To: Members of the Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission
From: Patricia Sinclair
Re: Comments on Transportation 2030
Date: February 29, 2008

Below are detailed comments on four areas of Transportation 2030 from a Lawrence resident.

1. I am strongly opposed to extending E. 19th Street eastward to connect with a proposed northern extension of Franklin Road or to having that extension connect with E. 15th Street.

2. I am opposed to an exit from the proposed South Lawrence Trafficway at Haskell and to the widening of that street northward to 23rd Street.

3. I strongly support public transportation, urge that the frequency and hours of operation be extended, but support an entire redesign of the current system which does not now meet the needs of riders and requires excessive transfers.

4. I urge that the city adopt specific minimum standards for roundabouts (size, location, etc.), as per my earlier presentation to the Traffic Safety Commission, and discontinue the indiscriminate use of them.

5. I urge the city to increase efforts to make the city more pedestrian-friendly, including by adding sidewalks, and upgrading existing sidewalks at the city's expense.

1. Opposed to extension of E. 19th Street eastward to meet the proposed Franklin Road extension.

Any extension of E. 19th Street eastward to link to roads from south of 23rd Street and to the industrial park would place an undue burden on E. 19th Street and its existing residents by increasing the volume and nature of traffic on a residential street.

19th Street is almost exclusively a **residential street** and already has more traffic than it can safely handle. Any proposed linkage eastward would generate more traffic which could not be accommodated without widening the street by tearing down homes. A loss of homes would severely damage and devalue the neighborhoods.

Increased traffic would be detrimental to residents and would bring changes not in keeping with the goals expressed for new neighborhoods in the plan. Quality of life for residents has already gone down due to a constant roar of traffic, noise, pollution, etc.

Residents of existing, established neighborhoods should not be expected to sacrifice their neighborhoods to allow for new developments, commercial or residential, on the outskirts of the city. We need protection to continue as a thriving desirable neighborhood.

The city considered E. 19th to be a collector as recently as 2003, but somehow it was changed to a minor arterial by the Planning Dept.

The past decade has seen dramatic increases in the volume of traffic, both commuters and commercial vehicles, on 19th. Residents in vehicles and on foot have difficulty crossing (or accessing) the E. 19th Street from side streets such as New Hampshire or Rhode Island. During high traffic volume on 19th, drivers on E. 19 do not yield to drivers from Barker trying to access the roundabout and traffic backs up on the local streets along 19th. This roundabout is very dangerous for pedestrians, including elementary school children and it is particularly small, giving short sightlines for viewing oncoming traffic and without room for traffic to stop for pedestrians without stopping in the roundabout itself.

I live in the Barker neighborhood, which is from 15th to 23rd, and east from Massachusetts to just east of Learnard. E. 19th Street bisects this residential neighborhood, which has its homes facing and close to the street. Any widening would destroy the residential character of the neighborhood and cause danger and hardship to its residents. Since I bought my home 14 years ago, E. 19th has gone from stop signs on Haskell to a traffic light with a turn lane. The roundabout has lead to faster continuous traffic on E. 19th as it no longer has to stop for stop signs at Barker. My backyard was once peaceful and now has the constant roar of traffic. My backyard abuts the backyard of a 19th Street resident.

Many children attending Cordley Elementary, on 19th at Vermont, must cross 19th. The same is true for students at Lawrence High School.

It is a bike route and incompatible with increased traffic. It is the site of a proposed rails to trails path which would cross E. 19th Street.

19th, from just east of Harper, is almost exclusively residential, with at least three churches or religious centers, an elementary school (and another a few blocks south), Lawrence High School, the Humane Society, the fairgrounds, a couple of Laundromats, some commercial on the corners of Massachusetts, a few K.U. residences near its western end, and an extremely limited area of offices and light industry, including the SRS office, by the former ATSF railroad tracks, and a small shopping center on one corner of Haskell.

Several years ago, residents of Barker had E. 19th closed for a very long period for several projects: new water lines, a new stormwater system east of Learnard that crossed the street, new curbs and surfacing, widened sidewalks, and the installation of the roundabout at Barker. This was a huge problem for residents in terms of dirt and dust and noise and commercial vehicles and the inability to move about in their own neighborhood. Narrow local streets such as mine got an enormous amount of cut-through traffic which endangered children, and residents walking and trying to exit their driveways, and caused noise around the clock.

This was a hardship on the neighborhood, and a large expense. People lost land for the creation of the roundabout. This should not happen again.

2. Opposed to SLT exit at Haskell and widening of Haskell.

The proposed SLT added an exit at Haskell. The SLT was supposed to be a bypass, which would not be designed for exits within the city itself. In written comments to the planners, I asked who they anticipated would use that exit, and where the traffic would go, but they had not studied that. I suggest that much of that traffic would find its way north and then west on either E. 19th or E. 15, neither of which can accommodate more traffic, and both of which are residential streets.

Will this be a shortcut to downtown or KU?

3. Public transportation

I support the expansion of public transportation in frequency and hours of operation. We already subsidize vehicular traffic within the city by providing streets, parking, maintenance of streets, traffic devices, police, etc. Public transportation allows people who are not fit drivers or whose cars may not be fit to drive an alternative to driving, thus contributing to safety and decreasing congestion. It should allow people to work, to volunteer, to shop, to access health and other services, to attend church, to attend social functions, to attend school, and for children to participate in after school activities.

The current design for bus routes in Lawrence is based on a study that was out-of-date at implementation and done by an out-of-town company. It does not allow for easy east-west movement, it causes people to travel downtown when not needed and make multiple transfers, and either does not serve adequately or at all the East Lawrence Recreation Center, the Boys and Girls Club, the large Edgewood public housing community, the Pelathe Center, etc. One might make the case that it its design makes it difficult for people living on the east side of town to access the west side.

4. Roundabouts

The city's use of roundabouts needs to be reconsidered and refined. Several years ago, I addressed the Traffic Safety Commission and stated that the city did not have any minimum standards for a roundabout. The one built at 19th and Barker is very small relative to others in the city (dimensions of the circle, width of drivers lanes, and distance approaching roundabout). It does not offer adequate sightlines for viewing oncoming vehicles, it does not allow vehicles to stop for pedestrians without stopping in the roundabout itself, and it is placed on what the city now calls a minor arterial. Pedestrians do not have adequate protection or even a safe place to stand midway.

The continuous flow of traffic created since drivers do not need to stop makes it difficult for those trying to enter 19th street from side streets (including Barker, which should have equal access) and for residents trying to cross the street. This also has lead to faster traffic and an increase in traffic. The traffic is not "calmed" as it does not slow down and makes turns onto Barker at a high rate of speed.

