

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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 specify a share for pedestrian and bicycle improvements or for general bus expansion. Agreement to “retrofit” environments where highway infrastructure creates hostile conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists only applies when the road is undergoing major construction.
- Casts doubt on the commitment to Context Sensitive Design and multi-modal use because increased speed, freer traffic flow and reduction in the number of traffic signals are explicit priorities.
- 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/ctagc/cc/theplan.htm>

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

Page	Quote	Comment
18	<i>Regional transportation policy should address comprehensive public health and safety concerns.</i>	Original statement was, "Regional transportation policy should address public health and safety in ways beyond the traditional acknowledgement of vehicular safety and air quality concerns." The relationship between active life-style and transportation investment is less apparent in the new text.
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. 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>	The safety section has been diluted from the first draft, where there was a primary emphasis on vulnerable travelers. Now vehicular safety has precedence; dollars are allocated on the basis of priorities set by the plan. If some resources are to be directed toward pedestrian/cyclist safety that has to be primary, not buried under continued investment in improved traffic flow.
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 to reduce traffic deaths and injuries can not be delegated to local officials.
89	<i>Many projects intended to increase capacity, reduce congestion or provide alternative travel choices have safety benefits that cannot easily be isolated from the total</i>	Agencies spending public funds need to be transparent and accountable about how and where the funds are spent. The public can not be expected to accept on faith that investments to

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	<i>project cost and benefit.</i>	facilitate more auto travel will increase pedestrian safety.
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.
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.
101	<i>Limit introduction of new traffic signals.</i>	This bullet point in a section on arterial improvements is in opposition to safe, multi-modal use of all local roads.
101	<i>Limit introduction of new traffic signals.</i>	Restatement of this principle encourages the perception that speedy, rather than safe, travel is the highest priority.