

# HIGHWAYS

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:

- Refusal to “flex” funds; persistent use of the old 60/40 highway/transit split, in spite of overwhelming public support for more transit and almost universal controversy on major highway projects.
- No discussion of the great degree of controversy surrounding some of the expressway and arterial projects proposed.
- 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.

\* 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
9		The table showing traditional 60/40 split in revenues between highways and transit was removed from draft, obscuring the actual apportionment. The plan fails to mention that highway funds can be "flexed" for transit and other purposes.
21	<i>Other strategies will include capital, management and operations techniques that improve the availability of highway as well as transit choices.</i>	Text in the first draft was “Other strategies will include capital, management and operations techniques that improve the availability of transit choices.”
98	<i>The RTP recommends a single amount of forecast revenue for use among the strategic regional systems; the fundamental guidance being that the strategies being designed and implemented will improve the performance of a unified multi-modal transportation system.</i>	Without dedicated funding all modes competing with highways for this funding will be at a disadvantage. The 2020 update allocated \$225 million to pedestrian and bicycle improvements. \$225 million was one half of one percent of total expenditures, but it was a specific commitment.
98	<i>Strategic Regional Systems"</i>	This heading was "Strategic Shared Use Systems" in an earlier draft. In the final draft, the only strategic mode is highway -- the Strategic Regional Arterials. Traditionally designation as "strategic" has created priority status and greater likelihood of funding.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology

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99	<i>Shared Path 2030 avoided making modal distinctions up to a point in consideration of a unified multi-modal approach. The RTP's major capital project recommendations, while mode-specific, include specific strategy discussions intended to provide implementation guidance to promote choice between and among travel modes.</i>	The refusal to prioritize transit and walkability heightens concern that continued heavy roadway investment is the intention.
17	<i>Planning, design and construction of major transportation projects is subject to rigorous environmental regulation. But public and private organizations can also, through their planning efforts, promote preservation of high-quality natural areas in the region that remain unprotected by legislation or regulation.</i>	This plan includes projects that are in opposition to land preservation policies; for instance, the Prairie Parkway is in opposition to the Kane County land use management plan.
21		. . . "techniques that improve the availability of transit choices" in the first draft became "techniques that improve the availability of highway as well as transit choices" in the final draft.
6	<i>Nonetheless, nearly all of the decisions regarding the transportation system's use are privately made. Thus, while decisions regarding transportation supply occur in the public domain, their success is dependent to a significant extent on the personal travel choices of individuals.</i>	Individual travel choices and household travel costs are heavily influenced by the infrastructure choices available. When auto travel is the only convenient or realistic option, cars must be purchased. Once purchased, autos create substantial, continuous expenses as well as environmental impacts and road maintenance costs over time. See the "The American Dream" at <a href="http://www.transact.org/report.asp?id=224">http://www.transact.org/report.asp?id=224</a> for more information on household travel costs.