



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Transportation Master Plan: Vision & Strategy Development

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Date: June 21, 2019

Subject: TMP Vision and Strategy Development Framework

OVERVIEW

Western Michigan University (WMU) is embarking on a series of exciting projects that will transform the campus and position it for the next generation of users. As these plans take shape, the need for a comprehensive assessment of campus transportation issues and opportunities has become clear. To facilitate this assessment, WMU commissioned a Transportation Master Plan (TMP) that will guide holistic, strategic, and practical improvements for near-, mid-, and long-term implementation.

The first step in the TMP process included a series of meetings and outreach activities that engaged the stakeholders who are most familiar and most impacted by the campus transportation network about their vision for the future of campus access and mobility. This included a variety of WMU faculty and staff, students, and community partners, who shared their insights via focus group meetings, open house activities, and an online campus survey.

Establishing a TMP Vision and Strategy Development Framework will memorialize goals, objectives, and performance measures that align with those of the University and community. This Framework will help guide TMP recommendations, establish a long-term process to more effectively integrate transportation planning into broader campus planning and culture, and enable WMU staff and their partners to measure program impacts and success.

Over the course of our initial outreach, stakeholders provided key inputs to the draft framework outlined below. Participants at the meetings included key staff from a diverse array of WMU departments, plus students and Kalamazoo community members.

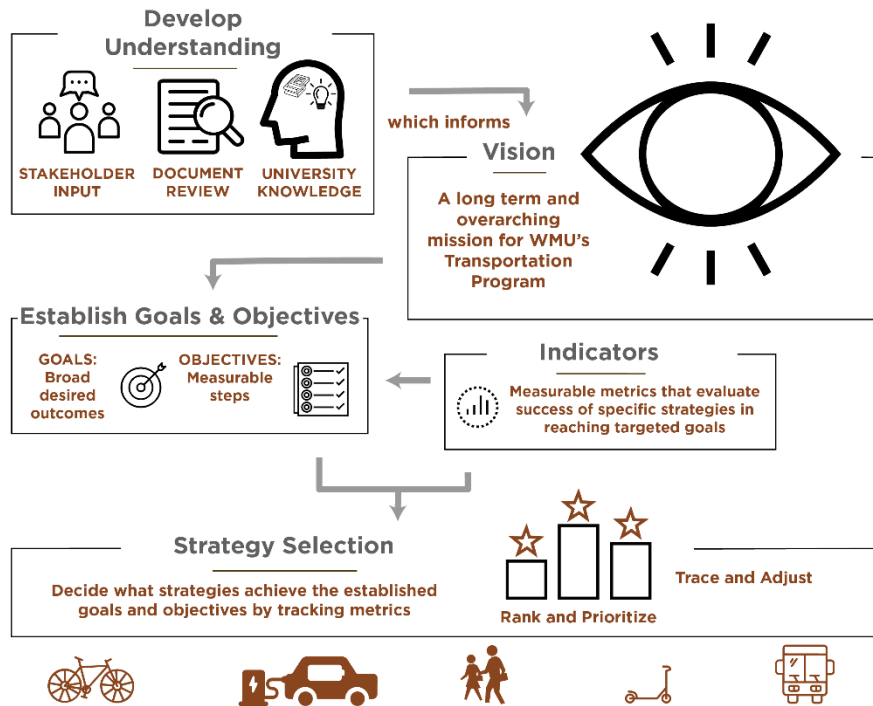
The vision, goals, and objectives will answer the following questions:

- **Vision:** What is the guiding statement for WMU's ongoing approach to managing and balancing transportation, parking, mobility, safety, and access needs?
- **Goals:** What values guide this work? What are the desired outcomes?
- **Objectives:** What specific actions will allow WMU to achieve the goals?

Performance Measures will be established in concert with the development of preliminary strategies to help WMU demonstrate the effectiveness of its mobility and parking investments. These measures will include key indicators and supportive metrics that WMU can use during implementation of plan recommendations.

The following figure illustrates the interrelationship between WMU’s defined vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures and how they will be used to develop and select appropriate strategies.

Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures Framework



THE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN VISION

Western Michigan’s Transportation Master Plan Vision responds to key challenges and opportunities, such as establishing a “walking campus,” improving accessibility for people with disabilities, enhancing the Bronco Bus program, addressing parking imbalances, planning for active and emerging transportation modes, and building stronger connections to surrounding neighborhoods—to name a few. Moreover, the TMP Vision encompasses WMU’s overarching vision, which calls for Western to be a *distinctive university of choice* that is *learner centered* and *accessible*. WMU’s commitment to student retention and success is integral to achieving its vision and the TMP will foster a transportation system that supports it.

The following sections contain a summary of the inputs received during the initial engagement with the Steering Committee and broader campus community between March – May 2019.

Steering Committee Input

During the study's kickoff process, the Steering Committee identified the following vision, goals, and objectives:

What WMU does on-campus will enhance the community as a whole.

