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## Multimodal Transportation Plan

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The preparation of this document was financed in part through grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation under Section 112 of the 1973 Federal Aid Highway Act and Section 8(d) of the Federal Transit Act of 1964, as amended. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, or the Texas Department of Transportation. Acceptance of this report does not in any way constitute a commitment on the part of any of the above agencies to participate in any development depicted therein nor does it indicate that the proposed development is environmentally acceptable in accordance with appropriate public laws.

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Rialto Studio

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Ximenes & Associates, Inc.

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Poznecki Camerillo, Inc.

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## LETTER FROM MAYOR TAYLOR

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It has been over three decades since the City Council last adopted a Transportation Plan. With the development of this Multimodal Transportation Plan in conjunction with the City's Sustainability Plan and Comprehensive Plan, we are planning for a sustainable transportation system that considers the relationship between land use and transportation and adequately plans for our City's growth and success. To better prepare for this growth, the City of San Antonio will work with area transportation partners to provide additional transportation choices as well as reduce travel demand, or the need for people to make a trip, through initiatives such as ridesharing, telecommuting, and encouraging people to live closer to work and other activities by providing housing close to employment and retail uses.

This multimodal transportation plan will help guide our future priorities, our investments in transportation infrastructure and will identify alternative funding strategies.

The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan provides the framework needed to make smart, strategic decisions about transportation investments for the next 25 years. It covers the entire City of San Antonio and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. It is also about much more than roads and cars. The plan incorporates pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, as well as vehicle drivers.

As we move forward, the Multimodal Transportation Plan will help those of us in elected office analyze transportation priorities to meet overall community goals. It's time we take control of our transportation future and make the smart, strategic, and sound decisions needed to become the world class city envisioned by our citizens through SA2020.

Sincerely,

**Mayor Ivy Taylor**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The City of San Antonio is anticipated to experience tremendous growth resulting in an additional 1 million people by year 2040. This increase will be accompanied by an increase in housing, employment, more vehicles on our roadways and greater demands on public transit and on our infrastructure in general. The City initiated SA Tomorrow, an unprecedented, multifaceted planning initiative to accommodate this growth while preserving what makes San Antonio a great place to live. While the SA Tomorrow effort consists of three plans, the

The Multimodal Transportation Plan fits under the umbrella of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and implements the broader community vision of transportation contained in the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. The plan covers all forms of personal travel - walk, bike, public transportation, and automobile.

Comprehensive Plan, the Sustainability Plan and the Multimodal Transportation Plan, the Comprehensive Plan is the umbrella document that unifies the vision, goals and policies of the other plans. These three plans provide guidance on how the City will develop over the next 25 years.

The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan (Multimodal Plan) is formed around the Transportation & Connectivity goals and policies framed by the Comprehensive Plan. It provides policy guidance creating a roadmap to transform our current transportation system into one that is sustainable, safe, convenient and efficient, inclusive of all modes and providing our residents with transportation options in 2040. The Multimodal Plan is a long-range blueprint for travel and mobility in San Antonio and Bexar County, establishing a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people. The Multimodal Plan will communicate the City's transportation strategy and will

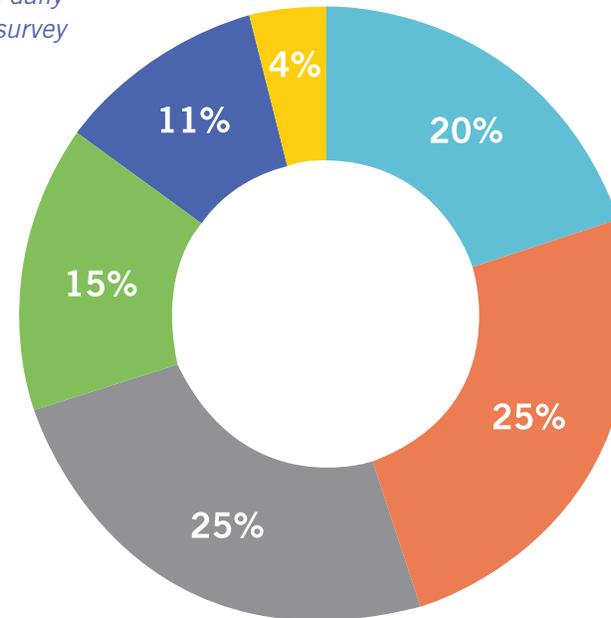
serve as a tool to analyze transportation priorities to meet community goals. **The Multimodal Plan** is being led by the Transportation & Capital Improvements (TCI) department and brings together all other agency plans and provides recommendations on how the City can direct investment to consider benefits from supporting and linking elements of other plans. The process included and will continue to include close coordination with the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) with their long range planning efforts.

