

2017-07-17

**Mobility Working Group #3**

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Committee Attendees

Dave Allen, Ruth Allen, Michelle Danila, Rachel Dias Carlson, Chris Featherman, Nate Fillmore, Greg Heidelberger, Mark Jensen, Caitlin McMurtry, Rob Ricchi, Emma Sandoe, Melissa Sharkro, Annie Tuan

Staff / Consultant Present

Staff: Stuart Dash, Susanne Rasmussen, Stephanie Groll, Joe Barr  
Nelson\Nygaard: Jason Schreiber, Cynthia Lin  
Utile: John McCartin

Committee Members Absent

John Gintell, Steve Miller, Bethany Stevens Stacy Thompson, Dustin Weigl

Three members from the public were present.

**Overview**

City staff reiterated the overall WG process. The consultant team recounted the mobility WG's work thus far, and described the meeting ahead. The group proceeded to discuss the revised goals and to review potential indicators, with an eye toward priority indicators and those that can be cut. The discussion concluded on potential actions, but the committee could not review proposed actions for each goal. City staff instructed committee members to send in feedback on the remaining actions within two weeks.

**Revised Goals Discussion**

- One committee member asked why comfort is listed as a goal. Consultant team explained “comfort” was intended to mean the absence of fear, rather than physical comfort. The group agreed this needs clarification.
- One committee member asked how drivers were represented these goals, and explained that overall the goals read to some as over privileging other mobility choices (walking, cycling, and transit ridership). This committee member expressed that people she talked with were afraid this privileging of active/sustainable modes would impede their ability to move around the city, particularly people with disabilities, the elderly, and those with young children. The needs of drivers should be stated alongside the needs of other street users, they said. They also noted a general fear among some residents (particularly low-income residents) that the vision articulated for Cambridge didn't include them.
  - The consultant team and City staff replied that the goals were not intended to be mode specific, and that all but Goal 3 are agnostic about mode. Staff agreed more could be said to make that clear, and asked if that would mollify concerns from those the committee member had spoken to. The committee member who brought the initial concern said people are afraid car is becoming a dirty word, and stated traffic is bad because streets are shrinking due to a focus on bike lanes and sidewalks.
  - One committee member stated they felt better infrastructure non-automobile modes would benefit drivers by reducing traffic from people who would prefer not to drive. Another committee member asked if it was about the cars themselves or about the people who are afraid they are underrepresented in the visioning process. The initial committee member replied it was both—that the people in question don't see themselves or driving in this new vision.
  - Consultant staff said there should be a memo that accompanies the goals that asks how accomplishing each goal would impact each mode choice, so as to note gaps or conflicts.
- One committee member asked for clarification on Goal D. What does the goal intend to “protect” neighborhood streets from. Staff stated it was a response to regional arterials vs. neighborhood streets—protecting neighborhoods from the impacts regional traffic— and said the language perhaps needs clarification.
- The committee noted “placemaking” is planner jargon, and that the goals need to be more accessible to the general public. Staff agreed each goal should be reviewed again to remove any jargon.

## Indicators Discussion

The consultant team and City staff described the criteria for a good indicator and noted that some indicators can apply to multiple goals (but that the memo being discussed limited each indicator to one goal, for brevity and to give space for more indicators).

The committee made the following suggestions or noted the following concerns for the indicators by goal:

### Goal A

- Committee asked if crash data should be included. It is.
- Does satisfaction measure comfort (defined as the absence of fear)? In LA, they survey feeling of safety.
  - Consultant team responded that it's possible to survey, but in some ways is too vague. It is hard to know what respondents will mean (or how they will interpret the question).
- Is there a target number of indicators?
  - No. Overall there will be at least six (one per goal), and there are roughly three important indicators per goal right now. More than that and it will become too unwieldy (in combination with all the indicators for the other focus areas).
- Does the sidewalk conditions measure include the number of poles and the amount of obstructions?
  - Sidewalk conditions usually more focused on concrete conditions, though ADA compliance does take pole clearance into account. De-cluttering sidewalks is an action stated later.
- Trip satisfaction. Could the plan use average trip time across all modes?
  - Travel time to work is possible (though not the same thing). Otherwise data is difficult to get.
- Could measure the percent of streets with reduced speed. Or the number of streets with safe designs.
  - The effect of this indicator may be measured elsewhere.
  - The plan should also focus on outcomes, not means.
- Disaggregate connectedness and stress in indicator 2?
- There is a response bias on feeling of safety (you wouldn't take that mode if you didn't feel safe)
  - Perhaps this could measure mode respondent would consider switching to, and what would make them switch. Staff noted the Bicycle Plan lays this out pretty well.
- Could measure percent of people driving unsafely (regardless of safe speed)
- Degree of connectedness might be better discussed under another goal
- There should be triangulation between speed, comfort, and crashes.
- Speed might be insufficient. Size and weight also matter. This could track truck movement enforcement on certain streets.
- Measuring compliance, such as percent of traffic moving at posted speed.
  - Posted speed a matter of politics, not necessarily safety, and indicators should track safety.
- Street condition missing from list.

