

Citizen Discussions: Transportation Outlook

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Gladstone Community Center
6901 N. Holmes
Gladstone, Mo.



WARM-UP QUESTIONS

AW: How do you get where you need to go?

S: Automobile (personal vehicle), scooters for handicapped, we would like to go on the bus more on Sunday once in awhile

S: We drive our own cars, some bicycle, some walk to some locations.

AW: Have we covered the primary modes of transportation? The dominant mode of transportation is driving. What all has to be in place for that to be possible?

S: Signage, roadways in good condition, adequate capacity, filling stations, automobiles, laws for enforcements, insurance.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

DISCUSSION

AW: Over next 30 years, 500,000 people will move into the region. What local government will do to accommodate the needs of all these people?

S: Available housing

S: Improve infrastructure

S: Schools and education system have to be prepared to address the students

AW: In the world of transportation, what will they need to do?

S: More efficient use of what we have

S: Live within the means that principally exist, and the existing [transportation system will] work for the additional 500,000

S: Will require more traffic, maintenance, personnel, etc.

S: Instead of thinking of adding more, [use] what we already know about environmental and governmental issues to look at the entire system. Look more for more sustainable solutions

S: Best practices in China and looking at local zoning laws and density solutions

AW: What will local government have to do to accommodate more workers?

S: Increase shuttle as an alternative to parking garages

S: Promoting green to allow employees to work from home more and they won't have to use the transportation system so much – work remotely.

S: Encourage businesses to go into empty spots near where housing already exists instead of putting up something new. You already have the near workforce and employment

S: Gets back to zoning issues and mixed zoning areas

S: Possibility of more integrated approach ... of how zoning gets done. Mixed-use building for residents, jobs, recreation and integration of the entire system

AW: What will local government have to do to accommodate the new shoppers and people who need to use these areas?

S: Prioritize spending with what [the areas] have – work with the income that comes in and the present taxes. Don't raise the taxes if you have more people – work with what you have.

AW: Connect shoppers outside with the inside of the community?

S: Plan and coordinate more with adjacent cities for infrastructure.

S: Each segment of the community needs to plan everything within the community that is necessary. [It should be a] self-contained unit that will need, and then [decide] what transportation they need [to get other places]. They don't have to leave for basic amenities.

S: Encourage redevelopment instead of new building in other places

S: Wal-mart threatens municipalities that if they don't do what it wants, it will build outside of the city.

S: Build Wal-mart's outside of bus stops. If they will go there, work with them so the employees will have easy access to transit

S: Employers who come in need to be more responsible for the infrastructure instead of all on the city and community.

AW: How should we take the natural environment into consideration?

S: Alternative fuel source for buses and major transportation areas

S: Make mass transportation more available and improve transportation to take cars off-road

S: Best practices from Israel – small networks of electric cars that can be rented by the hour and the day with charging stations throughout the area.

S: Zoning to protect green areas. There are already green areas in most of the areas, as we explore growth and development, protect these areas.

S: Development of streetcars and urban growth boundaries on a regional scale

S: Remove tax rebates and financial incentives that keep cars on the roads – big businesses provide parking incentives for employees. What are the subsidies that keep cars on the road? Realignment of incentives

S: Less idling you have the better you are. Improve major thoroughfares to keep from stopping so much – keep it green longer and better use what you are already using. Need more intelligent traffic management systems.

S: Omaha, different lights that change throughout the day – morning use vs. afternoon use – same streets but keeps traffic flows better. Need rush-hour traffic systems.

AW: Emissions: how much of a concern are they for you and how should they be addressed?

S: World science and communities – today a majority of mammals are going to be extinct in our lifetime – our environments, global warming and this is the most potential devastating issue and should be the highest priority of all – how we transport ourselves and goods – we live in a world that has finite resources. [We need to focus on] habitat preservation as well and where other species should live.

AW: Is how much energy your transportation habits consume important and what would you change?

S: It is important to me. Energy and where you need to go for work vs. pleasure and everyday living – lots of energy gets wasted. I think my opinion the main choice is that of independence ...

AW: How important is energy consumption, and what would you do differently?

S: I don't want to see more taxes for more road space. We got rid of streetcars for more room for cars, and should go the other way – it would be beneficial.

S: Customer service – if you have good routes and good buses and flexibility. Most people would stop driving cars if it was more reliable and went to business and education centers – you give them that and they will stop using cars

S: Best practices of New York – they don't even use cars in town but drive in from out of town. Some people don't think they even have a choice – sometimes a person of different economic issues play into this.

AW: What modes of transportation do you want to be able to use more easily in your community within the next 30 years?

S: Buses that get into the neighborhoods that are run on alternative fuel.

