

Chapter I – INTRODUCTION

Every resident of and visitor to Nevada is affected by transportation in one or more ways. Whether you are traveling daily to and from work, traveling for recreation, using a bike path for exercise, or are a visitor using our transit system to get around Las Vegas, it is part of our transportation network. Our quality of life in Nevada is heavily dependent on a productive, efficient and interconnected multimodal transportation system. The challenge for the Department of Transportation (NDOT) is to efficiently move people and goods throughout our state while providing a seamless network between travel mode options.

Nevada’s Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan is a policy document that is intended to provide direction and strategies for NDOT over the next 20-years. This Plan was prepared by NDOT with the assistance of many individuals and organizations. It is a multimodal plan that explores the issues affecting airplanes, bicycles, pedestrians, transit, cars, trucks, and trains and the linkage between these modes.

During the development of this plan NDOT reached out to the citizens, communities and businesses of Nevada to find out what’s important to them and what they want our transportation system to look like in the future. We held several workshops across the state, attended community meetings, participated in corridor studies, and attended transportation fairs. We also used the comments that we received from over 500 customer opinion surveys. For a detailed description of our public outreach efforts, see Appendix A.

This Plan was developed in accordance with the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) provisions. The financing

cycle for the Federal-aid Highway Program begins when Congress develops and enacts surface transportation authorizing legislation, such as SAFETEA-LU. This surface transportation act provides the foundation for the Federal-Aid Highway Program. It is the statutory provision that establishes or continues a Federal agency, activity or program and is generally for a six year period. The last edition of the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, titled the NevPLAN, was adopted in 2002 under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The Plan was renamed with this edition.



Federal and State Regulations

Under the United States Code, Title 23 Section 135 each state is required to develop a statewide transportation plan that provides for the development and integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) that will function as an intermodal transportation system for the State and an integral part of an intermodal transportation system for the United States. The process for developing the plan shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.

Following are excerpts from the Code of Federal Regulations for “*Development and*

content of the long-range statewide transportation plan” (CFR 450.214). To view the entire US Code Title 23 Section 135 and the Code of Federal Regulation for Statewide Transportation Planning and Programming please refer to the Appendix.

- Cover a minimum 20-year forecast;
- Provide for the development and implementation of the multimodal transportation system and consider elements and connections between public transportation, non-motorized modes, rail, commercial motor vehicle, waterway and aviation facilities;
- Ensure the preservation and most efficient use of the existing transportation system;
- Reference or summarize applicable studies and any statements of policies, goals, and objectives on issues that were relevant to the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan;
- Should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan;
- Should include a security element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects set forth in other transit safety and security planning programs, as appropriate;
- Be developed in consultation with affected non-metropolitan officials;
- Be developed in consultation with the Tribal governments;
- Include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation;
- Be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies;
- May include a financial plan.

In addition to Federal Law, NDOT has State Laws that guide the Planning Division in the development of this plan. The following is a summary of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 408.233, for transportation planning at NDOT:

- Be consistent with the social, economic and environmental goals of the State;
- Designed to meet the present and future needs of the State and local areas of the State for adequate, safe and efficient transportation facilities and services;
- Coordinated with local plans for balanced transportation facilities and services;
- Establish planning techniques and processes for all modes of transportation.

NDOT Mission / Vision / Goals

Through the Mission Statement, the general direction of the organization is established. NDOT’s Mission / Vision / Values/ and Goals are:

Mission:

“Providing a better transportation system for Nevada through our unified and dedicated efforts.”

Vision:

“The nation’s leader in delivering transportation solutions, improving Nevada’s quality of life.”

