

Memo

To: MIC & TAC members

From: Robert Herling, Planner

Date: May 12, 2009

RE: Draft language: LRTP goals, objectives and strategies

Please take time to review the following goals, objectives and strategies in advance of the upcoming TAC and MIC meetings (May 19th and May 20th), and be prepared to offer feedback. The staff are interested in knowing what language, if any, you might object to, or if there might be something the staff has overlooked, but you feel should be included.

The statements were developed using input received from the exercises many of you participated in during the March and February meetings. Unless we receive feedback requesting further revisions, the language as currently drafted will be printed in the updated long range transportation plan, *Directions 2035*. Please keep in mind that the updated LRTP will be a web-based document; the underlined items are intended to be future hyperlinks that will link to further information online.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact me by email at rherling@ardc.org or by phone at (218) 529-7573 .

Goal 1: Develop and maintain the Duluth-Superior transportation system in ways that support economic productivity, efficiency and competitiveness.

Obj. A. - *HIGH PRIORITY* - Increase interregional freight activities in the Duluth-Superior metro area across all modes of transportation (truck, rail, air and water).

**MIC
Strategies**

- Promote recommendations from [NE MN/NW WI Freight Plan](#).
- Promote recommendations from [Port Land Use Plan](#), [Rail Study](#) and [Airport Land Use Plan](#); update these studies in near future.
- Identify and inventory potential lay down areas for temporary freight storage.
- Assist jurisdictions in finding ways to incentivize new freight ventures.
- Work with UWS Transportation Logistics Program, Duluth Port Authority and Duluth Airport Authority to find ways to support innovations in local freight.
- Advocate for the harmonization of regulations between different jurisdictions (e.g. state weight limits & ballast water regulations.)

Obj. B. Increase the number of passenger trips to and from Duluth-Superior metro area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Support the local airports in efforts to improve options and incentives for passengers.
- Engage regional transit agencies (e.g. Jefferson Lines, Skyline Shuttle) in coordinating efforts to improve ridership.
- Advocate for commuter rail service to/from the Twin Cities; assist jurisdictions in planning for rail connections.

Obj. C. Increase transit options to and from employment centers in the Duluth-Superior metro area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Identify and inventory areas suitable for Park & Ride lots.
- Identify emerging employment centers and assess adjacent transit routes.
- Inform businesses of [Commuter Choice](#) and similar programs.
- Survey businesses and transit riders to determine unmet needs.

Obj. D. Improve tourist movement between tourist districts and local business districts.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Continue to promote recommendations of [Duluth Downtown Modal Connections](#) study.
- Advocate for further implementation of the [Wayfinding Plan](#).
- Maintain updated sidewalk inventories and bike route sign inventories; recommend improvements.

Goal 2: Improve and increase the safety & security of the Duluth-Superior transportation system.

Obj. A. Reduce all auto crashes in the Duluth-Superior area, especially those resulting in injuries or fatalities.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Use crash data to identify problematic locations; recommend appropriate improvements.
- Conduct regular [TSM assessment](#) of network - maintain database.
- Ensure every study or plan includes analysis of safety factors.
- Review proposed transportation projects to weigh in on potential safety improvements.
- Assist regional initiatives to increase safety education and enforcement efforts (e.g. [Towards Zero Deaths](#), [MN Safe Communities Coalition](#)).

Obj. B. Reduce bicycle and pedestrian crashes in the Duluth-Superior area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Include bike/ped-specific analysis during regular [TSM assessment](#) and maintain a database.
- Identify and study important, high volume pedestrian & bicycle corridors in the MIC area.
- Advocate for jurisdictions to maintain visibility of pavement markings, signage and signals.
- Promote recommendations of [Safe Routes to School](#) plans.
- Facilitate coordination among jurisdictions and business to add missing sidewalk links and improve accessibility.
- Promote local ped/bike safety education and [Share the Road](#) initiatives.

Obj. C. Reduce conflicts at rail crossings in the Duluth-Superior area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Inventory rail crossings and characteristics.
- Study traffic volumes, daily train trips, and crash exposure ratings; recommend improvements.

Obj. D. Prevent hazardous incidents on/at highway, rail, port and airport facilities in the area, and contribute data to assist in an effective, coordinated emergency response in the event of such incidents.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Work with local emergency responders to produce coordinated incident management plans.
- Promote the expansion of Intelligent Transportation Systems ([ITS](#)) in the Duluth-Superior metro.

Goal 3: Develop and maintain the Duluth-Superior transportation system in ways that increase accessibility and mobility.

Obj. A. Decrease gaps or barriers in sidewalk networks in the Duluth-Superior area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Conduct updated sidewalk inventories for jurisdictions.
- Identify priority sidewalk links either missing or in disrepair.
- Advocate for sidewalk improvements to be included in roadway projects.
- Promote design features that make it easier for pedestrians to cross the street.

