

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

This review will be more easily understood as annotated comments on problem areas in the 2030 RTP.* The 2030 RTP was considered from the point of view of public comment during 2001 and 2002, particularly the comment found in *Changing Direction: Transportation Choices for 2030***.

Thematic issues that impact this section include:

- The use of project “readiness” to determine which infrastructure to fund, rather than the benefits of a project or the regional priorities addressed by a project.
- Failure to conduct meaningful alternatives testing which should result in several alternative “visions” of how we want the region to grow. Also, no information is available in the document about which strategies from “alternatives” were chosen to form the final plan.
- Refusal to meaningfully incorporate the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) Evaluation Measure scores. Use of a “composite” score for projects, without showing individual scores, is ineffectual and uninformative.

* Available at <http://www.sp2030.com/CommentSite/index.html>.

**Available at <http://www.cnt.org/tsp/trans/ctagc/cc/theplan.htm>

The chart below offers specific page references and quotes from Regional Transportation Plan and commentary on why that quote is relevant or problematic.

Page	Quote	Comment
32	<i>Proposals involving community, environmental and management and operations strategies were incorporated to complement a set of “future regional scenarios” developed from the transportation system proposals.</i>	Developing the future alternatives by packaging proposals that are offered up is backwards. CATS should have developed alternatives based on public priorities and ranked the project proposals for their congruence with preferred alternatives.
39	<i>There is currently a set of transportation improvements for which there is sufficient progress toward implementation to include in each alternative future regional scenario.</i>	"Progress toward implementation" is substituted for project selection based on regional vision or cost/benefit analysis. This leads to competition between implementers rather than cooperative planning.
39	<i>There is currently a set of transportation improvements for which there is sufficient progress toward implementation to include in each alternative future regional scenario.</i>	Earlier draft said there was "sufficient consensus" or significant progress. Consensus statement deleted.
42	<i>Shared Path 2030 examined alternative future transportation scenarios, not so much in order to “pick” an exclusive approach, but to “learn” by comparing the resulting evaluation measures.</i>	The public can not discern the specific strategies and programs within each "alternative." They can not learn the results of the analysis from this document.

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44	<i>Transit oriented development (TOD) is in the Service Intensive alternative</i>	Decision about which strategies to include in which alternative seems arbitrary. Strategies that are a priority, like TOD, paratransit improvements, transit coordination or context sensitive design could be built into all models.
72	<i>It was anticipated that the plan's recommendations would be drawn from each of these alternatives.</i>	The document does not define how or which components from the alternatives are selected or what the relative costs of individual components are.
75	<i>Increased attention to the relationship between transportation and community development as well as intensive transportation system management and operation was found to reduce the overall volume of tripmaking, increase non-motorized trips, have a centralizing effect on land use development and increase transit mode choice.</i>	Although these are the desired effects, the next paragraph makes clear that the Plan's approach to these effects simply "provides a statement of regional intent and provides general guidance, delegating the exact specification of such strategies to legislative initiatives, intergovernmental agreements, transportation improvement programming (TIP), and local planning, zoning and capital programming efforts."