**The Multimodal Transportation Plan is dynamic, balanced and forward-thinking.**

**Dynamic** because it will be updated at five year intervals in order to capture and build upon transportation plans and improvements taking place, and to take advantage of changes in technology and emerging strategies.

## How is Your Commute?

*Today less than 1/2 of commuters experience daily congestion (Based on survey results).*



- Very Congested
- Somewhat Congested
- Some Days Congested
- Somewhat Uncongested
- Very Uncongested
- Not Available

**Balanced** because it considers all modes, provides choices, addresses the link between transportation and land use, meets the needs of all citizens, identifies the need for maintenance and funding strategies, includes plans completed by other agencies and emphasizes the need for continued cooperation and collaboration among transportation partners.

**Forward-thinking** because it incorporates and calls for the City to be familiar with and plan for emerging technologies, proposes multimodal solutions that focus on moving people rather than moving vehicles (light rail, High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, managed lanes, dedicated Bus Rapid Transit) and introduces lesser-known concepts (transit-only streets, congestion pricing) that may be needed longer-term to address the anticipated congestion associated with a million more people here in 2040.

This report contains seven key sections as shown below. The seven sections were

designed to lay out the journey we must take to develop our transportation system from where it is today to where we want it to be in 2040. Section 6 contains a substantial amount of information about each of the elements of our transportation system in 2040 as well as corridor examples demonstrating multimodal solutions.

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Recommendations, labeled 5 Year Action Plan, are included throughout Section 6, after each discussion on each transportation element. The 5 Year Action Plan recommendations are collected into a single summary under Section 7. Below is a brief synopsis of each Section.



## Where Are We Now?

This section of the Multimodal Transportation Plan establishes what our transportation system looks like today. Our transportation system has changed drastically since its origins from trade routes, farm-to-market routes and main roads connecting historic settlements and towns. Today we have an extensive roadway network and transit system that provides access and mobility for our citizens. Growth in San Antonio has generally moved outwards from the center city, challenging the City's ability to keep pace with infrastructure and other services.

In 2015, commuters in San Antonio are just starting to feel the pain of significant congestion and delay during peak periods. It has not, however, reached the level of discomfort associated with shifting people from their single occupant vehicles (SOV's) to other modes. The typical commuter (over 90%) chooses to drive alone most days according to one of the surveys conducted for this plan. One of the reasons San Antonio has not seen the need to provide transportation options is that as recently as 2010, our system has been operating at an acceptable level of service (LOS) with limited congestion. When we asked people "How is your commute?" in our survey, we saw 45% respond that it is congested. But the trend is moving towards worsening levels of service, congestion, delay, and longer

commute times. In 2011, San Antonio was ranked 29th most congested city in the nation by Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) based on total annual delay. In 2015, we climbed to 24th most congested.

San Antonio has made great strides with its bike network since the first Bicycle Master Plan was drafted in 1975. With the addition of the 2011 Bike Master Plan and recent update, today the City has 286 miles of bicycle facilities. When combined with 326 bike miles maintained by TxDOT, other cities, and unincorporated Bexar County, Bexar County has 659 miles of bike facilities.

Our existing pedestrian network consists mostly of sidewalks, linear greenway trails and park trails. The City has a significant portion of roadways that do not have sidewalks, or have gaps between sidewalks. Of greater concern, many sidewalks are 4 feet wide and located at the back-of-curb with no separation or buffer between the pedestrian and the traffic lane.