Roundabouts are not a safe solution for every intersection. National data which I presented showed that they are not recommended for arterial streets and are not for small intersections in densely populated neighborhoods such as Barker and 19th.

They are also very expensive, especially when counting the cost of the city staff's time.

R. W. Lichtwardt
2131 Terrace Road
Lawrence, KS 66049-2736

February 29, 2008

Ms. Davonna Morgan
Senior Transportation Planner
Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission
Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization
City Hall
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Ms. Morgan:

RE: ADOPTION OF *TRANSPORTATION 2030*

We were surprised to see a version of the *Transportation 2030* Proposed Thoroughfares Map showing an arterial along the section line between Sections 21 and 28 going directly westward from the Folks Road/Peterson Road intersection, whereas other, supposedly identical versions of the same maps available to the public did not show this arterial. We have attached four maps illustrating the problem. Maps #1A and #1B have been excerpted from the *Transportation 2030* version downloaded from the Planning Commission Agenda for the January 28, 2008 Planning Commission meeting. Supposedly identical maps available to the public as the *official draft* downloaded from the public website, http://www.lawrenceplanning.org do not show this road. We have attached labeled Maps #2A and #2B which do not show this road. We believe the map version which shows the road extension of Peterson Road due west along the section line between Sections 21 and 28 that appeared in the Planning Commission January Agenda is incorrect. A proposed road or arterial along that section line has never been adopted by the City Commission.

Almost three years ago the Planning Commission discussed several alternatives to extending Peterson Road to the west. After consideration, the Planning Commission forwarded to the City Commission three alternative routes to consider, which the City Commission did. The City Commission held a public hearing on these three possible routes, and there was very strong opposition to selecting the direct westward route along or near the section line between these Sections 21 and 28. Many individuals, organizations, and even the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Commission testified in opposition. Many valid reasons were given for opposing the construction of a road in that particular location westward from Folks Road. As a result, the City Commissioners did not approve this specific alignment and decided that further studies were needed before coming to any decision. No such studies have been done to date, and no decision has been made.

As a consequence, it is inappropriate for any *Transportation 2030* map to show an arterial or road on or near the section line going west from Peterson Road, even as a concept, because in doing so it implies that such a location has had official approval.

Because it is inappropriate for any *Transportation 2030* map to show that arterial in that location at this time, we respectfully request that you remove that arterial from the Proposed Thoroughfares Maps, Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 that is shown along the section line between Sections 21 and 28 on the Draft Maps that appeared in the Planning Commission version of *Transportation 2030* as illustrated in attached Maps #1A & 1B.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our concern.

Sincerely yours,

Bob & Betty

Bob and Betty Lichtwardt

cc: David Corliss, City Manager
Scott McCullough, Director of Planning
Grant Eichhorn, Chairman of the Planning Commission

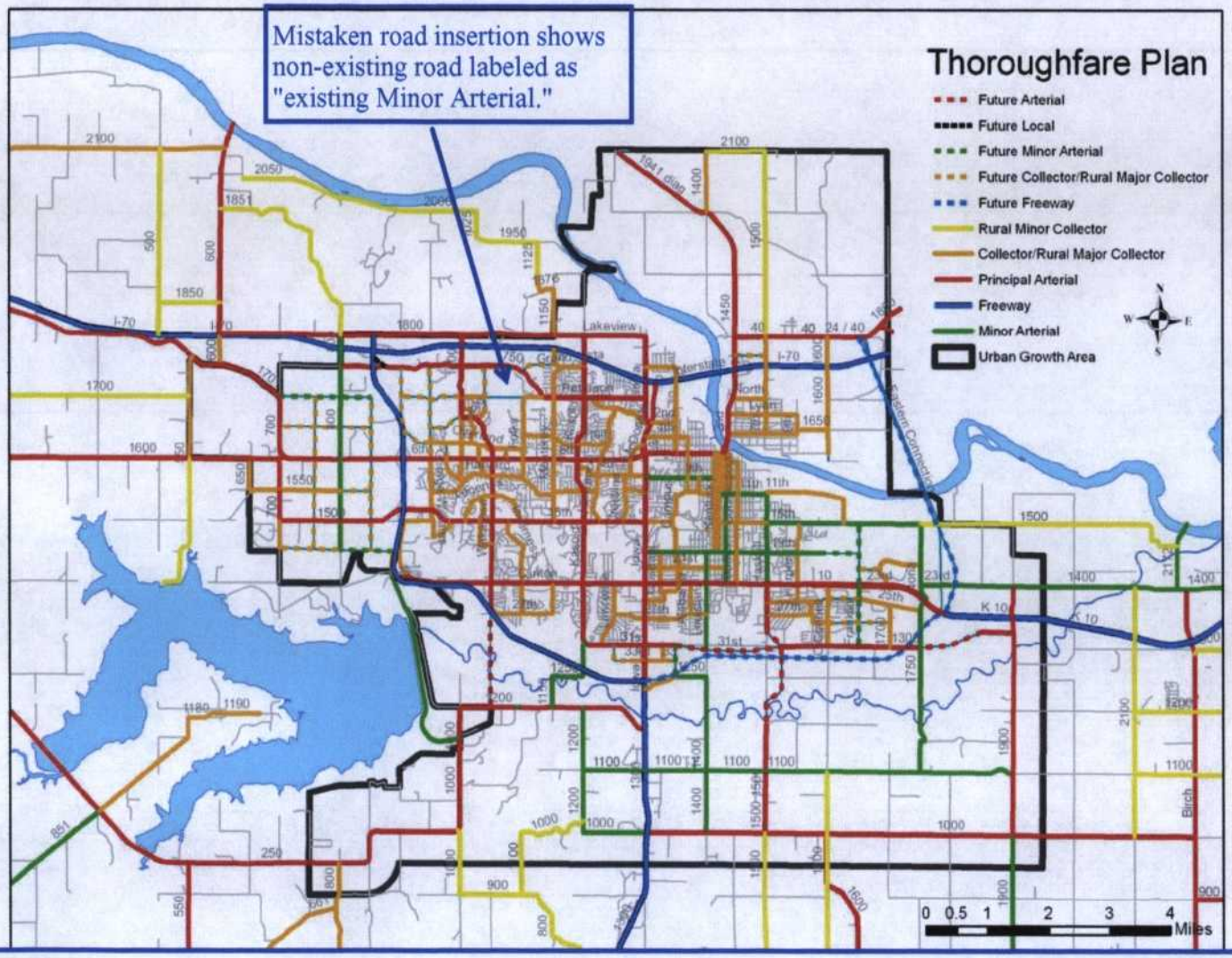
Attachments

PLEASE NOTE: ADDED COMMENTS BY LICHTWARDTs TO THESE MAPS ARE SHOWN IN BLUE.

