

Rural Transect Workgroup Notes

Goals identified with a ‘red dot’ as having a challenge or issue within the transect:

Goal: *Business-friendly policies and infrastructure*

Topic area: Economic Development

Discussion points:

- if we are giving businesses ‘stuff’ like tax credits, there may not be the money there to support it
- want to be cautious that we are not unfriendly to the community and that business policies reflect the desire and focus of the community (don’t want to favor business at the expense of the community)
- have the community determine what comes to their community
- some areas are limited from undertaking certain economic development incentives, for example counties have more limited powers
- There is a question in some communities of if growth is desirable and a recognition that not all growth is good growth
- In some communities businesses can be the keystones, the key is to be prepared for growth and focus on quality of life
- There are different types of rural communities and it may be useful to delineate rural typologies such as gateway communities

Suggested goal revision wording:

Promote business policies and infrastructure that support communities, or Promote community friendly business policies, including support of existing businesses.

Goal: *Maximize potential of new neighborhoods, while minimizing impact on natural resources*

Topic area: Housing

Discussion points:

- We want people to be where people already are, but since growth may be coming it is important that it be quality growth and that communities have policies in place to direct the kind of growth they want
 - Communities should determine if they want growth
 - Some communities are opposed to zoning
- Agricultural land and water are key to communities and environmental costs should be included in land valuation
- In regards to existing infrastructure land values and prices are issues. You can tax the land based on its proposed use versus its existing use
- Need to define what sustainable means
- The location and availability of roads often determines where neighborhoods are built
- It’s all about choices, having choices in where and how we live
- Growth in unincorporated areas is a problem, towns and cities priority areas for growth as well as other areas with existing infrastructure
- There is a need to have not only services but jobs located in neighborhoods

Goal: *Reduce consumption of non-renewable resources and promote the efficient use of renewable resources.*

Topic area: Environment

- list major discussion items concerning the goal

Discussion points:

- who will pay for renewable resource technologies? Resources are needed to be able to implement
- Some rural communities may not view this as a priority, but values may be shifting
- There is a history of a love of the land, a way of life in the rural areas that supports this goal
- identify any proposed changes to the goal wording

Goal: *Multi-modal transportation, including transit, pedestrian, and bicycle use, become a larger share of all trips made in the region, resulting in cleaner air and healthier communities.*

Topic area: Transportation

Discussion points:

- multi-modalism is a good goal, but implementation can be difficult in rural areas where you often have to drive to reach services
- A key is to provide services within the community, such as healthcare and to have policies and incentives to encourage the provision of services within the community
- Rural areas in the region are not a part of the MPO, which can make transportation planning difficult
- There is a need to interconnect as a region
- Education is needed to change the mentality about transit as well as to get the word out about services where they do exist

Goals identified with a ‘green dot’ (top goals receiving the most dots that were discussed):

Goal: *The region embraces its multi-cultural, historical, and natural assets to ensure that its communities retain and/or enhance their unique context.*

Topic: Healthy Communities

- list major discussion items concerning the goal

Discussion items:

- There is a lot of diversity within the rural areas
- Rediscovering what communities once were, for example through Main Street programs and economic development programs, can generate tourism
- For natural assets, eco-tourism can be measured through such metrics as number of visits to park, tourist dollars spent, the number of permits issues, the number of acres preserved or acres of quality habitat preserved, and conversely how many acres are lost or converted
- An additional potential metric concerning this goal is the number of cultural districts developed as well as tracking the use of HOT (hotel occupancy tax) funds used to preserve land
- identify any proposed changes to the goal wording

Goal: *The region's ecosystems provides healthy and adequate water, air, soil and food resources for current and future generations of people, wildlife and other living things.*

Topic: Environment

Discussion items:

- water is a key issue for quality of life
- industrial pollution and conflicts between industrial and residential areas is a concern
 - buffer green zones may be one potential strategy to address
- Environmental justice issues such as locations of landfills is also an issue
- Education or rural communities about how to report violations and what environmental regulations exist is needed
- Political will regarding this issue also needs to be created

Goal: *Increase education and skill attainment of the region's residents to establish a competitive, trained, diverse workforce.*

Topic: Economic Development

Discussion items:

- Access to education within your community so don't have to leave to get it
- Getting education for new emerging industries within the community
- Educate about the link between education and various industries
- Change the perception in rural communities that you have to leave to get an education

Please list any other major discussion items that were identified concerning goals

- There is a high need to increase the availability of broadband internet in rural areas. Should be included under infrastructure concerns. There may be grant monies available for this issues. Even if the infrastructure is created a service provider is needed.

Please list any other major discussion items that were identified concerning metrics

- Overall the direction of the metrics needs to be identified

Results of Dot Exercises: Distribution of dots (green and red) across all the goals:

Goals

- Multi-modal transportation including transit, pedestrian, and bicycle use, become a larger share of all trips made in the region, resulting in cleaner air and healthier communities. (7 dots, 1 red dot)
- Promote policies that coordinate transportation and land use and reduce the strain on resources. (9 dots)
- Housing, transportation, land use and infrastructure services and policies are coordinated to increase access to areas of opportunity, including: quality education, healthy food, and quality jobs to all region residents. (3 dots)
- Maximize potential of existing neighborhoods. (10 dots)

- The region's built environment promotes healthy communities, including affordable healthy housing and safe neighborhoods, walkable, communities, and access to open space and recreational opportunities. (7 dots)
- The region's transportation and infrastructure investments provide strategic access, linking residents, jobs, education, services, and other amenities. (2 dots)
- The region preserves and incorporates natural areas and open spaces providing opportunities for current and future generations. (9 dots)
- Increase recycling, reuse and diversion of waste. (9 dots)
- Increase education and skill attainment of the region's residents to establish a competitive, trained diverse workforce. (10 dots)
- Prioritize investments where people live and work by maintaining, leveraging, and coordinating existing infrastructure when making investments. (2 dots)
- Business-friendly policies and infrastructure. (3.5 red dots)
- The region's communities, businesses and individuals have access to a broad spectrum of educational, business, entrepreneurial, employment and investment opportunities. (6 dots)
- Maximize potential of new neighborhoods, while minimizing impact on natural resources. (5 dots, 1.5 red dots)
- The region's ecosystem provides healthy and adequate water, air, soil, and food resources for current and future generation of people, wildlife and other living things. (10 dots)
- Communities across the region have diversified housing stock that provides quality housing choice that meets the needs of the region's population, including the needs of the elderly, disable, and low income populations. (4 dots)
- The region increases efficiency and conservation, reduces resource and non-renewable energy consumption and increases availability of renewable resources (supply and demand side). (7 dots)
- Promote effective goods movement while improving quality of life for residents. (2 dots)
- The region embraces its multicultural, historical, and natural assets to ensure that its communities retain and/or enhance their unique context. (14 dots)
- Communities pursue resilient, adaptable, and diverse economies. (2 dots)
- The region's residents are able to earn a livable wage that promotes healthy and safe communities and families. (7 dots)
- The region has access to global markets and destinations (2 dots)
- The region's residents of all ages, are physically and mentally healthy and lead healthy lifestyles through access to quality and affordable healthy food, healthcare, aging services, and exercise. (7 dots)
- Increase durability, energy efficiency, health and safety of housing stock (3 dots)
- Reduce consumption of non-renewable resources and promote the efficient use of renewable resources (2 dots, 2 red dots)