Recently installed Z-crossing on Broadway in front of the DoSeum Children's Museum



In terms of safety, pedestrians are certainly the most vulnerable users of our transportation system. San Antonio and Dallas have the highest pedestrian fatality rates per 100,000 population in Texas. On average 2 pedestrians and 1 bicyclist are involved in crashes every day in San Antonio.

In September of 2015, San Antonio adopted the Vision Zero goal of achieving zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our roads. The mission of Vision Zero San Antonio is to create a community culture that prioritizes traffic safety and ensures that mistakes on our roadways do not result in severe injury or death. The goal to achieve zero fatalities on public roads is an endeavor that all cities must strive for and San Antonio is no exception. The mission statement of Vision Zero is: **TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE ZERO FATALITIES ON OUR ROADWAYS BECAUSE EVERY PERSON IN OUR COMMUNITY MATTERS.**

Our transit system, operated by VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA), is one of the top rubber-tire transit providers in the country. VIA is recognized as a very effective transit agency doing more with less. The VIA service area is comparable to Houston's and almost twice the size of Dallas' but VIA has substantially less funding than either. In addition, San Antonio is the largest city in the country without any type of light rail or commuter rail service.

Compared to other major cities in the country, San Antonio's transportation system would be considered **better** in terms of delay and congestion; **acceptable** in terms of roadway infrastructure provided; **less than acceptable** in terms of public transit service frequency and mode; and **falling short** in terms of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



Drive safe. Bike safe. Walk safe.

San Antonio faces major challenges as we approach the future, including:

- » an anticipated increase in population of over a million additional residents in Bexar County by 2040,
- » continuously increasing demand for an already limited water supply,
- » a strained City budget due to maintaining and improving infrastructure in an expanding geographic area,
- » maintaining the City's AAA Bond rating,
- » planning for and addressing air quality compliance as the region approaches non-attainment status, and,
- » informing and educating the community about the benefits of alternative modes of transportation to encourage a shift in views on using and investing in transit, light rail, streetcar, bike, and pedestrian facilities.

Although we have made great strides, we still have progress to make to be a world-class city that offers transportation choices that include an option to not own a vehicle.

## Where Are We Heading?

Congestion in San Antonio is worsening and is growing at a much faster rate than the population or even the daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This section of the plan gives us a glimpse of our transportation future if we choose to continue on the same course.

Many people would assume that delay would increase at the same or similar rate to that of the population. Delay actually increases faster and as time goes on, the gap widens between the two. This demonstrates how difficult it is to stay ahead of congestion by widening or building roads. If the trend continues, at some point in the future, delay will far out-pace our ability to add capacity through widening or building new roadways.

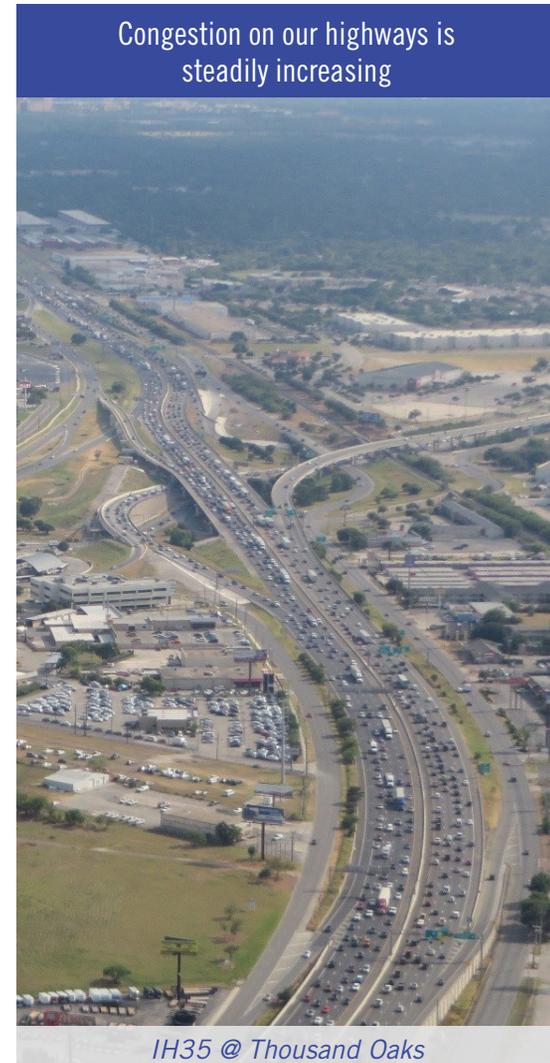
An example of what our transportation future looks like can be seen in a series of maps developed by the Alamo Area MPO. The maps show 20 minute

