

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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:

- Fails to address environmental justice; substitutes the production of tables on income and race for meaningful expenditures targeted to disinvested communities.
 - Reduction of \$1.8 billion for existing communities is a related burden on EJ communities.
 - Amassed all of Cook County suburbs into one category, disguising the wide variations between north and south Cook County.
- Forces all modes using arterials to compete with the road interests for the \$5 billion pot for "Strategic Recommendations," a competition destined to favor the road lobby and to obscure the amount of funding used for other modes.
- Retreats from "Universal Design" to special treatment for marginalized populations like "seniors and the disabled." Fails to account for wide usage of Universal Design by others, like parents with children in strollers/on bikes, people temporarily using crutches, or shoppers using carts.

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

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

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

Page	Quote	Comment
	"Cook Balance" (a geographic category that is used repeatedly in socioeconomic tables)	Category disguises the very large differences between south Cook and north/northwest Cook. Can't address disinvestment if it is disguised.
16		Reduction in text about independence for seniors and people with disabilities. Edited out section on impact of increased independence on family and caregivers. Retreats from "Universal Design" language of 2020 Plan, marginalizing small populations.
27		Removed the following statement from first draft "This can include large-scale regional strategies that promote growth potential at existing centers of development with an emphasis on those areas that are in need of reinvestment." Did not substitute other equity language. The document fails on multiple levels to address the inequity in regional job distribution that NIPC shows clearly in its Evaluation Measures (Map 1)

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30	<i>Objective: support programs providing financial incentives to low-income persons residing in communities that provide a wider variety of transportation choices.</i>	The plan doesn't address ways to support these kinds of programs in any fashion.
81	<i>In addition, transit oriented development should locate services (retail, medical, social services, and recreational) to serve seniors and persons with disabilities.</i>	Earlier version said "consistently locates services in close proximity to serve the elderly and persons with disabilities." Commitment to access is reduced.
90		Statement removed from earlier draft: "It should be recognized that these concerns not only limit the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities but also place an extra burden on caregivers and family members who must provide needed transportation." Deletion of broader reference reduces the number of people impacted, marginalizing populations.
90	<i>Safety for seniors and persons with disabilities</i>	The 2020 RTP spoke of "Universal Design" which implies that many or most of us will benefit at one time or another from safety and infrastructure design that accommodates wheelchairs, strollers, children on bikes, people using crutches or shopping carts. Marginalizing smaller populations of "seniors and persons with disabilities" implies a reduced urgency to invest in the necessary alteration of sidewalks, crossings, etc.
91	<i>Passenger rail providers have developed "key station" plans identifying stations to be retrofitted first. As stations are rebuilt, they are built to ADA accessibility standards.</i>	A regional plan should provide an inventory or information on how many stations are accessible, how "key stations" will be retrofitted and in what order.
119	<i>In a dense urban area, nearly all major project proposals are able to forecast some benefit to travelers and transportation system performance.</i>	This plan devotes a large proportion of the total investment to the portions of the region where population is sparse (over 50% of the new project miles are in "rural" areas). Most of the new projects have little benefit to existing communities and may direct resources away from existing communities.
88	<i>With regard to highway vehicle safety, most operational improvements to major highways and arterials are intended to increase the ability to operate a vehicle safely.</i>	The safety section has been diluted from the first draft, which put primary emphasis on vulnerable travelers. Now vehicular safety takes precedence. Dollars are allocated on the basis of priorities

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	<i>The improved flow of traffic and the removal of possible conflict points, common in many projects, are principally intended to reduce the possibility of crashes.</i>	set by the plan. Vulnerable travelers should have priority.
89	<i>Safety issues are also considered at a local level. In most cases, these local solutions focus on specific problems and are typically not indicative of any system-wide or long-term safety deficiency.</i>	Wider, faster arterials, with fewer traffic signals are promoted as a systemic regional goal. Responsibility for traffic deaths and injuries can not be dismissed as local.
90	<i>The RTP recognizes that these types of management and operations approaches are most effective when combined with enforcement, encouragement and education, and dedicated funding.</i>	We are in agreement, but wonder why the RTP fails to dedicate funding to protect the most vulnerable travelers.
92	<i>Roadway improvement funds should be devoted to improving pedestrian safety where necessary. In addition, discretionary transportation funds should be directed toward providing a variety of safe and convenient pedestrian options.</i>	The general statement is admirable, but without dedicated funds, pedestrians will continue to be shortchanged by the emphasis on more and wider roads and faster speeds.