MAP # 1A

Figure 6.9
2030 Proposed Thoroughfares Map
(Urban Growth Area)

Source: Lawrence/Douglas County MPO

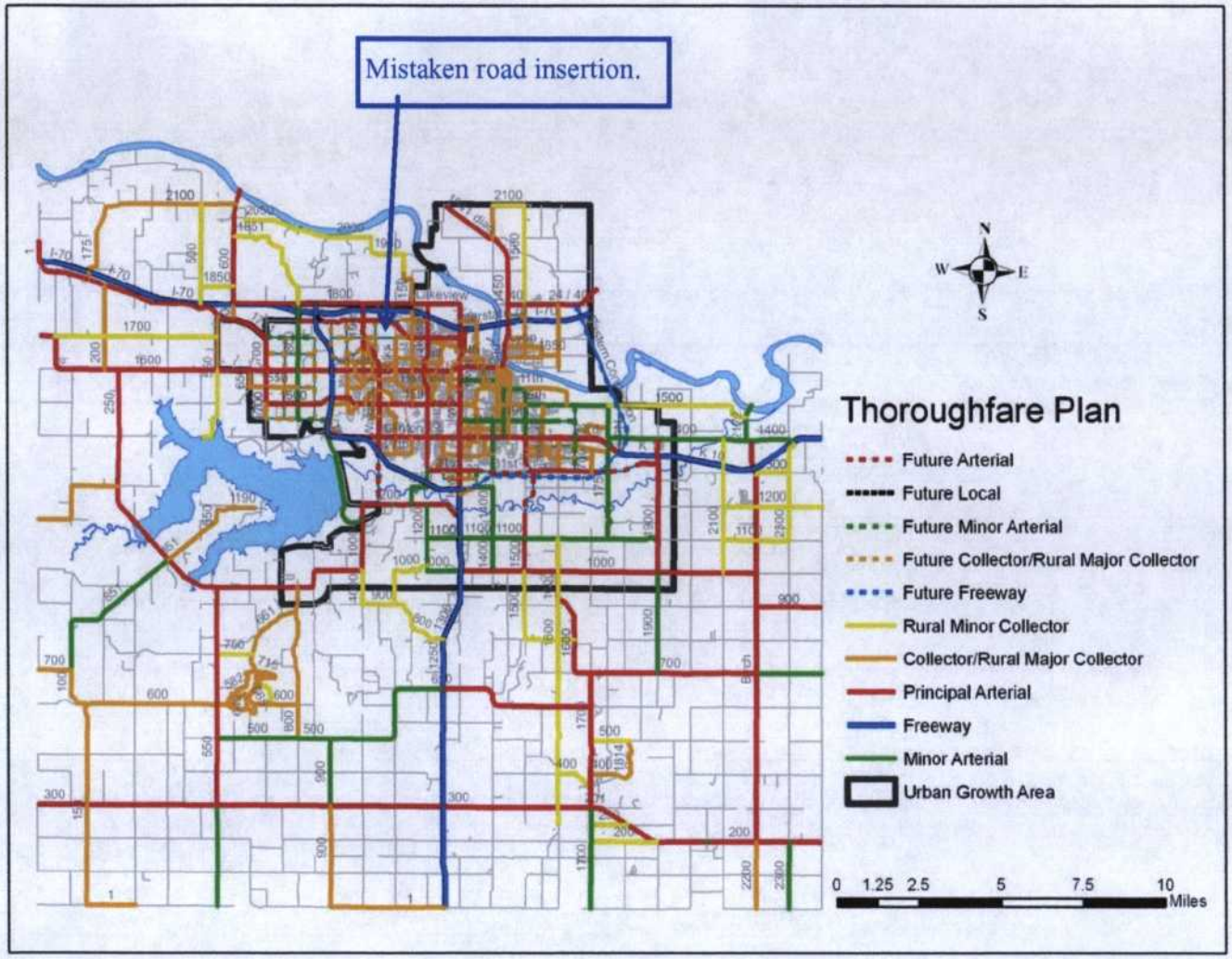


Roadway functional classification guides the access management, corridor preservation, and design needs of each facility.

MAP #1A. This map has been excerpted from the Draft Transportation 2030 version included in the 1-28-08 Planning Commission Agenda downloaded by us from the Planning Commission website, 2-27-08, intended for the Planning Commission and MPO review. The dark blue arrow shows the non-existent road labeled as an "existing" road."

Figure 6.10
2030 Major Thoroughfares Map
(Douglas County)

Source: Lawrence/Douglas County MPO



MAP # 1B.

This map shows the same mistake as Map #1A.

Roadway characteristics in the county differ somewhat from streets and highways in urbanized areas.

