or streetcars for fast, frequent, dependable service on major corridors.
- ii. Establish inter- and intra-regional commuter express service from outlying areas.
- iii. Improve regional and interstate passenger rail service.
- iv. Determine appropriate system improvements for the downtown area and in neighborhoods.
- v. Continue to work toward the establishment of a Regional Transit Authority.

#### » Walk

- i. Establish a complete and fully connected sidewalk system.
- ii. Plan and implement safe, accessible crosswalks with pedestrian refuges.
- iii. Establish a pedestrian system that is as ADA accessible as possible.

## » *Bike*

- i. Establish on-road bike lanes on urban streets.
- ii. Establish off-road multi-purpose trails along major corridors.
- iii. Establish secure bike parking in key locations throughout the region.
- iv. Upgrade and/or calibrate traffic signals to detect and accommodate bikes.
- v. Determine locations to integrate grade-separated facilities into the existing infrastructure
- vi. Establish framework to automatically count bikes.

## » *RideShare/Travel Demand Management/ITS*

- i. Consider opportunities and options for dedicated travel lanes for carpool and vanpool participants.
- ii. Continue to work with employers in the region to establish more incentives to carpool.
- iii. Improve and increase the region's Park and Ride lots.
- iv. Coordinate TDM strategies for commutes, special events and other trip types.

## » *Freight*

- i. Improve transportation system to facilitate regional freight service.
- ii. Enhance access for rail and truck freight.
- iii. Separate freight movements from passenger travel, where possible.
- iv. Support the on-time delivery need of local and statewide businesses and industry.

## **Goal: A cohesive relationship between land use and multimodal transportation planning**

- i. Blend land use and transportation planning to ensure proper place-making.
- ii. Integrate the policies for the City's and the County's respective comprehensive plans with transportation planning at the MPO.
- iii. Focus on jurisdiction transition areas (i.e. where the City, County and UVa meet) to make sure the land use and infrastructure blend seamlessly.

- iv. Recognize current and future growth areas and identify infrastructure needs of these areas.
- v. Plan transportation infrastructure that maintains the neighborhood scale and supports existing and planned densities and activities.
- vi. Expand modeling and forecasting technology to better coordinate the current and future transportation system (roads, transit, bike and pedestrian, etc.) with current and future land use.

## **Goal: A more structured and proactive method for pursuing transportation funding for all modes.**

- i. Re-evaluate funding streams to establish a more diverse, cost-effective, and multimodal system.
- ii. Construct a clearer and more approachable prioritization outline for local level projects.
- iii. Determine what an adequate and reliably available amount of funding is.
- iv. Establish funding flexibility in order to meet regional and local priorities.

## ► **Eight Planning Factors**

The second set of guiding principles, called the Eight Planning Factors, consists of federally required aims that focus on broader planning concerns such as safety and the environment. The Eight Planning Factors are outlined in Title 23, United States Code (USC), Section 134 and specify the goals local governments must work toward when evaluating metropolitan transportation projects. These planning factors have been a part of metropolitan transportation planning since the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was enacted by congress in 1991. The factors have been revised with subsequent acts, including the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The most recent federal transportation act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) did not alter the planning factors. MPO's are required to include these factors in both their long-range and short-range plans. The most recent edition of the Eight Planning Factors includes the following:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

### ► Conclusion

These sets of goals and factors were taken into account as MPO developed its list of projects considered for inclusion in the plan. The Eight Planning Factors are federally required goals whereas the Regional Mobility Goals were established by the MPO's committees and are specific to the region. Both sets of goals support the Regional Vision. In addition, they were helpful in developing a set of performance measures used to evaluate which transportation improvements would provide the greatest benefit for the region. These performance measures and their relationship with the goals and factors are described in the following chapter.