travel times from a series of locations in the City. In 2040, the distance we will be able to travel in 20 minutes is reduced considerably due to increases in congestion and delay.

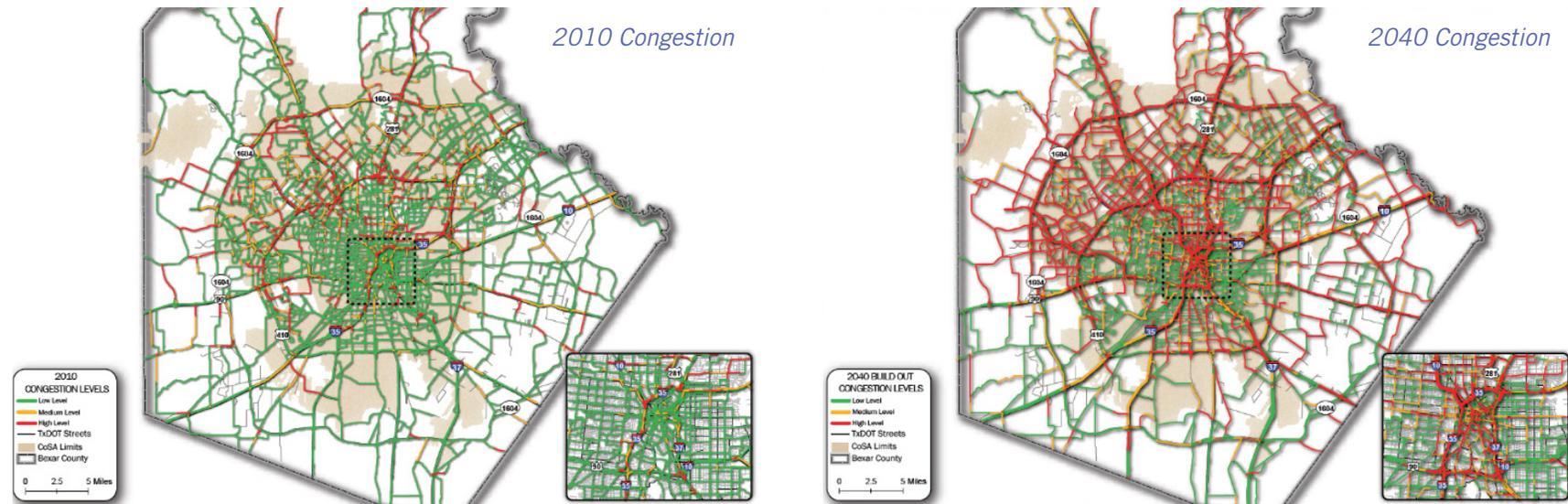
The AAMPO performed an assessment of our road network and its ability to accommodate the existing and anticipated traffic levels as part of the Mobility 2040: Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The two maps show the change that will happen if we continue on our current path. Roads with high levels of congestion or where the capacity of a roadway is exceeded and cannot accommodate the volume are shown in red.

**San Antonio can no longer focus on building its way out of congestion.** We do not have the available space. Widening roads would require significant acquisition of properties and great expense. Instead, we need to increase the capacity of our system by focusing on moving people instead of vehicles. We must begin to measure capacity in terms of person-trips

Congestion on our highways is steadily increasing



How congestion looks in 2040 if we continue on our current course



rather than vehicle throughput. Increasing capacity in our future must rely heavily on investing in ways to move more people within the same space we have today. A light rail system can move over 20,000 people in the same physical space and the same time that a freeway lane needs to carry about 2,500 people. We must make efficient use of our space to keep San Antonians moving.