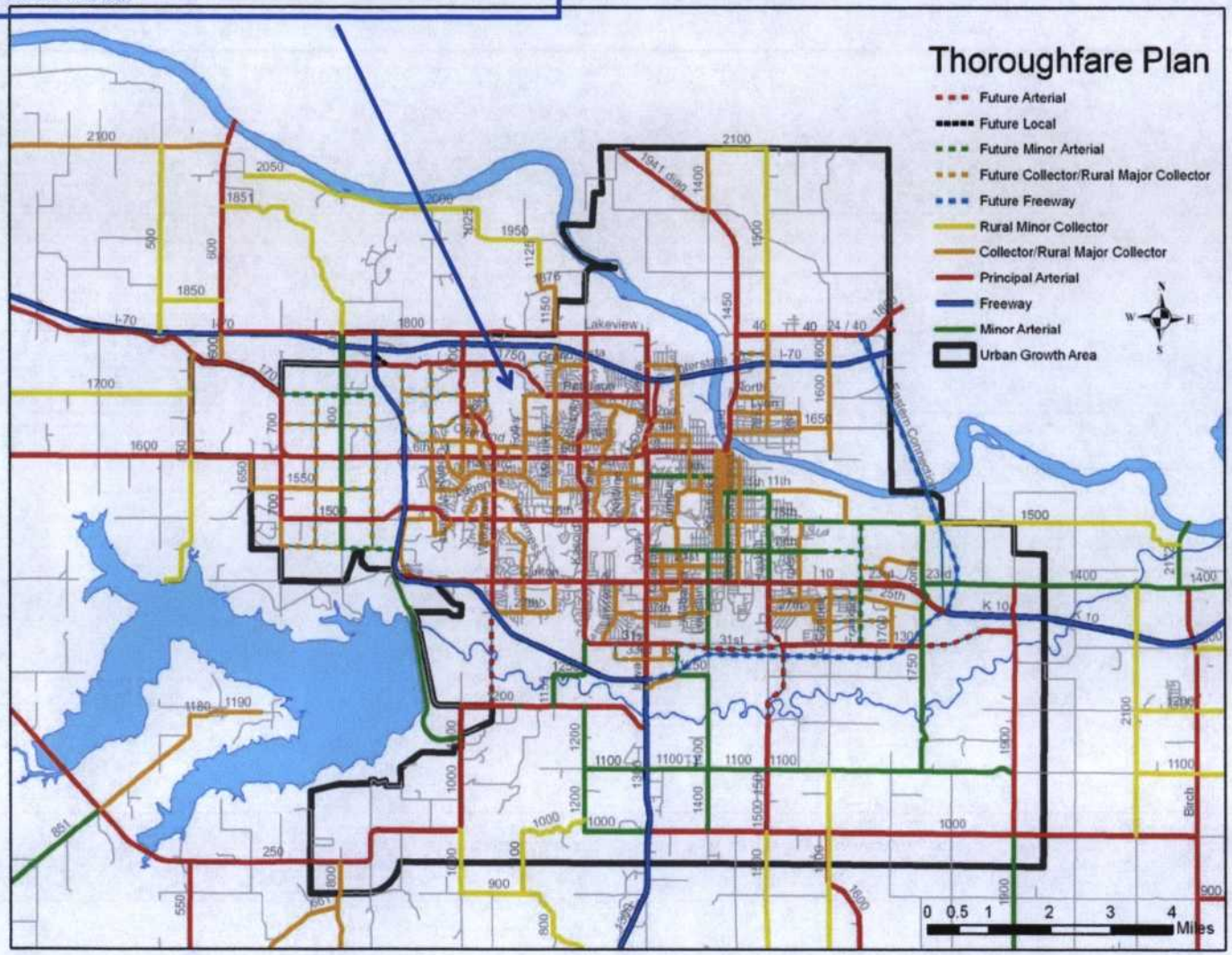
Comments in blue have been added by the Lichtwardts. This is the version of Transportation 2030 available to the public for review.

This is the correct version of the road. It does not extend near or along the section line between Sections 21 & 28, and has never been approved by the City Commission for that location to extend Peterson Road.

Figure 6.9
2030 Proposed Thoroughfares Map
(Urban Growth Area)

Source: Lawrence/Douglas County MPO

MAP # 2 A



Roadway functional classification guides the access management, corridor preservation, and design needs of each facility.

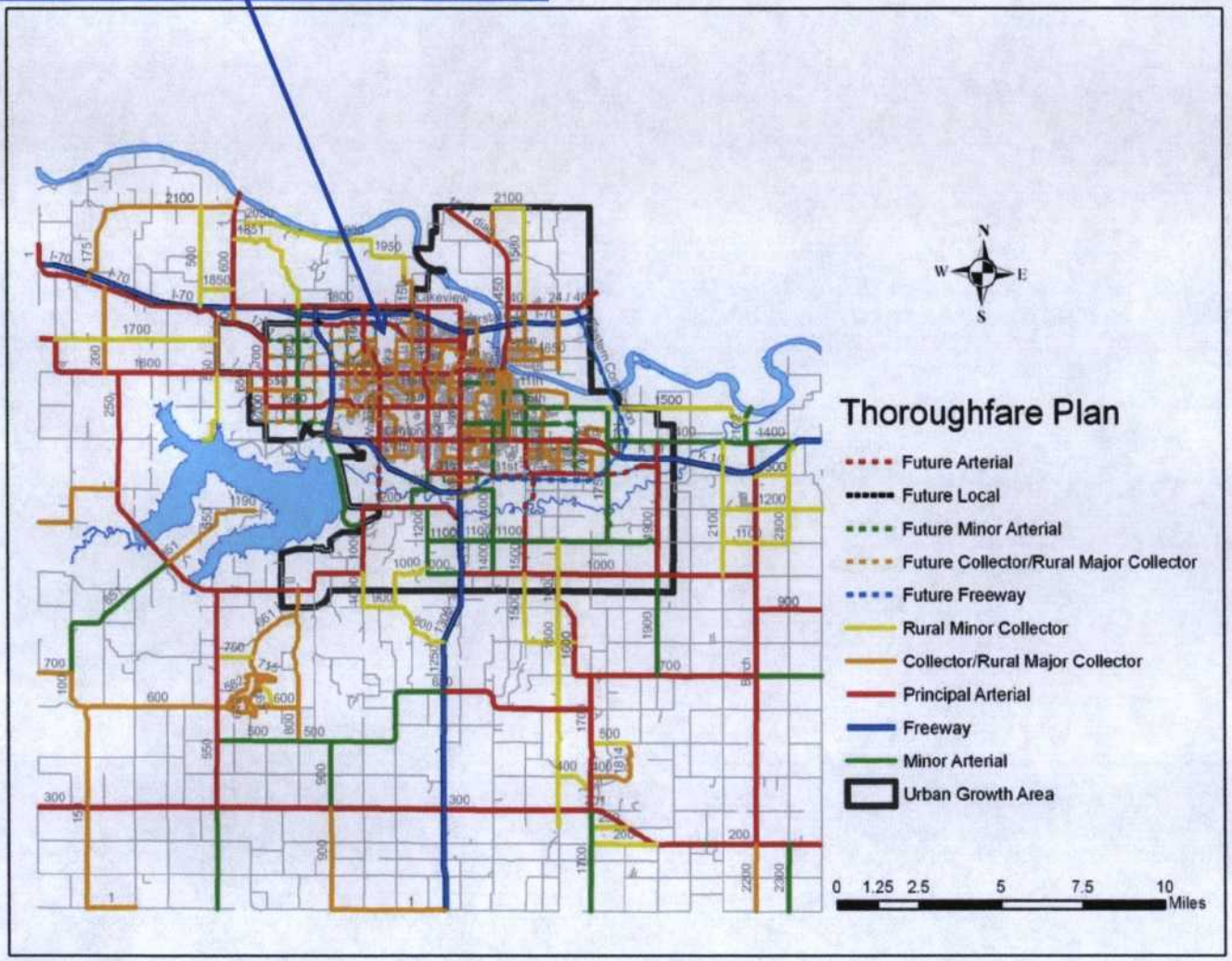
MAP #2A. This map has been excerpted from the Draft Transportation 2030 version included in the http:/www.lawrenceplanning.org general website intended for public review, downloaded by us early in February and again on 2-28-08. The blue arrow shows the same location as in Map#1A&B, but with NO ROAD, in contrast to the Planning Commission version which shows a road. Because this location has never been approved by the City Commission for a road, we view the Map #1A & B---the PC Agenda version---as a mistake.