Obj. B. Reduce missing links in the area's network of arterials and collectors; ensure that arterial and collector roads operate at acceptable levels of service.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Use traffic modeling to identify the need for improved connections.
- Use traffic modeling and regular [TSM assessment](#) to identify and prioritize locations of failing capacity.
- Promote projects that provide improved connections within the arterial/collector network.

Obj. C. Increase the number of transportation facilities in the area that are compliant with standards established by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**MIC
Strategies**

- Use sidewalk inventories to identify the presence/absence of ADA compliance.
- Advocate that ADA design features be included in street improvement projects.
- Assess ADA compliance of downtown Skywalk system and paved trail networks.

Obj. D. Increase the number of transit options and the accessibility to transit in more places. Ensure that area transit operates at acceptable levels of service (e.g. route frequency, schedule reliability, fare rates, etc).

**MIC
Strategies**

- Promote the recommendations of the [Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan](#).
- Promote establishment of Park & Ride lots; Inform businesses of [Commuter Choice](#) and similar programs.
- Assist DTA in studying route efficiency; survey businesses and transit riders to determine unmet needs.

Obj. E. Ensure that, by developing or improving facilities for one mode of transportation, barriers are not created for the access or mobility of other modes.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Request for the MIC to have timely review of the site designs for upcoming development projects; advocate for accessibility and connectivity.
- Use individual plans and studies to assess needs across all modes of transportation.

Goal 4: Protect and enhance the environment through responsible and compatible transportation projects.

Obj. A. Reduce the impacts that transportation in the area has on air quality and water quality, and ensure that projects are compatible with ecological processes and features of the area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Help ensure that projects meet [NEPA](#) and [CAAA](#) standards.
- Promote projects that minimize traffic congestion and emissions.
- Promote efforts to increase transit ridership in the Twin Ports.
- Promote projects that incorporate design features to mitigate stormwater runoff.
- Promote projects that minimize additional impervious surfaces.
- Research de-icing strategies and technologies to minimize the impact of road salt.

Obj. B. Ensure that transportation projects that are “context sensitive,” compatible with the cultural features of an area, and are consistent with local comprehensive plans.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Request for the MIC to have timely review of the site designs for upcoming development projects; advocate for accessibility and connectivity.
- Educate and advocate for the inclusion of “[Complete Streets](#)” principals in local projects.
- Promote awareness of local transportation issues and provide educational opportunities for decision makers and the public.

Obj. C. Increase the number of transportation projects that address existing development centers, promote density and reduce the need to expand the transportation network.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Advocate for jurisdictions to exercise [Smart Growth](#) principals in their communities.
- Promote the policies and recommendations of the [DUAGIS](#) study.
- Conduct a growth impact study for the Superior urbanized area.

Obj. D. Increase the number of projects that promote energy conservation and incorporate design features aimed at increasing local and regional sustainability.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Work with jurisdictions to identify growth areas; develop strategies to share revenues.
- Identify corridors where improved signal operations could significantly reduce fuel consumption.
- Research “green” transportation strategies or technologies relevant to MIC area.

Goal 5: Provide an integrated transportation network by connecting different modes of transportation to improve the movement of people and goods.

Obj. A. Increase the number of intermodal facilities in the area for transferring people between modes (e.g. multimodal terminals, park & ride lots, bike stations).

**MIC
Strategies**

- Assist the DTA in establishing a new multimodal downtown transit terminal.
- Promote the recommendations of the [Downtown Modal Connections Study](#).
- Advocate for stronger transit connections to area airports.
- Identify and inventory areas suitable for Park & Ride lots.
- Promote striping of bike lanes on key bike routes, installing bike racks, and establishing bike stations.

Obj. B. Increase the number of intermodal facilities in the area for transferring freight between modes (e.g. rail-to-truck facilities).

**MIC
Strategies**

- Promote recommendations from [NE MN/NW WI Freight Plan](#), [Port Land Use Plan](#), [Rail Study](#) and [Airport Land Use Plan](#).
- Work with local businesses, UWS Transportation Logistics Program, Duluth Port Authority and Duluth Airport Authority to identify intermodal innovations with promising potential for area industries.
- Assist jurisdictions in finding ways to incentivize new freight ventures.

Obj. C. Increase the number of roadway projects that incorporate the principals of “complete streets”.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Promote projects that incorporate “Complete Streets” design elements.
- Increase local awareness of “Complete Streets” principals by providing educational opportunities for decision makers and the public.

Obj. D. Ensure coordination between separate projects that address different modes of transportation.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Request for the MIC to have timely review of the site designs for upcoming development projects; advocate for accessibility and connectivity.
- Work with jurisdictions to coordinate the timing and design of transportation projects.

