



CHAPTER 2. VISION, GOALS AND MTP FRAMEWORK

MTP VISION

In order to create a framework for the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), a vision statement was drafted by the Vision/Goals Committee and presented to the TAC, RPC/Policy Committee and the public. As is evident in the following vision statement, this region understands the rapid growth rate of the area and the need for a multimodal (alternative, innovative, resilient, sustainable) transportation system.

A vision was developed for the MTP to guide its development. The vision is as follows:

The Northwest Arkansas region will develop and maintain a safe, reliable, and efficient transportation system for the movement of people and goods throughout the area. The system will include a safe, secure, well-integrated and connected roadway, transit, freight, pedestrian and bicycle network. The system will enhance and sustain a high level of economic vitality, community livability and quality of life by providing movement of goods, choice, mobility, convenience and energy efficiency.

GOALS, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

In order to create a plan to complement the aforementioned vision, five goals and supporting principles and objectives were adopted. The Goals, Principles and Objectives were derived from the extensive public input gathered throughout MTP development, and approved by the TAC and RPC/Policy Committee. The MTP Goals, Principles and Objectives create the groundwork for future policies to ensure that Northwest Arkansas is able to meet the demands of the transportation system in the most economical manner. Additionally, they challenge the region to think beyond strictly transportation and begin to make the connection between transportation and the broader society.

MAP-21/FAST Act established national performance goals. The MTP Goals, Principles, and Objectives strive to align with the national performance goals in five main areas:

- Safety and Security
- Infrastructure Condition
- Congestion Reduction and System Reliability
- Freight Movement and Economic Viability
- Environmental Sustainability

NATIONAL GOAL I: TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY – To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

MTP Goal I: Increase transportation safety for all modes of travel.

Principle I.1: Provide safe and secure travel for all modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling, transit and vehicular.

Objectives:

1. Encourage improved traffic operations, access management and other strategies and measures to reduce the number and rate of crashes and improve system reliability.
2. Encourage the use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) that improve the emergency response to incidents and clearing of incidents to improve safety and system reliability.
3. Implement strategies that help reduce fatality and serious injury crash rates for all modes.
4. Promote and improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized travelers through adherence to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
5. Encourage transit agencies to implement safety performance targets and measures and safety management systems.

Principle I.2: Provide for system safety, reliability, and lower crash rates.

Objectives:

1. Design, manage, and operate the transportation system to reduce crashes and identify safety improvements based on a data-driven process.
2. Use the Arkansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan 2013 as a guide toward development of state and local strategies to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries.
3. Collect, analyze and maintain crash data as it relates to the transportation system as a performance measure of safety.

NATIONAL GOAL II: INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITION – To maintain the transportation system in a state of good repair.

MTP Goal II: Maintain the existing and planned transportation system through ongoing maintenance, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and/or preservation.

Principle II.1: Identify and protect corridors needed for future highway, transit, freight, or other transportation system requirements.

Objectives:

1. Support the adoption of local right-of-way plans, policies and ordinances as needed to identify, acquire and protect the right-of-way within corridors as development continues.
2. When feasible, identify future corridors for advance right-of-way acquisition for highways, local roads, transit, bicycle and pedestrian use.
3. Promote shared right-of-way/easements for multiple purposes and utilities.
4. Maintain and preserve existing highway, transit and other facilities in good condition. Employ system performance measures, such as Maintenance Principles – Age of Transit Fleets; Pavement Management Systems (Overlay Programs); Bridge Repair based on ratings; and the Pavement Performance Index to gauge the transportation system's optimum use and efficiency.

NATIONAL GOAL III: CONGESTION REDUCTION AND SYSTEM RELIABILITY

MTP Goal III: Maximize the capacity and reliability of existing facilities on regionally significant routes and minimize the need for new roadways.

Principle III.1: Address congestion and system reliability and maximize efficiency and effectiveness through management and operations.

Objectives:

1. Align the Northwest Arkansas Congestion Management Process closely with the MTP and use the Congestion Management Process performance measures in project prioritization and funding that will maximize capacity and system reliability.
2. Manage access to and from adjacent property in key corridors, thus improving vehicular and pedestrian safety and reliability.
3. Safeguard transportation investments by promoting access management policies.
4. Encourage use of management and operations such as ridesharing, transit service, and coordinated traffic signals and traffic operations.

Principle III.2: Endeavor to reduce congestion by supporting alternative transportation modes.

Objectives:

1. Provide adequate and steady funding to operate existing public transit systems.
2. Provide improved pedestrian connectivity by providing sidewalks and/or trails to goods, services, jobs, schools, and recreation activities and providing safe crossings of roadways.
3. Continue development of the regional trail system for bicycles and pedestrians that provides a safe route of travel between home, work and services as an alternative means of transportation through use of the principals included in the Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
4. Encourage and support bus rapid transit and commuter rail transportation alternatives with the understanding that financial feasibility will depend on ridership, capital costs, and potential federal, state and local funding.