This is the correct version of the road. It does not extend near or along the section line between Section 21 & 28, and has never been approved by the City Commission for that location to extend Peterson Road.

Figure 6.10
2030 Major Thoroughfares Map
(Douglas County)

Source: Lawrence/Douglas County MPO

MAP # 2B.



Roadway characteristics in the county differ somewhat from streets and highways in urbanized areas.

Feb. 5, 2008

Planning Department,

Dear Sirs:

I write to again express my opposition to the extension of Bob Billings Parkway to K-10 highway.

As pointed out in my September, 2007 letter to the Lawrence City Commission, the Parkway, in a distance of less than 4 miles, already has 68 access openings providing both egress and ingress. It also includes an extremely dangerous curve near Corpus Christi Church which has been the scene of two fatal accidents in recent years. It should not be open to more traffic!

The most recent rationale "This is a new gateway to Kansas University" shows very poor planning judgement since the route from 15th at Iowa to the campus leads to what is termed as one of the most dangerous intersections in Lawrence .... 15th at Engel Road.

I urge you to put this transportation project to rest or, at the very least, at the end of your list.

Thank you.

Julie Hack
4300 Quail Pointe Terrace
Lawrence, KS. 66047

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission

FROM: Lawrence-Douglas County League of Women Voters

SUBJECT: Transportation 2030

DATE: February 29, 2008

These comments were prepared by the Land Use Committee of the League's local chapter. They are meant for consideration by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is the local planning commission. We understand that public hearings will be held by the MPO, the Lawrence City Commission and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.

While this is supposed to be a comprehensive multi-modal plan, it is primarily a highway plan. There are many specific highway proposals with cost estimates. While there are chapters on transit, bicycles, and pedestrians, they mostly contain general principles and recommendations rather than specific projects.

Three major highway scenarios are presented in Chapter 6. The plan recommends completion of the South Lawrence Trafficway on the 32nd Street alignment. It rejects the alternative alignment that would go south of the Wakarusa River. The League has never taken a position on the SLT, since there are arguments on both sides. The 32nd Street alignment would have adverse environmental impacts, but the other route would probably stimulate urban sprawl. This issue may eventually be decided in court.

The third scenario is the so-called "Eastern Bypass" which would connect the Kansas Turnpike with Route K-10. The plan rejects this proposal. Here the League differs, because we believe this highway should be built. It would take many trucks off of existing Lawrence streets, where they cause safety hazards and congestion (Iowa Street is especially affected at the present time).

There are other proposals to create freeways and widen arterial streets. In general, we prefer improving traffic flow on existing streets to widening them or building new routes. We concur with proposed intersection improvements for 23rd Street and Iowa Street. We agree that use of Intelligent Transportation Systems on major arterials would be desirable. This could help the transit system as well as other traffic.

The chapter on the "Transit System Plan" mentions only one specific route, quoting: "Consider a north-south route in the western portion of the City that would connect Bob Billings Parkway and Clinton Parkway." There are many general actions recommended. They are fine, but could be applied to any city in the United States. The

final transit action proposed is “Develop a Long-Range Transit Plan.” In other words, this document does not contain a transit plan, and the City doesn’t have one.

The chapter on the “Bicycle System Plan” does refer to a bicycle plan that was adopted by the MPO in 2004 and is recommended as a component of Transportation 2030. There is a map of the plan, but it is so small that it is essentially illegible.

The chapter on “Pedestrian Plan” also contains many good general policies but lacks specific proposals for improvements (with their locations). Here is one comment from the chapter: “What we’ve heard…A community pedestrian plan should be developed.” In other words, there isn’t any at this time.

There is one reference to the pedestrian advisory committee under a recommendation to “coordinate pedestrian planning issues.” This body has been inactive for some time and has never had official status. It should be formally created and its members appointed by the City Commission.

One issue that has received recent publicity is who pays to maintain sidewalks. We believe some public funding should be used for this, as happens in several cities in Kansas. Many pedestrian accidents occur when a car is turning right on a red light, and the City should increase efforts to control this.

The chapter on “Financial Plan” contains considerable detail on revenue sources from federal, state, and local sources. The total projected revenues to finance the plan through the year 2030 come to $1.3 billion. Expenditures would total $1.203 billion for highways and bridges, $96 million for transit, and $7.4 million for bicycles and pedestrians. The imbalance is obvious.

A couple of other comments:

The maps of future land use and highways do not always correspond with the maps in other documents, such as the comprehensive plan and the Smart Code.

We believe that membership in the MPO should go beyond members of the Planning Commission. We understand that federal rules permit elected officials to serve as members, and this would be desirable. It would be even better if some members were citizens with expertise in transportation.

We shall be grateful for your consideration of these points and shall try to respond if you have questions or differences of opinion.

Dear Davonna Moore,
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Transportation 2030 plan.

Referring to Chapter 6 "Roadway System Plan," p. 83 "Recommended Roadway System Plan,"
my top choices on the list are:

- I-70/KS Turnpike --widening to 6 lanes through Douglas County
- US-59 from South Douglas County Line to N 1100--four-lane freeway (the current US-59 is treacherous)
- Iowa St. and 23rd St. intersection improvements (as long as these roads are still safe and convenient for bicycles and pedestrians, traveling along and traversing)
- K-10/SLT Western Section (this road currently at 65 mph, 2-lanes and no median, is very dangerous)

LAST CHOICE ON THE LIST:

- K-10/SLT 32nd St. alignment

Thank you for registering my choices,

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/\/\/\/\/\/\/\/\/\/\/
Laurie Ward
38 Winona Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66046-4848
785-841-6118

Long Range Transportation Plan T2030 City of Lawrence, KS

Comments provided by Carey Maynard-Moody careymm@sunflower.com tel. 785.842.6517

The title of the document, Long Range Transportation Plan is misleading. It is not a multi modal transportation plan. It is a set of considerations that might be used to formulate a long range, multi modal transportation plan. If the language in the document were more assertive and proactive, it could be considered such a plan. There are, in the documents plans for highway building. I suggest the title of the document be revised to more accurately reflect what it contains. Perhaps something like: Highway Building Plans and Considerations for Drafting a Multimodal, Long Range Transportation Plan. Could the MPO to take on more promoting and planning of multimodal transportation? While there has been some progress in this area, the document, with its focus on roads, streets and highway projects, clearly puts public transit on the back burner at a time in history when it needs to be pulled forward.