### Goal B

- The curb ramp indicator shouldn't be excluded. It is the lowest hanging fruit. There are many other inputs into access (e.g. traffic light lengths), but these are excluded. Accessibility is mentioned a lot, but not sufficiently embedded in the indicators.
- Snow preparedness shouldn't be excluded
  - This would require Cambridge taking responsibility for plowing sidewalks (a big investment).
  - The City isn't afraid of politics, and should investigate this action. It would also make sure city doesn't plow onto sidewalks.
- Consultant team: One way to think about indicators is identifying outcomes we want to see.
- Travel time to work by mode and income and time arriving at work.
  - Time of trip not surveyed well, unfortunately.
- Way to measure new trips vs. trip replacement?
  - The mode itself may be the best measure available, but it is worth more investigation.
- Is equity embedded in mode? Is access? Make sure mode indicator accounts for this.
- Is proximity the same as access for community resources/assets?

- There is no good existing data on mobility to non-work resources, but these resources are important to include. Proximity is maybe the best proxy.
- Proximity is also a big indicator in public health circles, since it is correlated with active mobility choices.
- There is nothing here that measures mobility issues for children (except maybe community resources).

**Goal C**

- Measuring public ROW is important, could be more nuanced. There should be a distinction between travel lanes and parking lanes.
- Location of recurring transit delay is less nuanced than it could be. It could weight by ridership along each route or at each stop and the frequency/intensity of delay. There should be some method of prioritizing.
- Reliability should also look across seasons.
- There should be some cross-modal reliability measure
  - Strategies will at least be able to address that, even if very difficult to measure for some modes. This indicator is really only for bus
- There should be a way to capture the human experience of reliability, such as cumulative minutes wasted by those waiting.
- Is there any way to capture the human experience? Cumulative minutes wasted? Putting time or \$\$ to it? At this suggestion about whether it's proper and in what way to measure delay (even when the City has limited control over improvements).
  - Some noted it's not just about routes either or just Mass Ave (priority routes). The measure should be holistic.
  - Consultant team replied that the measure should retain its geographic specificity, however.

**Goal D**

- Staying activities doesn't capture the whole of activity in parks. This should measure mobile activities, too.
- Protecting parking places should be explicit. (Would be implicitly covered under access.)
- Proximity and access to community resources should including availability of parking. There followed some discussion about measuring parking access (number of open spaces, time spent searching for open space). Consultant team said number of open spaces would implicitly cover other measures.

**Goal E**

- What does "robust mobility hub" mean?
  - It was meant to indicate places with access to all modes (where access isn't just nominal).
- One committee member proposed that in lieu of robust mobility hub, way-finding be reintroduced, especially for driving
  - This could measure intuitiveness of the network and/or comfort navigating through the network.
- Transit routes should be measured against existing origin-destination pairs (e.g. for commuting).
- Indicators lost a measure of bike network continuity continuous network as relates to bike lanes
- Should comfort be included? Cross-tabulate connectivity and stress?
- Across modes, usability is the common denominator. (Stress for bikes, parking cars, reliability for buses, etc.)

**Goal F**

- Measuring progress toward resilience is difficult, as destabilizing events are relatively rare.
- The ability to attribute any one weather event to climate change is very small
- Maybe this should track preparedness, instead of resilience.
- There is no measure of auto traffic or congestion included here.
- There should be more detail in tracking where emissions come from
- How is the level of tree canopy coverage related to mobility?
  - Shade tree coverage impacting choice to walking and cycling. This measure may measure active mode choice as a proxy, in a way that may be unnecessary.
- GHG emissions should be measured by mode per traveller (e.g., empty buses have more emissions per rider than SOVs).

There was some discussion on how targets could be set for each indicator, but not targets set.

### **Action Discussion**

The committee made the following suggestions or noted the following concerns for the actions by goal:

#### **Goal A**

- Plans shouldn't be considered actions unless they're being implemented on time.
- Crash data should also track injuries (not reported currently) and crash severity.
- Vision Zero tracks from police reports, and injuries not being reported right now.
- Many feel the Five-year Street and Sidewalk Reconstruction Plan does not adequately integrate the recommendations of the City's other plans.
- Future plans should have standards that must be followed, like in ADA. Traffic calming has some, but there aren't standards for others (e.g. the bike and pedestrian plans).
- There should be more requirements and enforcement around truck traffic and loading.
- There should be more education on the rules of the road (what is acceptable behavior for all street users regardless of mode), as well as what complete streets infrastructure can and should look like.
- Public driver's education in schools, and resources for young people who want to drive.
- Radical (European-style) traffic calming programs, neighborhood can apply for it.
- Measurement of police enforcement of cycling violations, and red light running of all modes.
- A helmet law in Cambridge.

#### **Goal B**

- In addition to low-income transit passes, more opportunities to trial new mode choices (e.g. short term hubway passes), especially for employers.
- Partnering with local businesses to find new ways of moving goods (e.g. grocers delivering food instead of customers driving to the store, such as one system practiced in Amherst).
- Prioritizing complete streets around K12 schools.
- Tie ADA access and upgrades to populations with the most need (e.g. near elderly housing).
- A Cambridge-specific Transit Bill of Rights
- Hubway passes for youth and shelter residents

Given the discussion was stretching past the meeting's end time, City staff asked the committee to send in comments on the remaining actions with two weeks. Before opening up comments to the public, the team asked the committee for any immediate thoughts on actions missing from the list. They offered:

- Machine snow removal (not plowing).
- A citywide, systemic parking assessment.

### **Comments from the public**

One member of the public stated there must be more diversity in the working group composure if the City wants to hear all perspectives.