

DRAFT OUTLINE OF SKETCH VISION 2050 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

The following provides an outline of initial possible “sketch” land use and transportation development scenarios for consideration by the Commission’s Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use Planning and Regional Transportation System Planning. The sketch scenarios on the following pages are meant to be conceptual alternatives of how the Region might look and function in the future, representing a range of possible futures for land use and transportation system development. They are intended to be “what if” illustrations:

- *What if...we continue current trends?*
- *What if...we emphasize medium and high density development and focus on improving existing transit services?*
- *What if...we focus on highly compact, transit-oriented development in conjunction with developing a fixed-guideway transit system?*

The two basic elements that vary between the scenarios are:

1. Location, density, and mix of new development and redevelopment.
2. Components of the transportation system.

One of the primary purposes for including scenario planning in the VISION 2050 process is to translate the complicated land use and transportation issues facing our Region into simple concepts that are easy to comprehend. At the same time, it is important not to lose sight of the complexities of these issues, and to appreciate the difficult decisions that must be made to address these issues. The proposed scenario planning exercise will attempt to achieve this balance.

Total anticipated regional growth in population, households, and employment would be held constant in each scenario in order to compare the tradeoffs between scenarios. Criteria are being designed to measure the relative benefits, costs, and impacts—at a basic, sketch level—of the scenarios. These criteria will be developed in alignment with the VISION 2050 Guiding

Statements, which identify in general terms the Region's initial vision. Showing how well each scenario would align with the Guiding Statements will allow people to determine how desirable they believe a particular scenario to be. It should also be recognized that there are some issues that are difficult to capture in the simple criteria being developed. These issues will be discussed in a more qualitative nature.

Visualization is another critical component of understanding the differences among scenarios. Graphics will be used to present the scenario comparisons to the public, with visualization techniques that attempt to convey the information in a way that makes it interesting for those reviewing and providing feedback on the scenarios.

By reviewing and interpreting the scenario comparison results, this particular step in the VISION 2050 process is aimed at identifying generally preferred themes for developing the Region's land and transportation system. These general themes would build on the key values and priorities expressed through initial visioning activities and would then be used to develop a set of detailed alternative land use and transportation plans, each including a specific land development pattern and transportation system.

SCENARIO A – TREND

Land Use: Baseline

This scenario provides a baseline to compare to other alternative futures, and represents a continuation of current trends in declining urban density. Most development is assumed to occur at medium and low densities within existing urban centers or at the immediate outer boundary of existing urban centers, but some development would occur at low densities outside of existing urban centers.

Transportation: Baseline

Under this scenario, there would be no improvements or expansion of transit service, with continuing current trends resulting in service reductions. Segment-by-segment reconstruction of the freeway system is assumed to continue, with traffic lanes added on congested facilities and minimal new arterial street and highway facilities constructed. Bicycle facilities—bike lanes, wider curb lanes, paved shoulders—are provided as arterials are reconstructed, and off-street facilities are added gradually.

SCENARIO B – CONTROLLED GROWTH WITH IMPROVED BUS TRANSIT

Land Use: Higher Density Development

New development under this scenario is assumed to occur largely as infill or redevelopment in existing urban centers, and at the immediate outer boundary of existing urban centers. Medium and high density urban development is emphasized, resulting in a reversal of trends in declining urban density.

Transportation: Improved Existing Transit Services

This scenario would include a significant increase in existing transit services—including expansion of service areas, hours, frequency of service, and express bus service—with transit services continuing to be provided predominantly by buses. Bicycle facilities—bike lanes, wider curb lanes, paved shoulders—are provided as arterials are reconstructed, with a regional

system of off-street facilities developed beyond gradual additions. Highway capacity additions are implemented only to address the residual traffic congestion which may not be alleviated by transit, bicycle, and other measures.

SCENARIO C – COMPACT TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT WITHIN URBAN CENTERS

Land Use: Compact Transit-Oriented Development

This scenario concentrates new development primarily along light rail or bus rapid transit (BRT) lines and particularly at light rail or BRT stations. There is an emphasis on high density urban development, mostly through infill or redevelopment in existing urban centers. Very little growth occurs outside existing urban centers.

Transportation: Light Rail/BRT and High Levels of Bicycle Accommodation

Under this scenario, a system of light rail and BRT lines within urban centers is developed beyond a significant increase to existing bus transit services (service to new areas, additional hours, increased service frequency, and express bus service). Higher levels of bicycle accommodation, beyond bicycle facilities provided as part of arterial reconstruction, are provided—such as protected bicycle lanes—in key bicycle corridors. A Region-wide system of off-street bicycle facilities is also developed. Highway improvements are limited to modernization to current design standards as highways are reconstructed.

SCENARIO D – COMPACT TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT ALONG COMMUTER RAIL CONNECTING URBAN CENTERS

Land Use: Compact Transit-Oriented Development

This scenario concentrates new development primarily adjacent to commuter rail stations. There is an emphasis on high density urban development, mostly through infill or redevelopment in existing urban centers. Very little growth occurs outside existing urban

centers, with the exception of areas adjacent to commuter rail stations located between urban centers.

Transportation: Commuter Rail and High Levels of Bicycle Accommodation

Under this scenario, a system of commuter rail lines between urban centers is developed beyond a significant increase to existing bus transit services (service to new areas, additional hours, increased service frequency, and express bus service). Higher levels of bicycle accommodation, beyond bicycle facilities provided as part of arterial reconstruction, are provided—such as protected bicycle lanes—in key bicycle corridors. A Region-wide system of off-street bicycle facilities is also developed. Highway improvements are limited to modernization to current design standards as highways are reconstructed.

SCENARIO C+D – COMPACT TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT WITHIN URBAN CENTERS AND ALONG COMMUTER RAIL

Land Use: Compact Transit-Oriented Development

This scenario concentrates new development primarily along light rail, BRT, and commuter rail lines and particularly at light rail, BRT, and commuter rail stations. There is an emphasis on high density urban development, mostly through infill or redevelopment in existing urban centers. Very little growth occurs outside existing urban centers, with the exception of areas adjacent to commuter rail stations located between urban centers.

Transportation: Light Rail/BRT/Commuter Rail and High Levels of Bicycle Accommodation

Under this scenario, a light rail/BRT system within urban centers and a commuter rail system between urban centers are developed in addition to a significant increase in existing local bus transit services (service to new areas, additional hours, and increased service frequency). Higher levels of bicycle accommodation, beyond bicycle facilities provided as part of arterial reconstruction, are provided—such as protected bicycle lanes—in key bicycle corridors. A Region-wide system of off-street bicycle facilities is also developed. Highway improvements are limited to modernization to current design standards as highways are reconstructed.