Following are a few specific comments on text as well as on images in the document.

p. 1 "Why We Need a Plan" I suggest this revision:

Good planning considers the science of climate change. The City of Lawrence has signed the Mayoral Climate Protection Agreement committing it to reducing green house gas emissions (GHG). A heavy emitter of GHG is the transportation sector. Therefore, the transportation planning process strives to enhance the community's character and quality of life by considering the need for climate protection and energy conservation in planning transportation. Toward that end, T2030 strives to manage travel demands but not at the expense of exacerbating global warming. T2030 promotes and supports public transit and multimodal transportation services and infrastructure that conserve energy, protect the environment and citizens' health. T2030 involves citizens participation, considers the interaction between land use and transportation and their cumulative effect on the built and natural environments. This is reflected in the various projects planned and described in T2030.

p. 2 Important Transportation Issues

- Managing Congestion
  1. Please make a strong reference here to the *role public transit plays in relieving congestion*.
  2. Insert text about T2030's intention to *promote public transit* as a means of relieving congestion and protecting the community from excessive GHG emissions from automobiles.
  3. Describe *the future transit plan for the "T"*.

p. 28 Map

This map is too small to be meaningful. *Insert a full page map of the "T" routes* so the reader who has never seen one can appreciate how comprehensive the system is.

p. 32 "Land Use decisions are just as much public health decisions as are decisions about food preparation"

Please insert text describing the public health benefit of public transit as well as walking and biking. All three of these reduce GHG emissions. See comment p. 1

p.37 The Santa Fe depot.

1. In all fairness, some text should be added that acknowledges the lack of security and lack of public safety for our AMTRAK rail passengers waiting to board at Lawrence's Santa Fe depot or waiting for ride home after arrival at the depot.
2. T2030 should provide reference to plans for *securing and restoring the depot*.
3. *The proposed extension of the AMTRAK's Northern Flyer services between Lawrence, Topeka, Wichita, Oklahoma City & Dallas/Ft. Worth should be included in this section.*
4. K-10 Transit service text needs to include data on ridership increase and success of this new public bus transit service. *The route began in January 2007 and ridership has grown from 114 riders a day to 450 to 500 riders per day. Johnson County Transit estimated 66,000 riders in 2007.*
5. Text should acknowledge the new educational opportunities the K-10 transit bus service offers to LHS and Eudora HS students to attend JCCC & KU.

Describe collaboration and partnerships with regional MPOs for regional transportation system planning. Describe the regional transportation plan including public transit and how Lawrence's T2030 fits into that plan. This plan may include the Santa Fe depot in the transit hub.

p. 52 eighth planning factor in SAFETEA-LU.

#8 Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Note: This planning factor gives me pause. Long Range transportation plans suggest that present transportation systems need revision because they are out of date. Therefore, we do *not* want to *preserve the present system*. Perhaps text can be revised to suggest that the present system will continue to serve as a springboard for new systems that will correct the mistakes of past transportation planning. As the text in chapter 15 points out on p. 218-19, historically, transportation planning has served the motorists at the expense of the community and pedestrians. This kind of transportation system should NOT be preserved.

p. 53 Note on photos

Must all photos be local? Consider posting some from outside to serve as inspiration for what *we are striving for*. On this page, remove the photo of the view of 23rd street looking west and replace it with the beautiful transit hub in Topeka which is downtown on 9th Street near the Capitol. Or if that doesn't sit well, insert a conceptual drawing of what a fitting transportation hub would look like for our community.

Restoring community livability

Please consider commenting on those *under-utilized, over-built roads* in Lawrence that if retrofitted, would add safety for residences, improvement to neighborhood quality of life and reduction of the tax burden of maintaining overbuilt street. Suggest the option of narrowing these streets to reduce speeding and increase safety. Describe how in the space created by narrowing them, generous landscaped (read that trees) setbacks should be built between curb and sidewalks. As your quote on page 32 suggests, if a transportation system does not include planning for walkability as well as road use, then the health of the community will be compromised because no one will dare get out of their car. It will be too dangerous to cross four lane streets with turn lanes such as Clinton Parkway & Inverness Drive. How can the children who live north of Clinton Parkway safely walk to Sunflower Elementary if they have to walk across 5 lanes of roadway? How can pedestrians using the sidewalks along Clinton Parkway exercise or arrive at a destination without sucking up exhaust and enduring the deafening roar of traffic?

I couldn't find any text about Lawrence's USD 497 use of KDOT's *Safe Walk to School* program. Please include.

Note on maps in T2030 draft

They are too small to be useful. Many have no index. They have no street labels to help orient the viewer. If space is an issue in labeling, label just a few N,S,E,W major thoroughfares. Strive to make this document user-friendly.

p. 58 Goal 4

I suggest this revision (in red)

Preserve the environment by adopting criteria that promote smart growth patterns to help sustain healthy air quality levels, reduce use of fossil fuels, and minimize land use conflicts.

I suggest this revision (note yellow highlight):
Objective 4.1: Provide an efficient and effective network of streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, bike trails, transit stops and roads that access all areas, provide continuity and connections into and beyond the City of Lawrence and Douglas County,

Objective 4.2:
Support Measures to Maintain Air Quality and minimize Use of Fossil Fuels
(I suggest this revision (in red)
• Support and promote alternative transportation modes to improve air quality and to provide travelers a means of reducing the use of polluting and costly automobile fossil fuels.

p. 62 should read p. 63 check page numbering

p. 64 Sidewalk setbacks: Question: Why suggested only on arterial, principle arterial, and collector street? Why not on all streets?

Ch. 6 - Roadway System Plan

p. 91 - Environmental Mitigation Strategies

While a great deal of text is devoted to describing the mitigation strategies for the losses incurred by the *32nd Street Alignment B Alternative of the SLT*, no text refers to the cultural and spiritual damage incurred nor mitigation for this loss. This silence speaks volumes. I strongly encourage you to rethink conveying such insensitivity to our neighbors at HINU. Text reads:

> "The proposed K-10 (SLT) alignment is an excellent example of local, state, and federal agencies working with key stakeholders to address environmental issues."

Text does not reveal that local, state, nor federal agencies successfully worked with HINU, a major stakeholder, in an effort to honor HINU's need to maintain the integrity of the sacred wetlands.

Nor does the text reveal that HINU was ***not*** among the signers of the MOA. Text reads:

"This plan was memorialized in a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and signed by the Corps of Engineers, the Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This agreement indicates that there is broad agency support for building the Selected Alternative…"

While said agencies are valid contributors to the process of planning a highway, a major player is the community negatively affected by the project. In this case it is a racial minority community. The lack of reference to the important role of HINU in the text suggests either that HINU did not matter or that, because HINU did not agree with the alignment B, HINU was excluded from the highway planning process. I doubt this is the impression you want to convey in this text.

