

Recommended Congestion Management Objectives

The Role of Congestion Management Objectives

The starting point for the Congestion Management Process (CMP) is the development of regional congestion management objectives. These objectives define what the region wants to achieve and are an essential part of an objectives-driven, performance-based approach. Congestion management objectives should draw from the regional vision and goals that are articulated in the metropolitan transportation plan. These objectives serve as a primary point of connection between the CMP and the metropolitan transportation plan, and should reflect what the public and stakeholders value. The objectives also will serve as a basis for defining performance measures to measure progress toward these objectives.

While traditionally stakeholders often think about congestion in relation to highway capacity needs, connecting the CMP objectives to regional goals often leads to consideration of a broad array of mobility issues.

Process for Developing Congestion Management Objectives

The recommended congestion management objectives were developed through a process that involved the following steps:

- 1) **An initial discussion with the Baltimore region CMP Steering Committee during its first meeting, held on September 20, 2019.** During that meeting, the ICF team provided context on broad considerations for CMP objectives including multimodal performance, reliability, accessibility, travel options, and safety. The Steering Committee was then asked to identify issues that they believe will be important to consider in the region's CMP objectives. The discussion generated over a dozen ideas on diverse topics, including:
 - Supporting air quality improvement
 - Not just about moving vehicles, but also managing the demand for travel / reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
 - Reducing travel times
 - Improving reliability and resiliency, particularly in regard to nuisance flooding
 - Agency coordination at various levels (state-, county-, and city-operated roadways; across local jurisdictional boundaries; across modes), including curb management
 - Supporting regional goals
 - Taking a long term outlook, recognizing opportunities and changes that are occurring in mobility, such as connected and automated vehicles and new on-demand service models
 - Filling accessibility gaps, including first and last mile connections to transit
 - Vision Zero / safety across all modes
 - Considering different types of funding beyond traditional transportation sources
 - Equity
- 2) **A review of regional plans and documents.** The team conducted a review of existing regional and statewide transportation plans in order to identify key goals, objectives, and performance

measures, and to consider how they could help to inform objectives in the CMP. Documents reviewed included:

- *Maximize2040* (2015) and *Maximize2045* (2019) regional transportation plans
- *Transportation Improvement Program* FY 2020-2023
- *Unified Planning Work Program* FY 2020-2021
- Quarterly Congestion Analysis Reports
- 2016 BRTB Transportation Management Area Certification Review Report
- MD 295 Corridor Congestion Flyer
- Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) *Consolidated Transportation Program* FY 2020-2025
- *2040 Maryland Transportation Plan*
- MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) *Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Strategic Plan*
- MDOT SHA *Maryland State Highway Mobility Report*
- MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) *Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan*
- *Maryland Strategic Goods Movement Plan*
- *Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan*

3) **Interviews with regional stakeholders.** The team also conducted interviews with stakeholders representing a wide array of groups including:

- Emergency responders
- Baltimore City
- MDOT SHA Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering and Office of CHART and ITS Development
- MDOT MTA
- MDOT Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA)
- Freight stakeholders
- The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) Public Advisory Committee (PAC)
- MDOT SHA Motor Carrier Division

4) **Input session with the American Society of Highway Engineers (ASHE) Meeting, held in Baltimore on November 19, 2019.** This presentation and input session provided an opportunity for stakeholders, largely representing consultants and agency staff within the transportation community in the Baltimore region, to weigh in on issues and objectives they view as important for the region.

5) **Development of draft objectives.** The ICF team developed a set of outcome-based and policy/process-based objectives for discussion by the CMP Steering Committee, building off of the various discussions and goals and objectives identified to date.

6) **Review and discussion of the draft objectives by the CMP Steering Committee during its November 21, 2019 meeting.** During the second meeting of the CMP Steering Committee, participants discussed the draft objectives, and participated in a voting exercise to help prioritize the objectives.



Considerations for Developing Objectives






Ideally, objectives should be specific and measurable, in order to support development of performance measures. However, some MPOs develop CMP objectives that relate to policy priorities, such as prioritizing demand management before capacity expansion.

A relatively limited number of objectives should be developed to provide focus to the CMP. However, objectives should be comprehensive enough to reflect the region’s priorities.

Recommended Objectives

All of the input and discussions highlighted that there are a wide variety of important objectives within the Baltimore region in relation to mobility and congestion, building on the region’s vision and goals as articulated in *Maximize2045* and other regional and statewide plans. The CMP Steering Committee members generally indicated that their desired objectives in the CMP should be outcome-based and measurable in order to support performance-based planning. However, some policy-based objectives could be included if particularly important and tied to regional goals, such as fostering regional coordination for solutions. Based on these discussions and the voting exercise from the second Steering Committee meeting, below are a set of recommended objectives for the CMP, along with information on associated regional goals that they support from *Maximize2045* and rationale.

Proposed Congestion Management Objectives	Associated Goal(s) from <i>Maximize2045</i>	Rationale
 <p>Enhance access to jobs and other opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Accessibility 	<p>Access for people of all ages and abilities is an important regional goal. There are emerging efforts to measure accessibility to destinations, which have been tested by MDOT SHA.</p>
 <p>Improve travel times and reduce traveler delay on all modes of travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Mobility • Improve Accessibility • Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity 	<p>Travel times are measurable and are an important issue for both motorists and transit users. The region has established targets for peak hours of excess delay and has data to assess hours of delay.</p>

 <p>Improve travel time reliability (consistency and predictability of travel times) and resiliency for motorists and transit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Mobility • Improve System Safety • Improve and Maintain the Existing System • Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity • Improve System Security 	<p>Travel time reliability is a critical issue for travelers, particularly in relation to incidents, weather conditions, and special events. Reliability is important for both motorists and transit service, and the region has established targets for travel time reliability.</p>
 <p>Improve freight reliability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Mobility • Improve System Safety • Improve and Maintain the Existing System • Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity • Improve System Security 	<p>There are unique issues associated with freight and goods movement. The region has established a target for truck travel time reliability and performance data can potentially be analyzed for freight priority corridors.</p>
 <p>Enhance travel choices, including access to transit, safe and convenient bicycling and walking, and other alternatives to driving alone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Accessibility • Conserve and Enhance the Environment • Improve System Safety 	<p>Managing travel demand via improved land use coordination, incentives, and opportunities to use alternatives to driving was identified as a priority by the Steering Committee and supports multiple regional goals. The region has established a target for non-single occupant vehicle mode share.</p>
 <p>Reduce traffic incidents that contribute to traveler delays and loss of life or injury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve System Safety 	<p>Safety is a regional priority, and reducing traffic incidents (including bicycle/pedestrian fatalities and injuries) supports congestion relief.</p>
 <p>Enhance inter-jurisdictional coordination to optimize transportation system performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Participation and Cooperation Among Stakeholders • Promote Informed Decision Making 	<p>Improved coordination among localities, modes, and agencies within the region was identified as a key priority by the CMP Steering Committee. This objective also directly supports the region's vision and goals.</p>