

## Citizen Discussions: Transportation Outlook 2040

October 13, 2008

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### DISCUSSION

*AW: What is important to you about transportation?*

*Conversation will take three parts: growth and development, breakout sessions and equity*

Q: For my participation with the light rail task force, when we have a scheme laid out before us and then talk to us about our needs, the last 10 minutes have been structuring our thought processes. The thought processes is influenced by the presentation.

*AW: In the breakout sessions, you will have a chance to go outside the box.*

*In our culture, growth is viewed as positive and absence is negative. What do you want from our growth in the entire region?*

*How is it that we are trying to grow?*

S: We are going to grow anyway, so what will it look like so everyone has a good life here. Make it as decent as possible for everyone.

*AW: What would be decent?*

S: Everyone has a share in it.

S: Growth is fantastic, but has to be done as smart and equitable. Sprawl is what we have to get away from. Focus on maintaining and improving existing infrastructure and from moving further and further apart. More compact development.

*AW: How else should we grow?*

S: I was in a conversation with people who have traveled all over the world, as soon as a building gets halfway done, it's torn down, unlike old-world countries whose buildings still last.

Old buildings get to be unhealthful in terms of heating, but why tear them down and make a lot of dust?

S: I think she has made an interesting observation. Driving through Westport, a school used to be there, and there is now a shopping center and now it is having difficulty. The urban sprawl, we abandon quicker than what is necessary. Structures in KCMO left behind get torn down or empty. Hard to identify neighborhoods and young people don't have that.

Building sustainability and living space on what we have now and not moving on.

Will this group get some feedback on how this information is interpreted and used?

*AW: What will happen is that all is being captured to use in planning process and you will have full access when they are available.*

S: At this point every jurisdiction around the country wants more commercial space so they build and increase the tax space and collect taxes. The local governments are dependent on property and sales taxes. They keep moving on and on and build more and more shopping that gets abandoned.

Do a different kind of process to the local government.

As far as transportation goes, people change where they want to go. Shopping center stores change and then it becomes obsolete. How do you do a transportation system that fulfills that fundamental need?

*AW: Follow-up question: What impact on public infrastructure would that have? Positive or negative?*

S: Increase density, increase sewage and infrastructure.

S: At this point in time, you have to widen streets, add lights, school systems, transportation for the kids, commercial, police and fire protection.

S: There is a different kind of vision and consensus and what you want life like in my little town. We realize we would like to have a community that is everyone – old and young, rich and poor. This is community for me. We would really like that. People who moved into community after WWII. We liked to have everyone there.

S: Increase the viability of mass transit by increasing density.

S: Why go through neighborhoods to do transit when there is virgin territory not far from here to build transit areas? A neighborhood grows up around it then and doesn't make sense to tear up old streets.

*AW: Strong statement about the impacts of growth.*

*AW: As we are talking about growth, are there specific areas where growth should be discouraged?*

S: Environmentally sensitive ground, flood plains, steep slopes.

S: Even if environmentally sensitive, couldn't you build something that wouldn't have sewage system – perhaps light rail above the ground? A lot of caves that store food.

S: You can build railways there, but you need a population that it will serve.

S: Areas such as Bannister Mall and hotels and things, who would want to spend the gas to go there?

*AW: We will return to environmental issues. Are there places where high density makes more sense and why?*

S: Where there is already infrastructure.

S: We ought to be very aware that we are moving out into some of the finest farmland in the world and we should be very careful about intruding on this land. We are already eating up in areas in Johnson County and others.

Light rail: When we pay for transportation systems, they ought to be about transportation and not about some effort to force development or as a development tool. This end of the city, we still have the same

route we had in the '50s and '60s. Recently certain individuals advocating that we should spend millions per mile to put in a track system that may be another 30 years, another generation won't stay around there. Public expenditures ought to match the task at hand. This city has tremendous tax problems and revenue problems coming in the future. We are spending out the future. The deficit type spending needs to be controlled.

There were a large number of bus routes that were planned for this area and people will decide on Nov.4.

*AW: What investment in transportation makes sense in environmental point of view?*

S: Any transportation will be near density for the riders or attract density. Need to decide where you want to have density in the future.

AW: Transportation investments over the next 30 years, what makes most sense environmentally?

S: Maintenance of current building.

S: Street cars are better than light rail and can be put in without disturbing current infrastructure.

*AW: What type of impact will this type of system have on environment?*

S: The number of vehicles we had previously – sometimes when moved to Philadelphia, one car stayed in the garage.

*AW: Transportation investments?*

S: Increased mileage transportation, less gas and emissions. We could have 30,000 of those types in one block, but that's not a practical solution.

S: Bicycle and pedestrian transportation would make it better.

*AW: Issue of emissions: Which transportation policies creating right now that would have help decreasing greenhouse gas emissions?*

S: Electricity

S: Wind powered and solar

S: Combination of all of that

*AW: Not right and wrong, and you don't have to be an expert. How do we decrease greenhouse emissions over the next 30 years?*

S: Rickshaws – have to be living pretty close together to power by feet.

*AW: How should energy usage be considered when allocating transportation investments?*

S: We have talked about public transportation, not road usage. Are we dealing with transportation that is about highways as well?