Goal 6: Ensure the efficient operation and maintenance of the transportation system to optimize the movement of people and goods throughout the metro area.

Obj. A. Improve traffic flow on existing roadways, Reduce the number of locations on the road network that experience congestion or delay.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Use traffic modeling and regular [TSM assessment](#) to identify and prioritize locations of failing capacity.
- Conduct corridor studies of priority roadways; promote recommendations.
- Research innovative congestion management techniques; recommend appropriate strategies.

Obj. B. Reduce the numbers of operational conflicts between modes.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Request the MIC have timely review of site plans for new developments.
- Promote recommendations from [NE MN/NW WI Freight Study](#), [Rail Study](#) and [Airport Land Use Plan](#).
- Promote roadway designs that improve the pedestrians and cyclist crossings.
- Continue to advocate for providing signal prioritization to DTA buses.

Obj. C. Ensure efficient and effective operation of the area transportation system during unusual traffic events and/or emergency responses.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Promote the expansion of [ITS](#) and [TOC](#) technologies in Duluth-Superior metro.
- Work with local emergency responders to ensure coordinated incident management plans.

Obj. D. Ensure efficient, reliable operation of transit services in the Duluth-Superior area.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Assist the DTA in conducting route and ridership studies to identify where and how to adjust service to improve specific routes.
- Assist the DTA with securing funding for converting more of fleet to hybrid buses.

Goal 7: Preserve existing transportation infrastructure, ensure that transportation facilities are being optimally utilized, and apply limited financial resources in the most effective ways.

Obj. A. - *HIGH PRIORITY* - Increase the functional lifespan of existing infrastructure.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Maintain timely, ongoing communication with jurisdictions about project engineering and timeframes.
- Work with jurisdictions to coordinate the timing of transportation projects.
- Assist jurisdictions in identifying low-cost strategies (e.g. alternative striping) to improve the road function and avoid unnecessary reconstruction.
- Use [TIP scoring](#) criteria to prioritize preservation projects.
- Promote [Access Management](#) strategies to prevent unnecessary expansion projects.

Obj. B. - *HIGH PRIORITY* - Ensure that new infrastructure is built and maintained in ways that provide the longest functional lifespan.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Use regular studies, modeling and [TSM](#) assessments to identify future capacity needs.
- Use [TIP scoring](#) criteria to prioritize projects with the highest benefits-to-cost ratios.

Obj. C. - *HIGH PRIORITY* - Direct funding to projects that address the greatest needs and promise the greatest return on investments.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Gather pavement quality data, [ADT counts](#) and other performance measures from jurisdictions.
- Use regular studies, modeling and [TSM](#) assessments to identify greatest safety and capacity needs.
- Use [TIP scoring](#) criteria to prioritize projects with the highest benefits-to-cost ratios.

Obj. D. Constrain the number of projects which expand the transportation network to those that are most necessary and serve the greatest number of users.

**MIC
Strategies**

- Encourage jurisdictions to pursue higher land use densities and reduce the need for expanded transportation facilities.
- Use traffic modeling and [TSM](#) assessments to identify and prioritize capacity needs.
- Identify and recommend low-cost strategies (e.g. alternative striping) where expensive reconstruction can be avoided.
- Use [TIP scoring](#) criteria to promote preservation over expansion projects.

Goal 8: Maintain a planning process that is committed to coordination and public involvement, and is responsive to the needs and interests of all residents, stakeholder groups and public agencies.

Obj. A. Ensure successful coordination among jurisdictions and other local entities.

- Identify all stakeholder groups relevant to any MIC study or plan.
- Form diverse steering committees to provide additional expertise for planning activities.
- Stay abreast of jurisdictional plans and planning activities; communicate to other jurisdictions.

**MIC
Strategies**

Obj. B. Ensure that MIC activities remain consistent with federal Environmental Justice requirements.

- Identify areas of minority and low-income populations in the MIC area.
- Proactively engage all stakeholder groups to identify potential issues early in planning activities.

**MIC
Strategies**

Obj. C. Provide ample opportunities for the public to access information, get involved and provide input on transportation decisions.

- Use the MIC website to advertise all ways people can get involved.
- Continue to follow procedures established in the [MIC Public Participation Plan](#).
- Seek public involvement at the start of all planning projects and keep all participants regularly informed throughout, offering them additional ways to continue their involvement.

**MIC
Strategies**

Obj. D. Increase public interest in the MIC's activities and improve the public's understanding of the MIC and how it makes transportation decisions.

- Send out press releases to local media outlets to inform them of MIC activities.
- Keep the MIC website current with updated information relevant to public concerns and interests.
- Offer an online "news alert" mailing list for which people can sign-up or opt-out of.
- Showcase past MIC projects that have that have incorporated extensive public involvement successfully.

**MIC
Strategies**