## What We Heard

The Multimodal Transportation Plan established an unprecedented level of continuous public outreach and engagement and the result is a plan that is the product of widespread and diverse public input. This section of the plan

outlines the engagement effort and reports the feedback provided by the public.

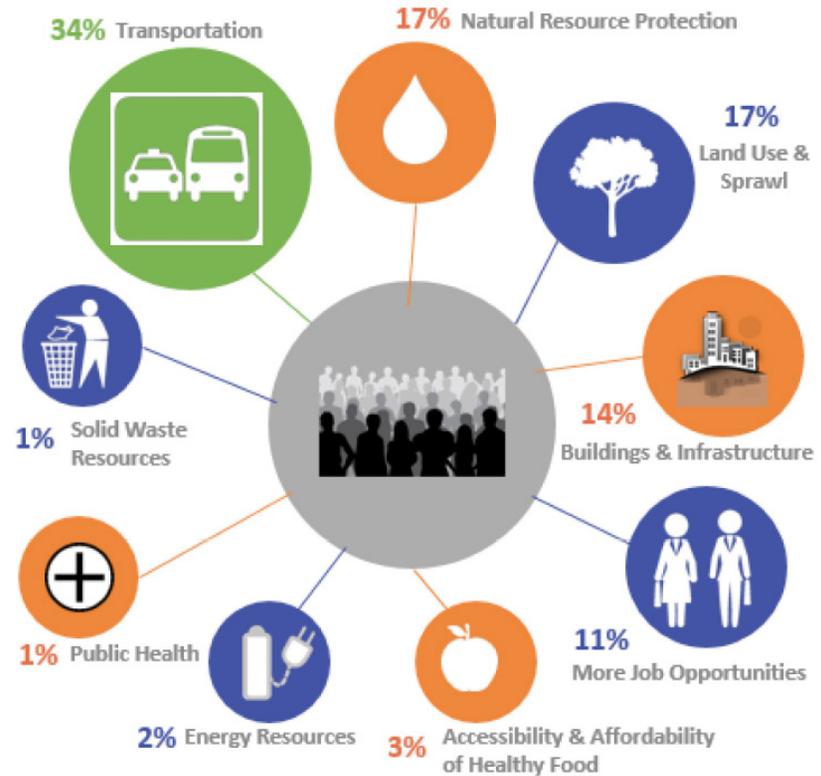
Thousands of San Antonio citizens participated in the SA Tomorrow and transportation planning process, offering their ideas and sharing their priorities for our City's transportation future. Moreover, hundreds of thousands learned about the larger SA Tomorrow program and the City of San Antonio's commitment to a comprehensive, citizen-driven planning approach to integrating land use, transportation and sustainability. The goals of the public engagement effort helped shape the program of outreach tools and style of events. The goals of the public engagement effort were to:

- » Create public awareness
- » Maintain an open and transparent process;
- » Provide information
- » Engage a broad range of stakeholders
- » Maximize the use of technology
- » Provide multiple and easily accessible opportunities for the public to get involved,
- » Collect meaningful input
- » Provide information in English and Spanish
- » Build understanding and support

More than 15,000 people engaged in the planning process for the Multimodal Transportation Plan, offering insights into their daily travel choices and their vision of mobility in the future. Over 150,000 people were reached and asked to offer input through a variety of different events and input mechanisms. Over 8,000 took

April 2015 survey results:

**WHICH AREA IN SAN ANTONIO NEEDS THE MOST WORK?** to be ready for 1 million more people



the time to respond to 3 different surveys providing insights and priorities about transportation.

The City, in partnership with other local and regional public agencies, engaged a diverse range of residents, business owners, civic leaders, transit users, and youth through a variety of high-tech, and grass-roots methods. The City committed to carrying the public engagement and outreach throughout the life of the project, resulting in an extensive outreach effort that incorporated varied approaches and methods to maintain interest, extend reach, inform and distribute information. Three major themes of the public information and engagement process were used to focus efforts that would address the goals.

