

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #5

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TO: Columbia County TSP Project Management Team

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SUBJECT: Columbia County Transportation System Plan Update
 Technical Memorandum #5: Goals, Objectives, and Evaluation Criteria

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The purpose of this memorandum is to facilitate the process of developing the transportation-related goals and objectives for Columbia County. The development of the goals and objectives will continue throughout the planning process, shaped by input received from the County Transportation Road Advisory Committee (TRAC), the general public, and other key stakeholders. An initial set of potential evaluation criteria has also been identified as a guide to measure how well strategy/project alternatives considered through the Transportation System Plan (TSP) update process address these goals.

A Guiding Framework for Transportation Planning

The process of identifying a vision, goals, and objectives helps describe the transportation system that best fits Columbia County’s values and guides how the TSP will be developed and implemented. This process typically begins with the development of a **vision statement**. A vision statement generally consists of an imaginative description of the desired condition in the future. It is important that the vision statement align with the County’s core values.

Goals and objectives create manageable steps through which the broad vision statement can be achieved. **Goals** are the first step down from the broader vision. They are still somewhat general in nature and should be challenging, but not unreasonable. Each goal must be supported by more finite **objectives**. In contrast to goals, objectives should be specific and measurable. Where feasible, providing a targeted time period helps with objective prioritization and achievement.

The solutions recommended through the TSP must be consistent with the goals and objectives. To accomplish this, measurable evaluation criteria that are based on the goals and objectives will be developed as part of the process to screen and prioritize TSP actions. The vision, goals, and objectives can be refined continuously throughout the TSP process. **Policy** statements to guide future transportation decisions will be developed in conjunction with the refinement of these goals and objectives. A final set of proposed transportation goals, objectives, and policies will be



developed during implementation tasks toward the end of the process in order to implement recommendations in the updated TSP and create consistency with other plans and State transportation planning requirements.

Draft Transportation Goals and Objectives

A draft set of goals and objectives have been prepared for consideration. These goals and objectives are based on the existing transportation goal, the Future Transportation Needs section outlined in the 1998 TSP, and the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan.

The previous (1998) Columbia County TSP, and Comprehensive Plan state the following transportation goal and objectives for the County's transportation system:

Goal:

The creation of efficient, safe, and diverse transportation system to serve the needs of Columbia County residents.

Objectives:

1. To utilize the various modes of transportation that are available in the County to provide services for the residents.
2. To encourage and promote an efficient and economical transportation system to serve the commercial and industrial establishments of the County.
3. To improve the existing transportation system.

The following goals and objectives have been developed for consideration and use in the current TSP update to broaden the goals and incorporate additional elements that address emerging local interests and statewide transportation planning requirements. The goals represent an initial set of elements to consider, which can be further refined to address the specific needs and vision of Columbia County through the review process. In addition to statements that define the County's vision for transportation, the draft goals will provide the basis for evaluation criteria that will be used to measure potential transportation projects and strategies developed through the TSP update.

Note: The following draft goals and objectives will be refined through stakeholder and public input.

Goal I: Provide for efficient and convenient motor vehicle travel.

- Objective 1a: Establish and maintain mobility standards to maintain the minimum level of motor vehicle travel efficiency. State and City standards for mobility will be supported on facilities under the respective jurisdiction.
- Objective 1b: Provide a mechanism to address the impacts of a proposed development and to fairly impose mitigation provisions.
- Objective 1c: Maintain the existing system of roads and bridges to a level suitable to the function of the road, allowing for smooth and comfortable travel, and reducing vehicle maintenance costs, through the preservation of pavements, and prevention of damage by overweight vehicles.
- Objective 1d: Keep County roads and bridges maintained and operable so that they continue to provide the primary function of connecting the transportation system, and

coordinate with the State to ensure proper maintenance of their facilities.

- Objective 1e: Incorporate new technologies such as Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) elements, as appropriate, to maximize the use of the existing transportation system
- Objective 1f: Establish and maintain a functional classification system that provides a plan for system purpose and design.
- Objective 1g: Manage access to arterials and highways where practical to reduce congestion and conflicting travel patterns.

Goal 2: Provide for the safety and security of all transportation modes.