- WMU's impacts will continue to uplift adjacent neighborhoods and Greater Kalamazoo.

Address the gaps between WMU, downtown Kalamazoo and other adjacent neighborhoods.

- There is a shared goal of the University & community to unify/link these neighborhoods.

Address the perception (real/imagined) of the ease of parking: make this a non-issue.

- It should be easy to get here, but we want this to be a pedestrian campus once people have arrived.

Improve the functionality of the Ring Road.

- Make it more amenable to all users, without worsening existing automobile congestion and delays.

Avoid increasing the cost of attending WMU.

- Enrollment and graduation rates have been on a 10-year decline and increasing fees can lead to attrition.

Ensure that changes do not impede WMU's ability to pay for mobility services.

- Parking fees fund a variety of important transportation services, from busing to roadway maintenance.

Move away from surface parking.

- As campus develops, we will increase density and add green space, which speaks to the need for the addition of strategically located parking decks to replace surface lots.

Look to peer universities for pricing strategies and approaches to structured parking.

- Explore "tiered" parking approach based on geography, user group, and other factors.

Address "change management" and evaluate the risk of recommended approaches.

- Ensure that, overall, we have a net positive impact on student experience, attraction, & retention.

Integrate technology and emerging mobility options into TMP solutions.

- Understand how these developments will shape future travel behaviors and needs.

Transportation Master Plan Vision Outreach & Engagement

More than 100 WMU stakeholders and community members were engaged through a series of open houses and focus group meetings in April 2019. Key themes that arose during exercises and dialogue included the following:

- The **walking campus** is a shared goal, but remains a work-in-progress.
- Today's campus is a "**drive first**" location, with many users re-parking multiple times in a single visit, as opposed to parking once and choosing other options for additional trips while on-campus.
- **Parking supply is ample**, but the current system does not work well for all users, leading to dissatisfaction with location, availability, regulations, and price.
- **Conflicting priorities and user needs** put a strain on the parking and mobility system, leading to more driving and congestion and lower use of non-driving options.
- **There is a strong desire to ride bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.**, but there are few dedicated or comfortable routes to campus from surrounding areas and the on-campus environment and regulations are unclear about shared use pathways.
- **Greater on-campus density** is desired, to add to the vitality of the campus, reduce the impact of surface parking lots, and reduce the need to develop greenfield sites.
- **Accessibility for people with disabilities** should be a key focus as improvements are made to sidewalk and roadway infrastructure, shuttles/buses, and buildings.
- **Change is coming** and the community (on-campus and adjacent) is optimistic about what that could mean for on-campus and community-wide mobility.

VISION STATEMENT

As a nationally and internationally recognized university of choice, Western Michigan University will create a campus that is accessible to all by providing a sustainable network of transportation options that engender a safe, convenient, walkable, and vibrant place where our community can live, learn, discover, work, and engage.

MOBILITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal	Objectives
<p>Increased Connectivity to Downtown Kalamazoo and Adjacent Neighborhoods.</p> <p>Leverage and enhance physical connections between campus and community for shared benefit and strengthened ties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase share of walking and bicycling trips to campus from adjacent neighborhoods ▪ Enhance student experience through greater access to downtown and other adjacent community assets and opportunities, including jobs, services, entertainment, etc. ▪ Encourage near-campus living for students, faculty & staff ▪ Support on-campus and neighborhood businesses by removing barriers to convenience and other shopping/dining trips ▪ Improve community access and on-campus programming, including education, cultural, entertainment, service, and commercial visits
<p>Create a Safe and Walkable Campus.</p> <p>Improve safety and connectivity through the design and maintenance of sidewalks, pathways, streets, & intersections and supporting programs & services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide appropriate infrastructure to support safe and efficient travel by all desired modes ▪ Encourage greater share of walking trips between on-campus destinations ▪ Reduce traffic collisions by identifying key conflict points and addressing contributing factors ▪ Eliminate all pedestrian and bicycle collisions on and adjacent to campus ▪ Reinforce the “park once” campus and reduce instances of driving and re-parking between on-campus locations ▪ Fill gaps with campus safety/mobility services, including escorts and shuttles, to address both accessibility and safety issues ▪ Enhance the on-campus experience for students, faculty, staff, and visitors
<p>Build a Comprehensive and Well-Used Bicycle Network.</p> <p>Foster a healthy, sustainable and connected campus with safe, comfortable, and contiguous bicycle accommodations to and through campus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase bicycling trips, both to/from and on-campus ▪ Update campus transportation policy to encourage bicycling on-campus ▪ Provide clear and dedicated bicycle routes and facilities to encourage safe operation and reduce conflicts between modes ▪ Facilitate an orderly shared bicycle network to increase access to bicycles for all users ▪ Coordinate with regional partners to extend bicycle networks from campus into the surrounding communities ▪ Support bicycle education, encouragement, and enforcement activities that promote bicycle activity
<p>Provide Robust, Efficient, and Convenient Transit Service that serves the needs of all users.</p> <p>Support coordination and enhancement of Bronco Bus and Metro Transit services to grow ridership and accommodate trips to, within, and between campuses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase use of Bronco and Metro transit services for on-campus and off-campus trips ▪ Address over-crowding during peak periods by providing more frequent service between key origins and destinations ▪ Increase coordination with Metro Transit to reduce redundancy and facilitate efficient and broad-reaching service for WMU users ▪ Identify potential for expansion and/or modification of off-campus shuttle service to key destinations ▪ Enhance bus stop locations, facilities, and amenities to improve functionality and make transit a more attractive choice ▪ Enhance mobile applications and provide accessible real-time information and interactive “trip planning” opportunities ▪ Expand awareness and use of transit benefits among students, faculty, and staff through proactive marketing and education ▪ Sync Bronco Bus service with efforts to promote a “park once” campus, including remote parking shuttles, etc.