S: Statewide energy study that was done in the late 1980s of energy use in the state of Missouri. Take the wisdom from that study and apply it to that question. Use energy that keeps jobs in the state of Missouri. I would love to be able not to own a car and get anywhere by public transit, bike and walking in nearby areas.

S: Can't get across the river on bike. Buses in the neighborhoods – rail lines in the areas, buses and bikes and walking areas where people can quickly get to the buses.

S: High-speed rail along the major highways that stops every five miles or so, and bike trails that connect to the bus routes that can get you to the place of employment. A combination of these where the traffic is.

S: Curitiba, Brazil best practices. They bought right-of-ways and set up trains/buses (paying in advance), and every six minutes the buses are on the major routes. Double-decker buses and neighborhood buses. More innovative ways to think of buses.

S: Curitiba, the Mayor – Jaime Lerner - goes around the world to speak on the architectural innovations of that city. Five major bus routes/lines (bus rapid transit lines) form the core of the system, but the drawback was that automakers built their factories in between the lines and sold cars super cheap. The people that used to do public transit then bought cars thus negating the effects of the public transit system.

S: Dedicate lanes for the buses that constrict the car passes.

AW: We have already spent a lot of money, and as you look around the region, do you feel that there are places where this was wasted?

S: We continue to spend a lot of money on highways – we are high in the percentage of highway miles that keep our traffic running. The lanes in Bogotá, I can get around better and less incentive here to use public transit. Put less money in highways and more in transportation system. Best practices of WDC, Chicago, and San Francisco. Other friends in these areas always use public transportation and never use a car within the city. Make KC that accessible and you will get a lot more cooperation when getting people around.

S: Good example, 71 Highway – four-lane highway with a bunch of street lights – back-ups, traffic jams. Bridges downtown where only one lane is high speed

S: Contractors able to work 24-7 so they can get the work done quicker instead of over longer periods of time.

S: 71 Highway, one way of thinking about it, this was an enormous detriment economically. Everything that advertises KC is the west side, and we have totally neglected half of our city. The green space between the roads [means that the roads] are close to people's houses. Economically stupid for a region to actually ignore a part of the city and [only advertise one part]. Land use patterns, the urban land being gobbled up by the sprawl. More and more people in less dense areas – where will be grow our crops and where will the animals live? Don't make developers rich by sprawling.

AW: Does a person of a different race in your community have equal access to transportation?

S: Yes, why not?

S: Yes, we all ride the bus if we want to ride the bus

S: Depends on economic resources

S: Just about public transportation or other like planes, trains, etc.?

S: Largely about economics. People of all races have different economic ability – I think it just has to do with economics rather than just race

S: In the urban areas it's difficult to own a vehicle and employment is several miles away. I think it is more difficult for people like that are lower on the sociological level.

S: It is definitely not equal if you live in rural areas and you don't have a car – you usually have to have a car – there is no equality whether you have money or don't.

AW: Should businesses use the transportation system pay a larger share?

S: You can actually map the areas of race, incomes and distributions of the area – they don't have the benefits of the entire system. It is clear that those in the city don't have access to the convenience of the urban lifestyle. It's very clear that it is a disproportionate level – the problems that you have living in the city including environment. The added burden of licensing your car – living in the urban core, you have different issues. The perception of the worse people is the ones of color and shouldn't be considered this way.

(Editor's note from participant comment: The kids that grow up in South Central LA, for example, have one-third less lung capacity than the average kid and that is from city air pollution. Kids in the urban core of most cities have 25 percent higher asthma rate because of the pollution.)

AW: Businesses using the transportation system and should pay a larger share?

S: Measurement complications — [how do we measure how much someone is using the transportation system?]

S: Example of Ford plant, Hallmark or Sprint – they have large number of employees that come into them – should they be paying more taxes in this area?

AW: Should they pay a larger share of maintenance?

S: Yes, but an example – Barry Road and at the west entrance – the area roads where they are sinking from the larger trucks and tracking – where they are designed, they need to putting in better roads or resurfaced, maybe what they take in should be put back.

S: Road access improvement fee

S: Autobahns in Germany, their roads are better built to last. If they aren't built well in the first place, they won't last.

S: I think you should design transportation around bringing businesses in the area. A specific piece of land, they pay a certain fee to the city to pay for being in that area?

S: They might not want to be near that area to pay the fee.

S: Businesses would want to be near the line for their employees.

S: In conversely they would build away to avoid the fee.

S: Yes, unless they prove documentation that they encourage mass transportation. If 15,000 employees drive 15,000 cars, then they should pay the fee.

S: Take away the incentives for new businesses get to have infrastructure to move in and add energy efficiency incentives. Incentivize other transportation modes.

S: So difficult to determine what the businesses are paying for the impact on the roads, and the employees pay taxes on going out to lunch, those businesses already pay for the infrastructure that is there. They are already paying sufficiently and supporting our incentives.