- Objective 2a: Identify improvements to address high collision locations to enhance safety for all modes.
- Objective 2b: Identify locations in the county where enhanced street crossings, shoulder improvements or road widening is needed for the safety of walking and biking users.
- Objective 2c: Support measures that enhance the safety at railroad crossings.
- Objective 2d: Identify investments needed along Lifeline Routes to preserve emergency response access and mobility.
- Objective 2e: Identify strategies to enhance emergency response to incidents.

Goal 3: Provide an equitable, and connected multi-modal transportation system.

- Objective 3a: Provide facilities for all modes of transportation.
- Objective 3b: Distribute the benefits and impacts of transportation decisions fairly and address the transportation needs and safety of all users, including youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, and people of all races, ethnicities and income levels.
- Objective 3c: Provide connections for all modes that meet applicable County and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Goal 4: Increase the quality and availability of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

- Objective 4a: Consider walking and biking user needs that complement the basic provision of services to encourage higher levels of usage (e.g., street lighting, bike parking, and way finding signage).
- Objective 4b: Identify necessary changes to the land development code to support connectivity between compatible land uses and to provide internal site access and connections for pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Objective 4c: Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to key activity centers such as transit facilities, commercial centers, schools, parks and community facilities.
- Objective 4d: Promote walking, bicycling, and sharing the road through public information and organized events.

- Objective 4e: Identify new or improved transportation connections to improve compatibility and transfer between modes and system efficiency.
- Objective 4f: Improve bicycle access along all major corridors to provide intercity bicycle connectivity, including high quality bicycle access along Highway 30. Support the development of the CZ Trail and connection to the Banks-Vernonia Trail.

Goal 5: Work with transit service providers to provide transit service and amenities that encourage and increase ridership.

- Objective 5a: Identify areas that support additional transit services, and coordinate with transit providers and transit plans (e.g., the 2009 Columbia County Community-Wide Transit Plan and US 30 Transit Access Plan) to improve the coverage, reliability and frequency of services.
- Objective 5b: Promote transit accessibility to transportation-disadvantaged groups.
- Objective 5c: Support efforts to make transit more time-competitive with automobile travel, where feasible, for high-demand connections.
- Objective 5d: Enhance intercity transit connectivity.
- Objective 5e: Implement bus stops, park-and-ride lots, and transit centers that are identified for Columbia County in the 2009 Columbia County Community-Wide Transit Plan and US 30 Transit Access Plan.
- Objective 5f: Identify needs for services to regional employment and activity centers.
- Objective 5g: Consider transit user needs that complement the basic provision of service to encourage higher levels of usage (e.g., sidewalk and bicycle connections, shelters, benches). Implement projects addressing these needs that are identified for Columbia County in the 2009 Columbia County Community-Wide Transit Plan and US 30 Transit Access Plan.

Goal 6: Manage the transportation system to support a prosperous and competitive economy.

- Objective 6a: Enhance access to major employment and industrial centers.
- Objective 6b: Enhance the freight system efficiency, access, capacity and reliability.
- Objective 6c: Enhance access to intermodal facilities such as ports, airports, and transit centers.
- Objective 6d: Increase the distribution of travel information to maximize the reliability and effectiveness of highways, which serve as the primary freight corridors.

Goal 7: Provide transportation facilities and services that are fiscally responsible and economically feasible.

- Objective 7a: Plan for an economically viable and cost-effective transportation system that makes the best use of limited transportation funds.

Objective 7b: Identify and develop diverse and stable funding sources to implement recommended projects in a timely fashion and ensure sustained funding for road maintenance and transportation improvement projects.

Objective 7c: Actively seek State and Federal Transportation funds to finance programs and improvements.

Goal 8: Provide a transportation system that conserves energy, and protects and improves the environment.

Objective 8a: Support alternative vehicle types and identify potential electric vehicle plug-in stations and develop implementation code provisions.

Objective 8b: Minimize impacts to preserve the natural, scenic, and cultural resources in the county.

Objective 8c: Provide public access to designated public water bodies, natural resource areas, scenic and cultural resources.

Objective 8d: Work with watershed councils for the priority replacement of barriers to migrating fish species.

Goal 9: Coordinate with local and state agencies and transportation plans.