- Creating Awareness
- Gathering Input
- Understanding Priorities

Many different platforms were used throughout the project, including social media, online meetings and surveys, a project website, videos, traditional public meetings and open houses, as well as many “Go to Them” meetings and distribution materials and presentations. A much greater representation of the population was reached by varying the style, medium, location and type of event.

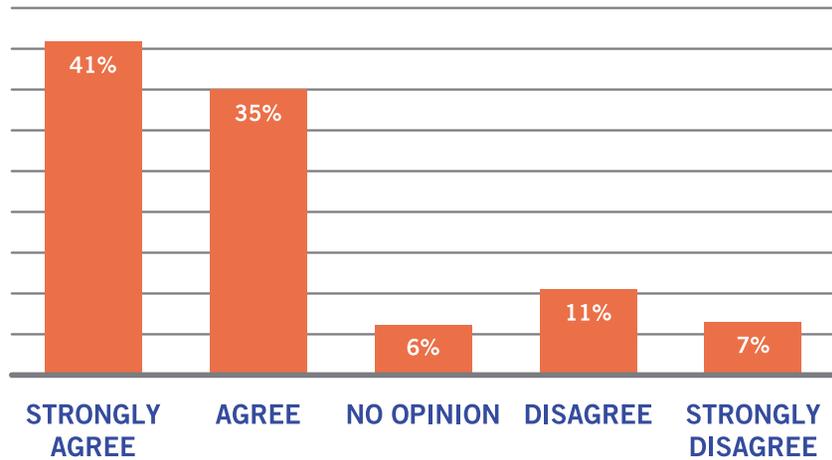
Some of the most thought provoking feedback we received during the process includes the following:

**Is Transportation Important?**

When asked about different areas of focus, those surveyed selected Transportation as needing the most attention.

VIA/SA Tomorrow Survey - April 2016

### HOV lanes are an important way to provide reliable transportation in 2040



#### What do we think of light rail?

When we asked people to show how they would spend \$100, they dedicated almost as much money to light rail as they did to roads.

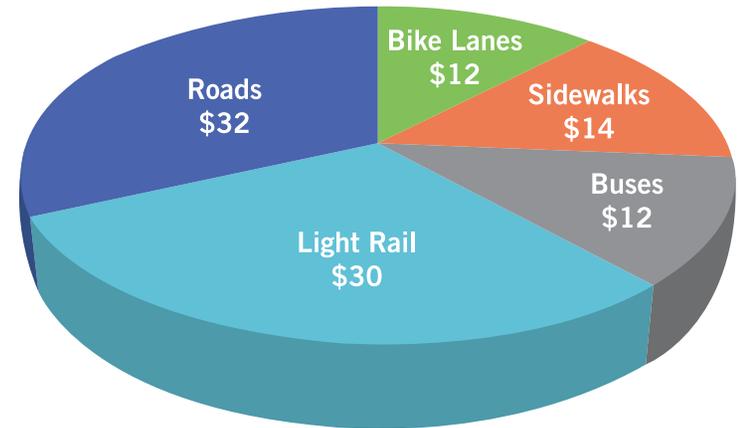
**In our most recent survey, 78% of the people agreed that light rail is an important part of our future transportation network.**

#### What do we think of HOV Lanes?

Despite hearing some in the community express concern about implementing HOV lanes in San Antonio, 76% of the people responding to this question consider them to be an important part of our transportation system in the future.

April 2015 survey results:

### How would you spend \$100?



■ Bike Lanes ■ Sidewalks ■ Buses ■ Light Rail ■ Roads

A diverse range of San Antonio citizens participated in the comprehensive, year-long planning process that resulted in the Multimodal Transportation Plan and its companion plans under the larger SA Tomorrow planning effort. Their ideas and comments were used to shape the recommendations contained in this plan. The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan has reached an unprecedented number of people. The extent of the investment made to provide a continuous, comprehensive and robust outreach and engagement effort has surpassed levels seen in previous City projects. People were reached through public engagement efforts that extended well beyond traditional approaches.

