

CHAPTER III

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

An important first step in any planning effort is the development of goals and objectives to support and to provide direction for the planning work to come. Goals and objectives reflect the values and desires of the individuals setting them. Goals and objectives are also valuable in measuring the effectiveness and success of the plans that are developed. Some of the objectives may compete or conflict with one another. This is to be expected, as the goals and objectives are broad in nature and designed to deal with many issues. It is the responsibility of the policy decision-makers to weigh the trade-offs between the goals and objectives when evaluating the plans and programs developed to address the needs of the community. It must be recognized that BCATS by itself cannot implement projects or improvements to directly satisfy the stated goals and objectives; however, BCATS provides a forum for coordinated decisions to be made cooperatively in the best interests of the greater Battle Creek area.

In developing goals and objectives for the Plan, and for BCATS in general, several existing plans and policy statements were considered as input, including: BCATS' previously adopted Goals and Objectives from the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, Michigan Department of Transportation goals for the MI Transportation Plan (see chapter VI), State of Michigan Strategic Highway Safety Plan for 2013-2016, Michigan Climate Action Plan, and FHWA's MAP-21/FAST Act rules and regulations.

MAP-21/FAST Act require transportation plans which involve all levels of government and all surface transportation modes. The regulations implementing the Acts state that "the metropolitan planning process shall be continuous, cooperative and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the transportation planning factors as outlined in Chapter II and restated below:

- (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 accessibility and mobility of people and 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
- (9) improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation
- (10) enhance travel and tourism

The MPO plans are coordinated with the state plans (as noted above) and the statewide planning process.

The following goals and objectives were updated to guide this minor update of the *2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* to a horizon year of 2040.

GOAL 1: SAFETY

To minimize the loss of life, injuries, and property damage resulting from travel on all modes within the BCATS area

OBJECTIVES:

- 1a: The transportation system should minimize traffic crashes and the severity of crashes
- 1b: Standard traffic control devices in the transportation system should be used to increase efficiency and safety whenever possible
- 1c: The transportation system should minimize rail/auto/transit conflicts and commercial/non-commercial vehicle conflicts
- 1d: The transportation system should minimize motorized/non-motorized conflicts
- 1e: The transportation system should maximize the safety and security of its users
- 1f: Safety management systems should be encouraged at all levels within the BCATS area and the outputs used in the needs assessment component of the planning process

GOAL 2: ACCESSIBILITY

To provide all travelers in the community with reasonable access to important destinations such as: residence, employment, recreation, community facilities and commercial centers

OBJECTIVES:

- 2a: The transportation system should provide appropriate access, via motorized or non-motorized transportation, to and from major land uses and attractions within the BCATS area and within the region as a whole
- 2b: The transportation system should minimize transportation barriers which put at a disadvantage the physically challenged, senior citizens, and persons who do not have automobiles available, or have limited economic means

GOAL 3: PRESERVATION

To preserve the investment in the area's transportation system

OBJECTIVES:

- 3a: The existing transportation infrastructure system should be preserved and maintained at the highest possible level - levels to be based on the policies and goals of all implementing jurisdictions
- 3b: Management systems which foster preservation should be implemented and coordinated at all levels within the BCATS area and the outputs used in the needs identification component of the planning process

GOAL 4: EFFICIENCY

To achieve maximum efficiency, utilization, and performance from the transportation system

OBJECTIVES:

- 4a: Transportation projects which reduce distance and time spent traveling should be promoted
- 4b: Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and transportation management system techniques should be utilized to improve the operating efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system
- 4c: Increasing vehicle occupancy should be encouraged for all motorized modes
- 4d: The movement of goods and persons should be coordinated for maximum efficiency

GOAL 5: FINANCIAL

To minimize the financial costs of the transportation system to travelers and the community as a whole

OBJECTIVES:

- 5a: Transportation improvements should be cost-effective and should maximize the long-term benefits by considering overall life-cycle costs whenever possible
- 5b: Transportation improvements, for all modes, should minimize capital and operating costs
- 5c: The scale and character of transportation improvements should be consistent with the ability to finance such improvements
- 5d: The private sector should be encouraged to invest in the transportation system and partnering projects should be encouraged

GOAL 6: COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

To coordinate the planning and development of transportation facilities within the metropolitan area and in conjunction with countywide and statewide planning efforts

OBJECTIVES:

- 6a: The development of the transportation system should be consistent with area land use plans, housing plans, recreation/open space plans, other relevant plans and economic development initiatives
- 6b: The transportation system should be multi-modal and intermodal in nature, providing a smooth interface between different modes
- 6c: Local land use policies and practices should encourage appropriate access management and right-of-way preservation to meet the future needs of the transportation system

GOAL 7: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To provide for public involvement in the planning and development of transportation facilities and services

OBJECTIVE:

- 7a: Provide maximum opportunity for the involvement of all segments of the community in the development of BCATS' plans and programs through multiple outlets

GOAL 8: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

To avoid disrupting social and economic life or creating a less attractive or less healthy living environment for Battle Creek area residents due to unintended harmful effects of transportation on the immediate and global environment

OBJECTIVES:

- 8a: The transportation system should minimize the energy resources consumed for, and green house gases emitted from, transportation
- 8b: The use of alternative fuels by all transportation modes should be encouraged
- 8c: Air pollutant emissions and concentrations (including greenhouse gases) should be minimized
- 8d: Noise emissions and concentrations should be minimized
- 8e: The transportation system and providers should encourage the use of public transportation and ride-sharing where feasible

GOAL 9: COMMUNITY IMPACT

To avoid and reduce conflicts between transportation facilities and land use

OBJECTIVES:

- 9a: Improvements to the transportation system should minimize, to the extent possible, negative effects on commercial and industrial facilities as well as recreational, cultural, religious and educational activities
- 9b: The transportation system should minimize, to the extent possible, interference with existing households and disruption of neighborhoods

Assessing the Plan's effectiveness in meeting these identified goals and objectives is discussed later in the document.