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN | VISION & STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Western Michigan University

Goal	Objectives
<p>Provide and manage efficient and adequate vehicle parking accommodations.</p> <p>Focus on a comprehensible, convenient, right-sized parking system that serves the diverse needs of students, employees, and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address the unique needs of different user groups by addressing seasonal, time of day, pricing, and location needs ▪ Foster a “park once” campus that reduces parking demand and vehicle trips by encouraging on-campus travel by foot, bike, or shuttle ▪ Provide sufficient parking to support campus growth, without over-building or over-burdening University finances ▪ Refine parking enforcement standards to best facilitate compliance, safety, order, and a high level of customer service ▪ Improve ease of use by providing clear information before, during, and after a parking trip ▪ Ensure event parking protocols provide adequate parking capacity and information during planned campus events ▪ Inform parking policies through regular measurement of parking utilization, utilizing new technologies/applications where appropriate ▪ Monitor satisfaction as part of annual commuter survey and pursue efforts to address areas in need of improvement
<p>Highlight Mobility and Access as a tool to attract and retain.</p> <p>Provide mobility programs, services, and amenities that help WMU stand out as a desirable destination for students, faculty and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve WMU’s competitiveness in attracting and retaining talent by highlighting campus accessibility and mobility programs prior to and during orientation and on-boarding processes ▪ Integrate and enhance multimodal policies and programs as an essential component of WMU’s faculty/staff benefits packages ▪ Support transportation options that are affordable, equitable, and encourage non-drive-alone modes ▪ Support student initiatives to facilitate innovative solutions to transportation challenges and leverage University partnerships ▪ Monitor satisfaction as part of annual commuter survey and pursue efforts to address areas in need of improvement
<p>Create and Enhance Campus Accessibility for users of all abilities.</p> <p>Remove barriers, provide amenities, and become a model in campus accessibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify ADA compliance issues and prioritize their resolution in capital and service planning ▪ Reduce/remove access barriers for all users by investing in physical and programmatic improvements above and beyond ADA requirements ▪ Promote WMU as a model in campus accessibility, attracting new talent and investment in facilities and research institutes ▪ Engage WMU Disability Services in capital and service planning discussions to ensure positive outcomes for all users ▪ Fill gaps with campus mobility/accessibility services, including escorts and shuttles, to address both access and safety issues ▪ Provide a transportation information clearinghouse that is easy to understand and accessible to students, employees, and visitors
<p>Integrate Technology and Emerging Mobility options into TMP solutions</p> <p>Plan for smart investment in near- and long-term future of campus mobility through integration of emerging best practices and projection of future needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proactively plan for the arrival of emerging mobility services through permitting, policy, and infrastructure investment ▪ Utilize WMU institutional and research capacity to identify best practice solutions to campus mobility challenges ▪ Increase collaboration with regional partners to devise solutions that benefit campus and broader community members ▪ Use expanding equipment and service offerings to collect and analyze data and inform transportation investments

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Goal	Objectives
<p>Prioritize Cost-Effectiveness Understand cost-benefit and risks of transportation investments and impacts on broader University fiscal health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize mobility investments that limit risk and offer the greatest cost-efficiencies to WMU and its affiliates ▪ Emphasize opportunities to utilize existing parking resources efficiently before constructing new facilities ▪ Nurture existing and encourage new coordination efforts that limit redundancy and encourage shared use of facilities and services ▪ Incorporate transportation programs, policies, and physical improvements in the planning phases of campus expansion plans ▪ Measure program effectiveness and economic health in view of Climate Action Plan goals ▪ Monitor transportation and parking programs and provide transparency to encourage financial sustainability and community support
<p>Support the Redevelopment of the WMU Campus. Implement sustainable and forward-thinking transportation projects and programs that are responsive to the evolution of the WMU campus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify near, medium, and long-term transportation and parking demand to support known campus development projects ▪ Provide a multimodal network that supports long-term campus growth and the broader goals of the Campus Master Plan ▪ Integrate transportation investments into campus development efforts during the planning, development and construction stages ▪ Invest in programs that facilitate shift to non-driving travel modes and reduce parking demand, allowing for optimal use of land