Core Values:

- Integrity – Doing the right thing
- Honesty – Being truthful in your actions and your words
- Respect – Treating others with dignity
- Commitment – Putting the needs of the Department first
- Accountability – Being responsible for your actions

Goals:

- Optimize safety
- Be in touch with and responsive to our customers
- Innovate
- Be the employer of choice
- Deliver timely and beneficial projects and programs
- Effectively preserve and manage our assets
- Efficiently operate the transportation system

Guiding Principles

NDOT has established Guiding Principles for this Plan. Our Vision, Values, Goals, and Guiding Principles represent the ideas, beliefs and standard of conduct that we will use to guide the decisions we make every day. We have also developed strategies to help us attain our Guiding Principles, and objectives to gauge how well we are meeting our principles. Please refer to Chapter IV for details on these Guiding Principles:

- Safety
- Customer Service
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Asset Management
- Mobility/Accessibility
- Freight Movement
- Environmental Stewardship

These Guiding Principles are used as the first step in our project selection and prioritization process.

Performance Measures

Assembly Bill 595 went before the Legislature in 2007. This bill was passed and provided close to one billion dollars in bonding capacity for Super/Mega (Major) projects

identified by NDOT as priority projects for our State. Included in this Bill was the requirement that the State Transportation Board shall adopt a plan for measuring the performance of the Department, which must include separate sets of performance measurements for each major division at NDOT and for the Department as a whole. Performance measures were developed for four primary functions: 1) Administration, 2) Planning, 3) Operations, and 4) Engineering. For more information on our Performance Measures see the “Annual Report for Assembly Bill 595.”

State Transportation Board

The Department of Transportation is overseen by a seven member Board of Directors consisting of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General and the State Controller and three members representing different districts of the state, who are appointed by the Governor. The Board has various responsibilities under Nevada Revised Statutes 408.131. Specific to this document, the Board is responsible for “*executing or approving all instruments and documents in the name of the State or the Department.*” This Plan is brought before the State Transportation Board for their input and acceptance.

Advisory Committees

In addition to the Federal and State Law, there are a number of Advisory Committees that provide input and guidance during the development of this Plan. These committees represent the specific interests of their communities and groups. Following is a summary of the Advisory Committees that provided input and guidance during the development of this plan.

Statewide Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (STTAC)

The STTAC was formed by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) in 1991 with the passage of ISTEA, specifically to fulfill one element of that law and provide a forum for discussing statewide planning and programming issues. Committee membership is made up of federal, state, and local agencies/entities. Those members represent the diverse interests of their communities and agencies. STTAC Committee membership is listed in Appendix A of this report.



Nevada Bicycle Advisory Board

The Nevada Bicycle Advisory Board was created by the Nevada Legislature in 1991. Their primary purpose is to identify and address the needs of the bicycling community, promote programs and facilities for the safe and effective use of bicycles, and advise appropriate organizations of the state on policies, programs and facilities for the safe use of bicycles. The Board consists of 14 members appointed by the Governor, seven from the public and seven from specified State Agencies.

The Nevada Aviation Technical Advisory Committee

This committee is a cross spectrum of the aviation community. It includes the airlines,

military, general aviation, aviation advocacy groups, consultants, Federal Aviation Administration, airport operators, FBO's and aviation users. The committee guides the department in the development of state airport system planning, provides a forum for aviation interests to meet and discuss issues, provides for assistance with NDOT's aviation trust fund prioritization and selection process, and is the one committee that has specific responsibility to assist the department in planning for and securing a future for aviation in the state.

Advisory Committee for Transit

The Advisory Committee for Transit (ACT) is responsible for guiding the development of the Statewide Transit Program with the goal of *“providing coordinated transit service in any small urban area, rural community and Indian reservations which desires such a service and where such service is feasible.”* The committee also provides oversight towards the Department's administration of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Programs.

While most of ACT's attention is on rural issues, it is the sole committee in the state that looks at all the transit needs, meets with the legislators to discuss state funding needs, and assists the Department in the planning and distribution of grant award monies. In addition to operators, transit sub-recipients, and advocacy groups, the ACT is composed of several state agencies including UWR, Rehab Division, RTC's that support the UWR concept of coordination and cooperation among transit providers.