Objective 9a: Work with the Northwest Area Commission on Transportation (NWACT) to promote projects that improve regional linkages.

Objective 9b: Coordinate with the Oregon Transportation Plan and associated modal plans.

Objective 9c: Coordinate with local agency Transportation System Plans for communities within Columbia County.

Objective 9d: Coordinate with local agencies and entities within Columbia County including major employers, incorporated and unincorporated communities, Port of St. Helens, and other stakeholders or groups, as appropriate, for transportation matters involving areas that impact such entities.

Objective 9e: Coordinate with ODOT, Clatsop County, Washington County, and Multnomah County on projects that improve and impact regional connections within Oregon.

Objective 9f: Coordinate with ODOT, WSDOT, Rainier, Longview, Cowlitz County, and FHWA on matters regarding the Lewis and Clark Bridge and connections to Washington.

Objective 9g: Coordinate with cities and ODOT to review and assess potential impacts and appropriate mitigation of proposed development applications.

Draft Evaluation Criteria

Project alternatives developed through this update will be evaluated by criteria that are an extension of the goals and objectives. These project level criteria provide a point-based technical rating method that will be used to evaluate how well proposed design alternatives align with County interests. By summing

ratings (and weighting if desired), alternatives can be compared. In this way, a consistent method will be used to evaluate and rank the alternatives.

Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Methodology

The evaluation criteria were selected based on the County’s proposed transportation goals and objectives. The criteria focus on compliance with state and local plans and policies, engineering design requirements, and a desire to maximize positive (and minimize negative) economic, social (livability), and environmental impacts. Table 1 lists the evaluation criteria and the corresponding scoring methodology.

Note: The following draft evaluation criteria will be refined through stakeholder and public input. Establishing weights to apply to the Goals will also be development through public outreach.

Table 1: Columbia County TSP Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Measure of Effectiveness	Evaluation Score
Goal 1: Provide for efficient and convenient motor vehicle travel.	
Traffic Capacity Optimize traffic capacity to reduce delay.	+4 Significantly optimizes traffic capacity
	+2 Optimizes traffic capacity
	0 No change
	-2 Reduces traffic capacity
	-4 Significantly reduces traffic capacity
System Function (Connectivity and Access) Appropriate balance of system connectivity to link system in an efficient manner.	+4 Improves system connectivity for a major connection (arterial or collector) that is appropriately located
	+2 Improves efficiency of a localized area (or local street connection) and is consistent with spacing targets
	0 No net change (may improve one local area at the cost of another)
	-2 Decreases efficiency of a localized area and/or does not meet spacing targets
	-4 Negative impact on system function
Improved Roadway Efficiency Implements Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) or other strategies to create greater mobility, reduce auto trips, and make more efficient use of the roadway system.	+4 Significantly improves roadway efficiency
	+2 Improves roadway efficiency
	0 No change
	-2 Negatively impacts roadway efficiency
	-4 Significantly negative impact on roadway efficiency
Goal 2: Provide for the safety and security of all transportation modes.	
Improve Safety Implement strategies and/or projects that are likely to reduce crash rate and/or severity	+4 Improves safety countywide or at specific location identified as a safety need
	+2 Improves safety, but not at identified need location
	0 No change
	-2 Potentially reduces safety for some users
	-4 Potentially reduces safety at location that is identified as a safety need
Emergency Response Routes Enhances access and mobility for emergency response.	+4 Significantly enhance access to or travel along emergency response routes
	+2 Enhance access to or travel along emergency response routes
	0 No change
	-2 Degrade access to or travel along emergency response routes
	-4 Significantly degrade access to or travel along emergency response routes
Goal 3: Provide an equitable, and connected multi-modal transportation system.	