Principle III.3: Encourage land development patterns that promote transportation efficiency.

Objectives:

1. Support in-fill development and the concentration of new commercial and office space activity that enhance the utilization of alternative forms of transportation.
2. Identify transit corridors that allow higher density mixed-use areas to be served by public transit.
3. Encourage major facilities to locate along planned public transit lines and implement “transit friendly” strategies.
4. Encourage transit stops/stations within convenient walking distance of major concentrations of employment.

NATIONAL GOAL IV: FREIGHT MOVEMENT AND ECONOMIC VITALITY

MTP Goal IV: Increase transportation mobility and accessibility for both persons and freight, thus promoting economic vitality in the region.

Principle IV.1: Support an integrated system with efficient connections between transportation modes.

Objectives:

1. Minimize travel time and increase reliability.
2. Increase accessibility to employment centers.
3. Increase accessibility to other major commercial, industrial, educational, medical, and recreation centers.
4. Provide for access to developing areas in the region.
5. Encourage transit supportive infrastructure to be implemented at the time of new construction or improvements.

Principle IV.2: Enhance commerce.

Objectives:

1. Promote improvements that facilitate the efficient movement of freight and enhance regional and global competitiveness.
2. Encourage cooperative planning with other transportation agencies to insure regional goals.
3. Promote reliable travel time to aid in just-in-time manufacturing processes.

NATIONAL GOAL V: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY – To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

MTP Goal V: Provide a transportation system that protects and enhances the environment, promotes energy conservation and improves the quality of life.

Principle V.1: Support the regional implementation of recommendations covered in the Cave Springs Karst Area Resource Conservation Study and the Northwest Arkansas Open Space Plan.

Objectives:

1. Encourage and assist local jurisdictions in adoption of drainage ordinances.
2. Encourage implementation of Best Management Practices in the Karst geology direct impact area.
3. Promote conservation of various types of open space through use of strategies contained in the Open Space Plan.

Principle V.2: Identify and encourage the use of developing technologies and sources of energy that assist in protecting the natural environment.

Objectives:

1. Minimize energy consumption on a system-wide basis by reducing congestion and improving reliability.
2. Minimize air, water, noise and visual pollution.
3. Minimize disturbances of the region’s natural aesthetics and wildlife habitat.
4. Provide for needed highway and transit system enhancements.

MTP FRAMEWORK

To guide decision-making and comply with the Federal transportation legislation, MAP-21/FAST Act the MTP Framework was developed around national goals, AHTD goals, and MTP goals. Table 2.1 illustrates how Federal and State transportation goals align with MTP goals. The MTP Framework also establishes potential MTP System Measures tied to each of the national, State and MTP goals with the opportunity to track progress towards these goals.

| 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Framework - National, State, and Region | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| National Goal Area | National Goals | AHTD Goals | NWARPC 2040 MTP Goals | Potential 2040 MTP System Measures |
| Infrastructure Condition - State of Good Repair | To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair | Invest in the existing highway and bridges to maintain and preserve the existing system. | Preserve and Maintain Infrastructure | Bridge Condition on NHS Pavement Condition on NHS Transit Bus/Fleet Age/Condition |
| Safety and Security | To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads | Improve statewide safety for all modes and all users and reduce system vulnerability and improve system resiliency to maintain essential travel during extreme events. | Improve safety | Serious Injuries per VMT Fatalities per VMT Number of Serious Injuries per 100K Pop Number of Fatalities per 100K Pop |
| Congestion Reduction and System Reliability | To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System. To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system | Invest in the multimodal transportation system to improve mobility, connectivity, accessibility, and reliability for people and goods. | Reduce Congestion Improve Reliability | Volume Delay Per Mile on CMP Congestion Index on CMP Travel Time Index on CMP |
| Freight Movement and Economic Vitality | To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development | Improve intermodal transportation system connectivity, efficiency, and mobility to support existing industries and strengthen national and regional economic competitiveness. Partner with Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Planning and Development Districts, local governments, and other responsible modal agencies to improve intermodal transportation system safety, accessibility, and connectivity. | Improve Regional Mobility | Miles of Complete Streets Miles of roadways with Access Management Number of Bike and Pedestrian Catalyst Projects Miles of improved Arterial Network % population served by public transit with 1/4 mile Unlinked Trips per Passenger Mile (Transit, NTD) Unlinked Trips per Revenue Hour (Transit, NTD) |
| Environmental Sustainability | To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment | Enhance the performance of the transportation system while avoiding, minimizing, and/or mitigating impacts to natural and cultural resources. | Protect the Environment | Number of Jurisdictions with drainage criteria manuals Number of jurisdictions with Karst BMP's Cave Springs Recharge Area |

* Potential Performance Measures based on FHWA Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) and also includes on-going NWARPC initiatives and implementation of plans

Table 2.1 - 2040 MTP Framework