Legislative Commission's Subcommittee to Study Transportation Issues

This Subcommittee was created to study transportation issues, specifically, transportation

funding, transportation planning, and alternative modes of transportation, among other things. They will initiate studies and other legislative business relating to transportation that must be handled before the 2009 Legislative session.

Other Planning Guidance

In conjunction to the development of a Statewide Transportation Plan, the following plans or reports are incorporated by reference:

Transportation System Projects (TSP)

In compliance with Title 23 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act and the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS 408.203) NDOT produces the Transportation System Projects (TSP) document. The TSP contains the following sections:

- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- Transportation Enhancement Program Annual Work Program (AWP)
- Short Range Element (SRE)
- Long Range Element (LRE)

The TSP is the instrument used to implement plans resulting from the statewide transportation planning process. This planning process sets the stage for balancing the states needs with limited resources and by establishing long range funding strategies on a statewide basis. Development of the TSP is completed in cooperation with federal and regional agencies and local governments.

Metropolitan Area Plans

There are four designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) in Nevada: Clark County, Washoe County, Carson City and Lake Tahoe. These four MPO's have the primary stewardship for transportation planning

within their boundaries, including member cities and surrounding unincorporated areas.

Las Vegas and Reno are designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMA), having an urbanized area population of over 200,000. In addition to meeting all the federal requirements for an urbanized area and MPO, TMAs are also responsible for developing Congestion Management Process (CMP), TIP project selection, and are subject to a joint (FTA and FHWA) federal certification review of the planning process at least every three years.

The MPOs are required under SAFETEA-LU to prepare a long-range plan (20+ years) for their respective regions. These plans cover elements of transit, freight, transportation demand, bicycle and pedestrian, congestion management, highways, safety, security and mitigation elements. These plans and their recommendations are required to be financially constrained with reasonable funding assumptions. Following are brief overviews of each of the MPO plans:



The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada is a regional government organization composed of elected officials appointed from each of the local governments within Clark County. They are the regional organization that develops transportation plans to meet the needs of the area.

The Clark County area in Southern Nevada includes the cities of Henderson, Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, as well as the other

smaller cities and towns such as Boulder City, Mesquite, and Laughlin, and the unincorporated areas in the county. These communities and services are linked to each other by a network of roads and streets that enable vehicular access to these services and permit them to receive materials to meet customer demands. Coordination is essential.

Often, when these municipalities work to meet the transportation needs of their constituents, there are conflicts with the needs of an adjacent jurisdiction. Limited funding for transportation projects from federal, state and local funding sources requires some agreement on how the money will be allocated so that local and regional needs are in balance. RTC of Southern Nevada coordinates agreement on project priorities, so that the planned projects can be funded with the resources available over time.

The RTC of Southern Nevada is responsible for providing public transportation in Clark County. Transit service is provided to the Las Vegas Valley, Boulder City and the outlying communities of Mesquite and Laughlin.

The RTC of Southern Nevada’s long range plan (20+ years), officially known as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a tool that local officials use to express regional transportation needs to both federal funding authorities and local citizens concerned about government response to transportation growth issues. The RTP has developed the following vision and goals for their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP):

Vision:

“Provide a safe, convenient, and effective regional transportation system that enhances mobility and air quality for citizens and visitors.”

Goals:

- Implement transportation systems that improve air quality and protect the environment.
- Develop fully intergraded modal options
- Enhance the efficiency of existing transportation facilities
- Improve access to mass transportation facilities and services
- Secure funding for expansion, operations and maintenance of systems and routes
- Enhance public awareness and support of the regional transportation system
- Improve safety for all travelers
- Improve security for all travelers
- Support more efficient freight travel



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
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Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County

The Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County was formed in July 1979 as a result of legislation approved by the Nevada State Legislature, which consolidated the Regional Street and Highway Commission, the Regional Transit Commission and the Washoe County Area Transportation Study Policy Committee. They are the designated MPO for the Reno-Sparks urbanized area of Washoe County and are responsible for the planning of high volume regional roads and to create and maintain a vibrant and efficient transit network for Washoe County.