I encourage staff to make another stab at this text, one that is more forthcoming about the agencies' disregard for and resultant hurt that this highway project alignment has had on the HINU community. Furthermore, I suggest that staff write text that informs the reader that when the ROD (record of decision) is issued this spring, that the highway project will be challenged in court, creating further delays. In its current form, text suggests that the Alignment B of the SLT is a done deal that future transportation planning should work around. This is hardly the case.

Ch 15 Impacts of the plan

Re the adverse effects of building the SLT – As written, the adverse effects of Tract 0010.01 Native American population at HINU) fail to refer to the significant loss of contiguous natural area (wetlands) which has historic and spiritual value to this community. This oversight is an affront to the First Nations People at HINU. To minimize the impact by considering only the temporary inconvenience of the noise of construction is to overlook the significance of the loss to the Native American community of the 77 acres of wetlands and the wildlife that use it for habitat.

Thank you for your kind attention and thoughtful consideration of my comments on the document. Please feel free to contact me with questions and further considerations.

Carey Maynard-Moody

careymm@sunflower.com

785.842.6517

Lawrence Peak Oil Action Committee
Kansas Sustainability Action Network
P.O.Box 1064
Lawrence, KS 66044

20 February 2008

Lawrence-Douglas Co. Metropolitan Planning Organization
Lawrence-Douglas Co. Planning Office
Lawrence City Hall
6 east 6th St.
Lawrence, KS 66044

re: T2030 draft, Jan-Feb 2008 (typo correction, paragraph 3)

Dear Members of the MPO:
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the current draft of T2030. I would like to address the larger context as well as specific chapters within the document.

Ch. 1, Context & Issues
As we enter the 8th year of the 21st century, it must be noted that all the underlying assumptions of this document are of the 20th century. As a result, all the conclusions of this draft of T2030 are skewed toward old school thinking.

The historical pattern of 2% annual growth of population and employment over several decades is given as the validation that this growth curve will continue unchanged. No empirical data is offered to support this assumption. Yet the bulk of this document is predicated on a continuation of an era of cheap petroleum that is rapidly being eclipsed by the phenomenon known as Peak Oil. Simply stated, Peak Oil occurs when global oil demand outpaces global oil production, resulting in rapid price inflation.

No energy policy analyst denies that Peak Oil is upon us; the only dispute is how soon the peak will occur (and some maintain it already has). The earliest projections are 2005-06 made by Lester Brown of the Earth Policy Institute and by K.S. Deffeyes of Princeton. The general range is from 2006-10, projected by petroleum executives and geologists, academics, and investment bankers. The World Energy Council projection is after 2010. But notably, the CEO of Shell Oil just revised his projection of 2025 back to 2015. [1]

Obviously, most of these dates are present time, with none having a planning horizon anywhere near 2030. For the T2030 Plan draft to ignore this reality is not only irresponsible, it is embarrassing for our community and our MPO.

The effects of Peak Oil are already being felt throughout the local and global economy, with significant implications for the transportation sector. Peak Oil price inflation will negatively impact everything transportation related: air, ocean, rail, and road transport, global supply chains for commodities and finished products, ports and distribution hubs, warehousing and on-time inventories, big box retailing with truck fleets, internet sales with package express, suburban sprawl with single occupancy autos, commuter jobs, transit, asphalt availability and cost, agricultural traction, coal mining and coal trains, etc.

Because our highly mobile society is completely oil dependent, Peak Oil price inflation will multiply through every aspect of our economy. Just today, 20 February, “The Labor Dept. reported that the total price index rose this month by 0.4%, but the core inflation index rose by 0.39%, which means higher prices are spreading into the broader economy”. [2] The driver? Energy. Today registered a record high $101.32 per barrel for oil.

Therefore, it is imperative to plan for transportation options that will minimize our use of oil, and even minimize our reliance on transportation itself. A better title for this plan would be Transportation Contraction 2030.

That said, I will comment on several specific elements within the Plan. What I offer is not prescient, merely scenario planning based on economic reality.

Ch. 5: Land Use and Transportation

This could prove to be the most important chapter of T2030. However, to effectively address a future following oil depletion, this chapter must be radically revamped. One of the few principles of T2030 that will hold is the TND cluster settlement and planning for reduced auto use. However, this principle must be rapidly applied to all of our existing neighborhoods within a much nearer planning horizon of 5-10 years at most.

First, we must shift our thinking away from autos over to any other form of transportation as our primary modes of transportation. Capital improvements must be prioritized for pedestrian, bicycle and transit connectivity, and re-engineering the auto infrastructure over to these non-auto modes.

Secondly, because of reduced influx of commodities and goods into our community (see: Ch.11 below), we will need to change City-wide zoning to accommodate mixed use neighborhoods that allow small scale handiwork trades and services and sales. Equally important will be a parity of open space and cluster density, so at least 50% of urban land is set aside for local food production, community gardens, and food vendors and cafes.

Third, building codes and subdivision regulations will need to incorporate solar access (non-shade) provisions, and rooftop wind generators or district-scale wind generators.

Fourth, any urbanization beyond current City limits will need to be very low density with village scale clusters, so as to preserve the bulk of productive agricultural lands. And all prime soils within the Kansas River and Wakarusa River floodplains must be designated and zoned for agricultural uses only. Our future food security will be regionally supplied.

Ch. 6: Roadway Plans

From the section titled Roadway Deficiencies: “Vehicular traffic is outpacing our ability to improve the roadway system. As a result, congestion has been building on the City's roadway network. This trend is expected to continue through the year 2030.” This policy statement from the Plan is a pivotal assumption, based on an unending supply of petroleum, and completely ignoring the Peak Oil crisis at our doorstep. If Peak Oil is fully acknowledged and appreciated, the reverse assumption will become our reality. Chapter 6 needs to be reworked accordingly.

As transport adapts to Peak Oil, auto use and congestion will be decreasing, and human powered transport and transit will be highly in demand. Any motorized urban transport that remains will tend to be electric or compressed air micro-autos, and electric scooters and bikes.

Vehicles and fuel are only half the picture. Pavement is the other component affected by Peak Oil. 94% of U.S. roads are paved with asphalt. On 14 January 2008, Venezuela halted exports to the U.S. of 6.2million barrels of asphalt per year. Though there are other sources, an overall shrinking supply and escalating oil prices will only result in higher road costs. And concrete production exhibits a significant CO2 profile, which, with the advent of the coming carbon taxes, will likewise be more expensive.

