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GOALS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES





GOALS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Introduction

The Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMPO) in its Goals, Policies and Strategies, supports the principles of Sustainable Development, the YouMove Massachusetts Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan initiative, the GreenDOT initiative and the transportation Green House Gas (GHG) reduction initiatives identified in the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2020. The Goals, Policies and Strategies presented are believed to be consistent with and supportive of the Commonwealth policies and that they stress the need to examine, maintain and improve existing transportation networks.

Goals

To provide a safe, secure, reliable and affordable multi-modal/intermodal transportation system throughout the Montachusett Region for the movement of all peoples and goods, to formulate strategies to attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards and the states Green House Gas Reductions initiative, to ensure and maintain Federal and State water quality standards, to protect priority habitats from fragmentation, to encourage economic development and revitalization, to promote Homeland Security efforts and to seek appropriate funding mechanisms in order to implement policies and objectives.

It is also a goal of the MMPO to assist and support the Commonwealth's core transportation policies as related to the development of projects and strategies for the continued improvement and maintenance of the Montachusett Region.

Policy I

Continue to seek to improve and maintain the existing road network while increasing efficiency, safety and economic development and decreasing congestion and safety hazards.

Strategies

1. Locate and prioritize deficient roadways in need of improvements.
2. Minimize crashes, congestion and driver frustration through improvements in roadway maintenance, signal timing and improved signage.
3. Promote and encourage the preservation of rights-of-way for construction of future transportation projects.
4. Promote and encourage the principles of Complete Streets, supporting design guidelines that include equal opportunities for all users of the road. Encourage roadway construction and upgrades to include provisions for bikeways and pedestrian ways, where appropriate. Roadway safety features, such as adequate lane and shoulder widths and bicycle and pedestrian responsive traffic signals, shall also be included where appropriate.



5. Promote economic development to coincide with highway capacities and local zoning laws as well as roadway improvements to enhance planned development areas.
6. Promote and encourage roadway design and management principals that appropriately address stormwater flows, including use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques, wildlife passage, and maintenance practices to minimize environmental impacts.
7. Promote regular review of functional classification schemes of municipal roads to ensure compatibility with current and desired use as well as funding eligibility.
8. Promote and encourage roadway construction and improvements that address identified safety issues and concerns in order to reduce vehicle crashes that produce fatalities, personal injuries and property damage.
9. Seek to ensure that adequate funds are available for maintenance and operation of the existing transportation system before new capital projects are considered.

Policy II

To improve the mobility of those without automobiles and provide incentives for those who wish to reduce automobile use.

Strategies

1. Seek to show sufficient, appropriate innovative public transit programs designed to increase transit ridership.
2. Promote and encourage more efficient and timely interregional rail passenger services.
3. Promote MassRIDES initiatives by encouraging the establishment of carpool lots and use of carpooling options.
4. Encourage communities to develop bikeways and pedestrian ways that encourage coordination between modes.
5. Promote and encourage safe, adequate parking facilities for all transit carpool users.
6. Promote safe, clean, accessible vehicles and transit facilities for patrons of the MART services.
7. Promote and encourage public transit programs designed to address the needs of nontraditional and economically disadvantaged individuals.
8. Promote multimodal transportation centers that serve business, residential and mixed-use developments through zoning and local development plans.



Policy III

To improve and expand transportation services for the elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged.

Strategies

1. Provide coordination and technical assistance to transportation services to generate consolidated services.
2. Secure available state and federal aid for improved elderly and disabled services.
3. Facilitate efforts between the private sector and social service agencies in providing transportation for the elderly and disabled.
4. Promote goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit program as established in MART's ADA complementary paratransit plan.
5. Promote goals of Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and Welfare to Work (WtW) programs and the concepts of Environmental Justice to expand services to identified segments.
6. Continue to improve and expand transit services in order to provide access to essential destinations, ie. hospitals, grocery stores, schools, pharmacies, parks, large employers and etc.

Policy IV

To continue to improve the multi-modal/intermodal transportation systems to facilitate the movement of goods and people through the region, leading to greater economic growth potential in the region.

Strategies

1. Promote and encourage improved rail, air and truck transportation as well as effective and logical links between modes.
2. Work to maintain railroad tracks, airports and other infrastructure within the region.
3. Promote the development and utilization of centralized terminal facilities for intermodal transfer and distribution of goods and people.
4. Seek to reduce delays and impediments to freight movements by reducing height and weight restrictions on roads and bridges.
5. Promote and incorporate the Massachusetts State Freight Plan recommendations into the Montachusett Region's transportation planning efforts.

**Policy V**

To encourage and support development patterns consistent with land use policies and goals in the region.

Strategies

1. Coordinate the regional transportation planning process with state, federal and local priorities as well as public opinion.
2. Conform transportation plan to other local and regional plans, i.e. land use, water quality and housing plans.
3. Promote convenient vehicular travel along the regional road network to the state highway system to promote growth consistent with local and regional plans.
4. Promote a public transit system whose routes are developed and refined in coordination with existing and planned development patterns in the region.
5. Encourage compact development patterns within communities in order to mitigate sprawling conditions that provide further congestion to the existing transportation network and further fragmentation of wildlife corridors and habitats.
6. Encourage and promote efforts to utilize Brownfield sites within the Region, especially those located on or near major transportation links that assist and/or improve the efficiency of these systems.
7. Encourage development patterns across community boundaries that make use of existing strengths in the transportation network.

Policy VI

To promote energy-efficient multi-modal/intermodal transportation systems within the region.

Strategies

1. Encourage the use of public transit, car pooling and alternate methods of transportation.
2. Minimize traffic congestion by targeting those locations identified as most congested for improvements.
3. Promote mass transit that is safe, energy efficient and economical to maintain.
4. Promote the development of zoning regulations that encourage freight rail use in logical locations that are acceptable to local communities.
5. Encourage and promote the development and use of alternative fuel for transportation and transit through the expansion of support facilities, funding, policies and incentives.



Policy VII

Promote Environmental Protection and Climate Change Adaption

Strategies

1. Identify site-specific, transportation-related air quality areas, and develop improvements, as necessary, to reduce the levels of harmful pollutants at these locations.
2. Develop a program of Transportation Control Measures (TCMs), in cooperation with state, regional and local agencies, which when implemented will reduce transportation-related emissions in the region.

Policy VIII

To promote strategies, policies and resources in order to maximize funding on a local and regional basis in order to implement identified projects and priorities and to address deficiencies.

Strategies

1. Promote and encourage coordination across municipal, regional and state boundaries to ensure better use of limited funds and resources.
2. Work with state and federal officials to expand resources and funds to address regional and local needs.
3. Encourage the review of population based formulas for the distribution of funds to address equitability issues between large and small communities.
4. Seek to take advantage of any flexibility in funding to increase options for communities

Policy IX

To promote strategies, projects and plans which will help to attain and maintain Homeland Security as well as local and regional safety and emergency efforts.

Strategies

1. Promote local emergency planning efforts.
2. Promote and encourage prioritization of projects and policies that incorporate emergency and safety aspects.
3. Promote the improvement and maintenance of the transportation network to address issues related to Homeland Security and emergency preparedness.
4. Promote funding opportunities for communities to develop and improve emergency preparedness along transportation routes.