*AW: Inclusive of both*

S: Biggest use of environment is emissions of cars on the highways – traffic jams and not going anyplace. Hybrid cars will stop – emission free.

S: We are still a market force economy and people will stay with cars and technology will change. The public transportation that gets developed is people will get out of their cars. The amount of bus transportation needs to be flexible. I don't think you will force people back in by 2040. Transitions will be slow.

S: If you have livable, attractive ways to walk, put us closer together. Create a structure of being human and the humanity of living. Living in places where the two-block area, we had to have a community consensus – by one strong arm guy.

S: 2040 is the planning period to think about – longer than I have to worry about it.

S: 25-minute ride to take me to get to work. Bus routes will take me two hours to get to work. Need them to be rerouted in order to get to work. I would use bus if I can get there within 45 minutes.

*AW: Is the current transportation for this region adequately serving the needs of this region?*

S: That is something that all the little mayors in the other areas need to approve in order to get them there. Local government leadership needs to be better.

S: Every time they open up for transportation, they close down an old one. It makes it difficult for the people who used those routes.

S: They cater the bus routes for downtown business. If you miss it, you are stuck downtown.

*AW: I asked about regional transportation, this is as open or narrow as you want it to be. Is the current transportation meeting the needs?*

S: Not meeting mine, I can't do public work because I can't get home at night.

S: Don't think so. As the lady stated earlier, it all depends on what the cities want to pay. It goes back to the individuals and they need to talk to their councilmen. That is the only way for them to get anything changed.

*AW: Does the effectiveness of regional transportation effect where you want to live?*

S: It does, when I bought my house that is one of the things I took into consideration. If my car broke down, I would need public transportation.

*AW: How could our current transportation system is improved?*

S: A lot more money ... and the local governments don't have it right now.

For Raytown, there are two buses that come pretty close. They are about half a mile at least that I would have to walk. Have another one down Raytown Road.

S: More safety for parking lights.

S: I voted for the light rail, and I would vote for it again. Anything to get the congestion off the triangle.

S: Even the light rail advocates admit that they never pull enough off to make a difference. I use public transportation, and if I don't catch at the right time, it becomes not convenient. Needs more options out south.

*AW: Are there any current transportation projects receiving too much attention or investment?*

S: What sort of examples would you give?

*AW: Some parts of regional transportation getting more than they deserve?*

S: As far as funding at the federal level, highway and automobile travel gets more funding.

Highway funding gets more attention.

*AW: Any other thoughts or attention or funding?*

S: Some things don't get enough, like the infrastructure on the highways, and they are really not that improved. Like Minneapolis.

S: Highways don't get too much, just a bigger piece of the pie. And we need to spend more on general funding.

*AW: Is economic development an appropriate reason to build transportation infrastructure?*

S: To where you live and work and shopping. Where do you want the tax dollars to go? Light rail is being sold as development and not transportation. There isn't enough money to have everything, and those decisions have to be made here along with everywhere else in the country. Corporate discussion three weeks ago, and some of the top financial wizards are worried about economic future of the city, we need to be aware.

There are only so many chairs on the ship, and we are in the process of rearranging the chairs.

Give us transportation, to home and work and to shop, but don't to create development where we are not living or working.

S: New Jersey from Philadelphia extended a line to another town, and it blossomed with high density. Nothing before and now bloomed.

*AW: KC region has been a hub for freight activity, should that be a priority for public investment?*

S: Are they asking for money?

S: That is a curious question. The city has already made a huge investment and in the highway system is a huge investment, but curious talking about it at this meeting.

S: Never thought of that or cared about that before.

S: Any public investment in railroads, if and when we need right-of-way, you won't argue with us.

S: Being a hub for activity for whatever, it will create more jobs. The more you attract interstates here, you will attract more hubs. I am for all of that.

S: Grandview-Belton Corridor is now dried up and been neglected so long. 71 Highway has been neglected and all the businesses have dried up.

S: Would the businesses come if that was developed?

S: There was transportation in the spring.

S: Stores and restaurants

S: KC Southern is willing to cooperate with the rail system and the tracks are there but not many people want to take up that issue now. The railroad needs to take people back and forth to work.

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## **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

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### **DISCUSSION**

*AW: Do you believe the factors such as race, income and or physical/mental ability has access to fair transportation?*

S: The system will work for whoever does the planning.

S: The better buses were always west of Troost. Race and economic factors play a role.

S: Few people arguing against that. I would like to hear the argument against that.

*AW: Are transportation costs and benefits distributed fairly among the communities in the KC region?*

S: In regards to the bus, the bus east of Troost, they will get their routes cut and change the routes around.

*AW: Spectrum of transportation, buses, rails, bikes, trails, freight, tractor, trailer and trucks. Everything regarding transportation, are they distributed fairly?*

S: Interesting that very few jobs related are going east of Troost.

S: The state of Kansas, for instance, that is the biggest metropolitan area in the state. KC is number two to St. Louis. They get a lot more money than KS. Disparity because they get more money than KC.

*AW: Equity impacted by state budget.*

S: Related to representatives in congress

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### **CLOSING**

Remind folks to fill out forms on sign-up side. We have four other community meetings coming up. Everything will be posted on the Web.

In the spring, we will be building on this information to develop strategies and policies.