Ch. 7: Transit

The current City bus system is currently inadequate in frequency and range, both for employment trips and personal trips (retail, medical, etc.). And in the current budgetary mix, it is seriously under prioritized, readily considered as the “sacrificial lamb”.

For a post Peak Oil future, transit will need to become the backbone of any motorized local transportation. This principle will hold true for local options whether fixed route buses, semi-fixed route share taxis, or fully demand-response vans, as well as for inter-local options such as commuter rail and highway connector buses.

Lawrence needs to begin rapid integration of regional transit in cooperation with the Mid America Regional Council MPO, Kansas City MO, Johnson County KS, KDOT, the KTA, UPRR, and BNSFRR. Strategic origin-destination studies should be investigated, right-of-way options identified, and capital equipment budgeted for.

Ch. 8: Bicycles

Until ten years ago, the official City view of bicycles was still as a toy, for recreation and youth, in spite of the fact that Lawrence had adopted the Pedalplan in 1979. City bicycle plans were administered and funded by the Parks & Recreation Dept. For the most part, implementation meant bike signage, but for a few fragmented trails through City parks or along Federally funded roads. Commuter or utilitarian bicycling was inconsequential.

In the late 1990's, a combination of increased Federal funding and local bicycle activism spurred more serious bicycle plans and resulted in more bicycle lanes and side trails, with connectivity as a key design principle. While this is admirable progress, bicycle infrastructure lags behind most other equivalent cities, particularly University towns.

Admirably, current City plans and policies recognize bicycles as transportation, and funding is mostly through the Publics Works Dept. Yet implementation is slow because bicycle lanes or side trails are funded only as an adjunct to new roadway construction. Advancing the connectivity of an on-street bicycle network is not a priority of itself. Beyond that, the circumferential trail network is again a recreation item, impeded by the Parks & Recreation Dept. lack of R.O.W. purchase funding.

As with transit, a post Peak Oil Lawrence will need to rely extensively on bicycles for normal day-to-day activities. In order to transition from an auto emphasis to a non-motorized transportation system, Lawrence will need to conduct bicycle origin-destination studies, identify key roadways to dedicate primarily for bicycle use, and extend the network throughout all existing neighborhoods. Buses will need to incorporate more space for bicycles, locking bicycle racks will be needed in public areas, and places of employment will need shower facilities.

Ch. 9: Pedestrian

Walking in the late 20th century was used mostly after parking one's car, or else for health reasons as in hiking. The most walking done by the average person has been around home or work, or short jaunts in one's neighborhood. Only the young or indigent used walking extensively to get around. Therefore, many existing city sidewalks have deteriorated, and the billions of dollars needed to repair U.S. infrastructure is generally not devoted to sidewalks.

After many city dwellers abandon their automobiles due to fuel prices, walking will become a necessity for at least part of their mobility. Consistent surface sidewalks will be required, for non-motorized secondary transport such as roller blades or kick scooters, for

walking in inclement weather, and for cleanability during winter snow and ice. Budgeting for concrete will need to shift progressively away from auto pavement over to pedestrian facilities. All neighborhoods will need to become walkable neighborhoods.

T2030 has identified various protocols for inventorying sidewalk conditions and connectivity, and for level of service rankings. These will be useful tools for Peak Oil transitioning, but will need to be applied in a very different context to anticipate and plan for waning auto use, and a much heavier and continuous sidewalk use.

Ch. 11: Freight & Intermodal

The assumptions stated in the first paragraph of this section are probably the most likely to prove incorrect after Peak Oil. It is true that a seamless intermodal link from the local economy to the global economy has been valuable over the past few decades, with Kansas warehousing developing as a major economic reality.

For example, Kansas City Southern RR is spending billions to link their intermodal Smart Port with the shipping port of Lázaro Cárdenas on Mexico's Pacific coast, to bring Chinese containers to the central U.S. for truck distribution to markets. BNSF RR is pursuing a somewhat less ambitious facility in Gardener, on the assumption that U.S. consumer demand will continue to require global suppliers.

However, for a whole constellation of reasons, U.S. consumer demand is becoming constricted. This trend is driven by the sub-prime crisis, the export of most U.S. manufacturing jobs, record U.S. foreign debt and military spending, and volatile energy prices. And the flip side of the global economy sees consumer wealth and demand rising rapidly in China and India so that more and more production there is going to serve their own population rather than be exported. We are caught on our own economic petard.

As you might rightly imagine, this global supply chain is entirely dependent on cheap oil. But Peak Oil signals an end to that for two reasons: all major oil producing regions are now pumping at capacity and unable to ramp up their output, and their discovery of new oil fields continues to fall. Econ 101 says prices rise.

Adding to that is the fact that these producers are also allocating more of both their manufacturing output and oil output to their own growing economies, and exporting less. So not only are foreign product exports and U.S. product demand contracting, but Peak Oil means the cost of bring product to our markets is escalating. Econ 101 says availability drops.

Local and state roadway plans are greatly predicated on an expanding influx of foreign goods, but fairly soon that will prove to be a fanciful premise. The T2030 Plan would do well to scale back circumferential and inter-urban highway networks, and concentrate our limited budgets on local roads, trails and sidewalks to serve local and regional production.

The remaining focus on this chapter dealing with passenger rail, inter-city bus, and commuter rail are completely appropriate for post Peak Oil, but should be given even greater attention.

Conclusion

In essentially 100 years, industrial societies have consumed one half the global oil reserves, the easier half to extract. Being at the peak now, or very soon, means the remaining half or oil reserves is deeper, more remote, thicker oil, harder to extract, and more expensive. We are facing an oil depleted future, and our planning must reflect that.

Sincerely.

Michael Almon
for Kansas Sustainability Action Network

Source Notes

[1] Global Oil Production Peak - Range of Projections

2005-2006	Brown, Lester	World Policy Institute
2005-2006	Deffeyes, K.S.	Prof. Emeritus, Princeton
2006-2007	Bakhtiari, A.M.S.	Iranian oil executive
2007-2009	Simmons, M.R.	Energy Investment Banker
2008-2018	Aleklett, K.	Assoc. Study of Peak Oil
Before 2010	Goodstein, D.	Vice Provost, Cal Tech
~ 2010	Campbell, C. J.	Oil company geologist
After 2010	World Energy Council	NGO
~ 2015	van der Veer, Jeroen	CEO, Shell Oil
~ 2037	US EIA avg. scenario	USGS & SU DOE

[2] Marketplace Evening Business Report, by American Public Media