Numerous platforms and methods were utilized in order to connect with “hard-to-reach” areas of the community. Barriers to participation were removed by providing online events and opportunities to provide input via the project website and real-time online webinars as well as by conducting “Go-to-Them” meetings at already-planned events throughout the City.

## Where Do We Want To Be?

Many cities have charted a course based on a particular transportation focus. Dallas made a strategic decision to invest in transit, implementing 90 miles of light rail; half of which opened in the last 5 years. Chicago set a target of having bicycle accommodations within ½ mile of every Chicagoan. In 2014, the city installed 51 miles of new bikeways. New York City took back portions of their streets from traffic, and gave them to people. The NYC Plaza Program ensured all New Yorkers live within a 10 minute walk of quality open space. From 2008 to 2012, 22 sites were selected for implementation. The question for our City is where do we want to be and what should we focus on to get there?

Once we define the most desirable future for San Antonio, what can we do to achieve it? A critical step is to develop, implement, and aggressively follow a set of guiding policies. These policies



should govern all major decisions - they should not only be aspirational goals, but daily reminders when making policy and everyday decisions. In order to successfully implement a policy and to create and support real change in the community, the City of San Antonio needs to be adamant about their goals and objectives.

The results of the Scenario Planning conducted (with three different roadway network scenarios) indicate that **real change in congestion levels will only occur with major changes in land use patterns, not additional capacity added**

**to the system.** Integrating personal vehicles, transit, bicycle and pedestrian priorities to create a well-connected network with more transportation choices is essential for San Antonio. San Antonio's preferred future is to have a world class transportation system that maintains existing roads and supports transit while strategically investing in the transportation system.

San Antonio's focus and direction should be movement towards a multimodal system. **Our attention should be directed at moving more people rather than vehicles.** We will need to be a

Great places are created in areas where land use and the transportation system interact to create environments people want to live, work, and play in.



*At the Guadalupe and S. Brazos intersection, the transportation network supports the adjacent land uses and helps create a livable, multimodal friendly environment.*

multimodal city if we wish to compete and attract economic development. We must incorporate new strategies like High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, light rail, dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and connections to bike and pedestrian facilities. We have to be able to accommodate the additional one million more people expected to move to the region. **This is equivalent to the population of the City of Austin moving to San Antonio!**

## What Can We Do?

Without question our approach must incorporate all of the modes. We must implement improvements to each of the different modes and provide the connections between them in order to create a balanced multimodal system that is sustainable, safe, convenient and efficient for all users. This section describes the Multimodal Transportation Plan and its various elements – both individually and how they relate to each other. In addition to the connection to land uses, it also describes the current and future projected status of the highway / roadway network, parking, the

City's Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) and its various alignment challenges and cross-section recommendations and considerations. These recommendations are made in an effort to not only improve traffic flows, but to expand access to bicycle and pedestrian networks as well as support VIA's efforts to provide enhanced transit services. There is also a section on innovative ideas and technologies – including autonomous vehicles, transportation network companies, ITS, incident management, and managed lanes. Each element incorporates items that feed into a 5 Year Action Plan for the City.

Phoenix's Light Rail System



Multimodal solutions were developed for corridors around the city to demonstrate possible options that could be applied to other locations with similar characteristics. The solutions include light rail, dedicated BRT, bike facilities, and pedestrian improvements. Developing and evaluating these solutions at the corridor-level provided opportunities to identify needed policy recommendations and to develop short term improvements to address safety and operational issues. A summary of the policy recommendations identified throughout the plan is included in the 5 Year Action Plan along

Imagining a Future Multimodal Station



with the short term recommendations for improvements to the corridors. In addition, the long term multimodal concepts developed for each of the corridors and all of the work that led to those solutions will provide a foundation for future strategically selected corridor studies. Evaluation of the longterm multimodal options and identification of the preferred solution will be possible through a detailed corridor study. Three to five corridors should be selected for inclusion in the 5 Year Action Plan.