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the RTC of Washoe County proposes highway improvements that focus on the maintenance of the existing street and highway system and provide additional capacity for existing and future residents and businesses.

The RTP also proposes new bicycle, pedestrian and public transportation improvements.

Six overall goals were developed to guide the implementation of the RTP. These goals reflect the concern for better management of the transportation system and the need to strengthen the interrelationships between modes of travel. The RTP goals are:

- Provide for and sustain a mix of transportation modes that can meet the continuing needs for personal mobility and for the movement of goods consistent with regional goals and values.
- Comprehensively plan for all regionally significant modes of transportation and insure their interconnection. Coordinate with all other jurisdictions that either influence or are affected by regional transportation planning efforts.
- Develop a balanced land-use and transportation system that minimizes the need for automobile travel and maximizes the opportunity for transportation alternatives such as public transportation and non-motorized travel modes.
- Maintain, upgrade or develop existing and future transportation systems as a public service in way that renders them safe, functional, flexible, environmentally acceptable and aesthetically pleasing.
- Manage the transportation system to provide an optimum level of mobility for the greatest number of persons while ensuring mobility for the transportation disadvantaged.
- Improve safety in all transportation modes through timely maintenance of existing infrastructure, development of new infrastructure, enforcement of access controls and expanded public education and awareness.



Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO)

The Lake Tahoe Region holds Federal, State and Local transportation planning authorities and the region’s planning complexity requires the utmost coordination and collaboration among transportation and land use planning partners. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Lake Tahoe Basin, including the City of South Lake Tahoe, and in the State of California. The TRPA’s overriding obligation is adherence to the Lake Tahoe Planning Compact, including attaining and maintaining environmental thresholds. The TMPO’s mission, on the other hand, is to provide policy decision on transportation plans and program. The TMPO defined area is concurrent with that of the TRPA.

Under federal law, the TMPO is required to prepare a Federal Transportation Plan/Regional Transportation Plan (FTP/RTP) that looks at conditions 25 years from now, while focusing its implementation in the next five years. The Lake Tahoe Basin Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) combines the requirements of the TRPA, the TMPO, and California transportation planning requirements into a single, integrated plan that satisfies all planning requirements.

It is the goal of their RTP to develop an intermodal transportation system that reduces reliance on the automobile, provides for integrated connectivity of modes and services,

and provides for the efficient movement of people and goods in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Rather than proposing increases in highway capacity, the Lake Tahoe Basin’s transportation plan focuses on getting the greatest value from the existing street network. Growth within the Lake Tahoe Basin is restricted by the area’s Regional Plan, which limits the number of housing units and commercial-retail floor area.

The TMPO does not operate the public transportation services in the Tahoe Basin. The area is served by two publicly operated transit systems, Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART), BlueGO, and a number of privately operated shuttle systems.



Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)

The Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the State’s newest MPO designated by the Governor in 2003. They cover most of Carson City, the northern portion of Douglas County and the western part of Lyon County.

Following are the goals of CAMPO’s 2030 Regional Transportation Plan:

- Support the economic vitality of the CAMPO planning area by improving and investing in the transportation infrastructure, and promote consistency with planned growth and economic development patterns.

- Increase the safety of all modes of the transportation system.
- Increase the security of all modes of the transportation system.
- Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the general quality of life for residents of the CAMPO planning area.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient system management and operation of the entire transportation system, and preserve the existing transportation system to the maximum extent possible.

CAMPO does not operate the public transportation service in the MPO area. The area is served by transit services from Jump Around Carson (JAC), Douglas Rural Area Transit, BlueGO, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority, Alpine Mountain Transit, and the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (for intra-city service).