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Measure of Effectiveness	Evaluation Score
Multiple Travel Modes Connection or improvement serves a variety of travel modes.	+4 Serves more than two travel modes
	+2 Serves more than one travel mode
	0 Serves single travel mode
	-2 Serves single travel mode, but has a negative impact on another
	-4 Serves single travel mode, but has negative impact on more than one travel mode
Accommodate all Ages Improves accessibility for all ages and supports travel independence in the county.	+4 Connection or improvement benefits residents of all ages
	+2 Connection or improvement benefits some residents, but not all
	0 No change
	-2 Connection or improvement benefits some residents, but has a negative impact on another age group
	-4 Connection or improvement benefits some residents, but has a negative impact on more than one age group
General Consideration for Equity (not scored)	
Note: Equity is not scored on an individual project basis, but it is an important element of the plan. The overall project list will serve the overall needs and users of the county. Based on specific project location and system needs, individual projects may not serve all users.	
Goal 4: Increase the quality and availability of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	
Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity Adds pedestrian and bicycle improvements that fill in system gaps, enhance system connectivity, and are accessible to all users.	+4 Significantly improves pedestrian or bicycle connectivity or accessibility
	+2 Improves pedestrian or bicycle connectivity or accessibility
	0 No change
	-2 Reduces pedestrian or bicycle connectivity or accessibility
	-4 Significantly reduces pedestrian or bicycle connectivity or accessibility
Intercity Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity Adds pedestrian and bicycle improvements that provide intercity connectivity.	+4 Significantly improves intercity pedestrian or bicycle connectivity
	+2 Improves intercity pedestrian or bicycle connectivity
	0 No change
	-2 Reduces intercity pedestrian or bicycle connectivity
	-4 Significantly reduces intercity pedestrian or bicycle connectivity
Facility Amenities or Furnishings Improves user experience and comfort to encourage higher levels of walking and biking trips (e.g., provide benches, planter strips, lighting, wayfinding).	+4 Significantly improves facility amenities
	+2 Improves facility amenities
	0 No change
	-2 Negatively impacts facility amenities
	-4 Significantly negative impacts on facility amenities

Table 1: Columbia County TSP Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Measure of Effectiveness	Evaluation Score
Goal 5: Work with transit service providers to provide transit service and amenities that encourage and increase ridership.	
Transit Access Improves access to transit facilities. Promotes transit as a viable alternative to the single occupant vehicle.	+4 Significantly improves access to transit facilities
	+2 Improves access to transit facilities
	0 No change
	-2 Negatively impacts access to transit facilities
	-4 Significantly negative impacts on access to transit facilities
Transit Amenities or Facilities Improves user experience and comfort to encourage higher levels of transit ridership (e.g., provide benches, shelters, lighting, schedules).	+4 Significantly improves amenities or facilities for transit
	+2 Improves amenities or facilities for transit
	0 No change
	-2 Negative impact on amenities or facilities for transit
	-4 Significantly negative impacts on amenities or facilities for transit
Goal 6: Manage the transportation system to support a prosperous and competitive economy.	
Employment Enhances access to employment.	+4 Significantly enhances travel comfort and convenience to employment in the county.
	+2 Enhances travel comfort and convenience to employment in the county.
	0 No change
	-2 Negative impact on travel comfort and convenience to employment in the county.
	-4 Significantly negative impacts on travel comfort and convenience to employment in the county.
Freight mobility Improve the movement of goods along freight routes.	+4 Significantly enhances freight mobility.
	+2 Enhances freight mobility
	0 No change
	-2 Negatively impacts freight mobility.
	-4 Significant negative impacts to freight mobility
Goal 7: Provide transportation facilities and services that are fiscally responsible and economically feasible.	
Fundability Available funding sources exist to implement projects in a timely fashion.	+4 Partial funding identified and secured
	+2 Potential funding partners/grant opportunities exist
	-2 No likely partner/grant funding opportunities
	-4 Potential for losing or conflicting with secured funding

Table 1: Columbia County TSP Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Measure of Effectiveness	Evaluation Score
Cost Effectiveness Assume project benefits exceed projects costs	+4 Highly cost-effective, low-cost option
	+2 Moderately cost-effective, low-cost option
	0 Average cost solution
	-2 Moderately cost-effective, high-cost option
	-4 High-cost option, not cost-effective
Goal 8: Provide a transportation system that conserves energy, and protects and improves the environment.	
Environment Minimized impact on the natural, scenic, and cultural resources.	+4 Significantly enhances the natural environment
	+2 Enhances the natural environment
	0 No change
	-2 Negatively impacts the natural environment
	-4 Negatively impacts the natural environment in significant ways
Goal 9: Coordinate with local and state agencies and transportation plans.	
No evaluation criteria for Goal 8, this is required for all solutions.	