## How Do We Get There?

We get to where we want to be by setting priorities in terms of projects and funding, by establishing policies and practices that support a multimodal transportation system and meet community goals, by implementing improvements in a phased approach, and by developing a funding strategy that pursues external opportunities and identifies new sources of funds. This section describes a prioritization process developed for the SA Tomorrow initiative, outlines different funding strategies that have been implemented elsewhere, and presents a



5 Year Action Plan containing short term projects and policy recommendations. The 5 Year Action Plan will be updated in 5 year intervals in order to take advantage of changing technology, new funding opportunities and changes to community goals.

Using the goals and objectives identified as part of SA Tomorrow, a project prioritization tool was developed. The outputs from this tool can be used to assist in the process of making future

budget and bond program decisions – this allows for an objective selection of projects to be completed using the limited funds available for transportation investments. This is especially true for a community of the scale of San Antonio, where comparing the merits of various projects can be difficult to do given the number of potential projects to be considered.



Advertising opportunities creates revenue for Phoenix's Light Rail System.



It is inevitable that as we see 1 million more people in San Antonio, the burden of providing services and infrastructure to accommodate the growth will increase. We can do our part by making choices that reflect the City's commitment to sustainability and to maintain the system in the most efficient way possible. As we provide transportation choices that encourage people to walk, bike, ride transit and consider living where they can work and shop nearby, new revenue sources will be needed to cover the additional construction and maintenance costs.

The City's funding strategy for the Multimodal Transportation Plan will need to rely upon many funding sources to address a range of project types and sizes. The City must have the internal resources to continuously monitor the different funding sources available and be ready and able to pursue and compete for those funds. The funding program must be flexible enough to recognize that sources and the size of the available revenue may change over time.

## Conclusion

The Multimodal Transportation Plan provides a framework for the City of San Antonio to create a transportation system that is efficient, safe, sustainable, and considers all users and includes all modes. It identifies alternative funding sources and sets up a prioritization process that will distinguish projects that support the community's goals. The plan is dynamic and calls for continuous improvement through updates at five year intervals with an eye toward a 25 year horizon.

### Where are we Now?

Our transportation system today is adequate but falls short in some areas, especially those that define a multimodal system. We are experiencing congestion during peak periods, but we have not yet reached the levels where people are motivated to leave their single occupant vehicles.



### Where are we Heading?

Historically, we have applied the “build our way out of congestion” method to improve mobility by adding capacity to our system. If we continue on this course, we will not be able to keep pace with congestion and our transportation system will experience greater congestion and delay. It will take us twice as long to travel to the same place compared with today. We have to use other methods that are available to us to create an efficient, sustainable system that offers transportation choices.

### What we Heard.

Overall, we heard strong support for a multimodal system. HOV lanes, light rail, dedicated BRT, bicycle facilities and an improved pedestrian environment are all welcomed by most of the public responding to the surveys and providing comments during the project. The San Antonio community also seems to agree that transit supportive development, and Regional Centers that promote mixed use development will support these types of transportation options. The message must continue as we move towards implementing these initiatives.



## Where do we Want to Be?

Other cities have identified a focus and charted a course to get them where they are today. San Antonio’s focus should be on multimodalism. **San Antonio can be a world-class city by creating a balanced transportation system that offers options through incorporating a number of modes and promoting the connections between them.**

## What Can we Do?

We have a variety of tools at our disposal that we can apply to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation system. The City must continue to be familiar with new and emerging

technologies and innovative strategies so they are applied early and incorporated into planning. Coordination with partner agencies is critical for creating a multimodal system that relies on connections between modes, builds on each agency’s plans, and provides the policy recommendations and political support that will promote alternative modes like HOV lanes, commuter rail, dedicated BRT, light rail, bike and pedestrian facilities.

## How Do We Get There?

We get there by prioritizing projects and initiatives that meet our goals of incorporating other modes, offering choices, creating connections, improving safety, managing congestion, and maintaining our system. We must identify a number of alternative funding sources and be ready to pursue available programs. Our funding strategy must include more than one funding source as well as non-permanent sources that our currently available.