State of Nevada Statewide Rail Plan

The state rail plan describes Nevada’s rail planning program, and its part in overall statewide multimodal planning, highlights rail issues, examines the state rail network (including freight and passenger service), evaluates lines subject to abandonment and looks at remedies and alternatives, analyzes benefits and costs of potential projects, and assesses strategically Nevada’s rail future.

Nevada Airport Systems Plan

The primary purpose of Nevada’s Airport Systems Plan is to develop a system of airports that will meet the air transportation

needs of Nevada until 2020, which is also compatible with the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems and local planning activities. Nevada’s Airport System Plan identifies airports and their significance to a balanced statewide system, establishes a program that looks at where improvements or expansions are needed, establishes investment priorities, defines policies and process for implementation, and serves as the basis for continuing statewide aviation system planning.

State Bicycle Plan

Nevada’s Bicycle Plan provides a blueprint for improving conditions for bicycling, clarifies NDOT’s role in bicycle transportation, and establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the current transportation system. The state Bicycle Plan has two primary goals:

- Increase levels of bicycling throughout Nevada, doubling the number of trips made by bicycles in 2005 by the year 2010 with additional increases achieved by 2020.
- Reduce crashes involving bicyclists and motor vehicles in 2005 by at least 10% by the year 2010 with additional increases achieved by 2020.

Nevada Pedestrian Plan

The Nevada Pedestrian Plan sets forth a foundation for pedestrian facilities planning and design throughout the State. It is intended to provide a cohesive and uniform approach to pedestrian safety, mobility, security and comfort. It presents facts, current practices and recommended design features to ensure that walking Nevadans and visitors are afforded the best of all possible environments. The Plan stresses the need for system continuity across all components of a given pedestrian system. Finally, the Plan addresses the notion of pedestrian friendliness and its importance in setting the tone for a community or region.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

This plan focuses on the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with limited incomes throughout the rural and small urban areas of the State. The RTC’s of Southern Nevada and Washoe County and the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization have developed complimentary Coordinated Public Transportation and Human Services Plans for their areas. Federal Transit Administration funding programs covered by this report include Elderly Individuals and Individuals with disabilities (5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (5316), and New Freedom (5317). The goal for this plan is to provide guidance on how best to provide transportation services for these targeted populations. The Plan looks at service needs, gaps, and barriers, and identifies potential solutions for meeting transportation needs.

State Management Plan

The State Management Plan describes how NDOT and the sub-recipients of 5311 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds will administer and manage those funds. Eligible sub-recipients include State or local governmental entities, non-profit organizations, private for-profit operators of transit services or intercity bus services, and federally recognized Native American tribes. The 5311 FTA program is intended to enhance access of people in the non-urbanized areas of the state to health care, shopping, education, employment, public service and recreation.

State Implementation Plans

Sections of the Clean Air Act and its amendments require that state departments of transportation assure that their activities are in

conformity with State Implementation Plans. A State Implementation Plan (SIP) is a collection of regionally planned Transportation Control Measures (TCM) intended for the attainment of the Federal National Ambient Air Quality Standards. It is prepared and is intended to address emission reductions from both stationary and mobile transportation sources.

Surface transportation plans, programs, and projects cannot cause or contribute to new violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). A determination of conformance to the SIP is required for all Regional Transportation Plans (RTP), Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP), and regionally significant projects.

The Statewide Planning Public Participation Document

This Plan documents NDOT’s public involvement process, describing how we provide opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points during transportation planning activities. The procedures established in this document comply with the Statewide Transportation Planning Public Involvement requirements contained in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.210 and Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 241.

NDOT Corridor Studies

A corridor study is an examination of transportation needs on particular sections of roads to gather knowledge that may someday be the start of transportation improvement projects. Corridor planning takes needs identified in the long-range plan, refines the understanding of those needs, and evaluates potential transportation strategies to address them. The end result is the selection of an investment strategy that best meets the needs in the corridor and that fits the region’s financial capacity.

Corridor plans are the connection between the long-range plan and project development.