



MEMORANDUM

TO: Highway 12 Corridor Study TAT

FROM: Bob Rogers, AICP

DATE: April 21, 2014

RE: Highway 12 Corridor - Transportation and Land Use Goals & Objectives Tech Memo

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the Highway 12 Corridor Study Vision Statement and supporting transportation and land use goals and objectives. The vision statement and goals & objectives apply to the portion of Highway 12 and the adjacent properties from approximately 45th Street SE on the east to Kandiyohi County State Aid Highway 5 on the west.

Highway 12 Corridor Vision Statement

Highway 12 is a critical east-west transportation corridor in west-central Minnesota that serves as a vital link between trade center and employment nodes for local residents, commuters, and businesses. The Highway 12 Corridor Study will focus on the roadway segment between 45th Street SE on the east side of Willmar to Kandiyohi County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 5 on the west. In addition, regional needs beyond the study limits will also play a factor in identifying the long-term conceptual vision that will define future land use and transportation investments that will improve mobility, and safety and support the economic vitality of the area.

The intent of this policy statement is to state a desired outcome in general terms. The Highway 12 Corridor Vision Statement has been developed with the consideration of key findings related to the existing and forecast transportation and land use conditions along the corridor and by integrating public input generated as part of the public outreach from the corridor study. The Highway 12 Corridor Vision Statement is as follows:

“The Highway 12 corridor through the City of Willmar will facilitate the efficient movement of citizens, visitors, and commerce within and through the city on a safe, well maintained, convenient, coordinated, and fiscally responsible route using a balanced approach of land use and transportation policies and investments.”

Highway 12 Transportation and Land Use Goals & Objectives

The transportation related issues shown on Figure 1 were identified based on an assessment of the existing conditions as well as from input received from the project partners. The study goals and objectives must respond to the key issues along the corridor and within the adjacent study area.

The Highway 12 Transportation and Land Use Goals & Objectives should reflect a vision of what the Highway 12 corridor should provide. They will also help guide priorities for future investment by MnDOT, the City of Willmar, Kandiyohi County, and/or in partnership with other regional or state agencies. These transportation goals and objectives provide the project partners with a means to measure the performance of the transportation system over time, and as necessary, an opportunity to reassess, revise and/or supplement the desires of the community.

The “goals” indicate a policy direction and assist in organizing individual objectives and more defined policies. The “objectives” provide more detailed action plans that are necessary to prioritize and initiate a goal. Objectives may include the start up or continuation of a program or implementation of a specific project. The following goals and objectives are not ranked or presented in order of importance or need:

Goal 1: Preserve and enhance Highway 12 and intersecting roadways in a manner that improves safety and mobility.

Objectives:

1. As one of the regions greatest investment priorities, the study and roadway partners (MnDOT, City of Willmar, and Kandiyohi County) shall preserve their existing transportation systems in the highest order of operating condition.
2. Continually monitor crash data and traffic volumes along the Highway 12 corridor for trends and performance levels and tailor improvements for targeted areas.
3. Conduct studies of reasonable traffic management techniques where documented safety issues exist and identify possible high benefit/low cost solutions.
4. Maintain the Highway 12 corridor by making adequate improvements to accommodate anticipated growth or to replace worn or obsolete components of the highway.
5. Seek opportunities to improve existing intersections through land use changes or redevelopment opportunities and by coordinating improvements between roadway partners and their funding programs.
6. Evaluate current intersection control along frontage roads that parallel Highway 12 and determinate if travel safety would benefit from modifications (adding stop signs, etc.).
7. Identify options for supplying alternative access to developments.
 - a. Understand how businesses, customers and suppliers use access on TH 12.
 - b. Study the need for and impact of access modifications (access relocation, consolidation, closure).
 - c. Evaluate frontage/backage road extensions along the corridor.

8. Further study the need and effectiveness of intersection traffic control at key intersections (CSAH 9, Lakeland Dr., 7th St. SW, 10th St. SW, Industrial Dr., CSAH 5).
9. Ensure that future improvements consider special design and safety considerations for heavy truck operations/movements along the corridor.

Goal 2: Increase the connection between transportation considerations and the land development regulatory process

Objectives:

1. Implement land use development and performance standards that will promote safe and efficient access to Highway 12 and the local transportation network including the adequacy of the following items:
 - a. Off-street parking for any new or expanding land use;
 - b. Internal traffic circulation and separation of parking maneuvering areas from driveways;
 - c. Stacking spaces for drive-thru related facilities;
 - d. Maneuvering space for delivery and service vehicles; and
 - e. Driveway widths and off site turn lanes.
2. Require the dedication or preservation of right-of-way consistent with adopted right-of-way standards when property is platted or subdivided, and work with landowners/developers during the site planning process to implement efficient internal circulation with access first being provided via a local roadway rather than directly from Highway 12.
3. Maintain a detailed land use plan (and supporting ordinances) that support the orderly and logical staging of infrastructure and public utilities in conjunction with development.
4. Encourage new industrial uses to locate in existing or future industrial parks within Willmar.

Goal 3: Plan, design, and construct transportation and land use improvements in the Highway 12 corridor that respect and reflect the aesthetic character, historical and cultural context, and values of the citizens of Willmar

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with and between governmental agencies, departments, the Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, and other groups/organizations when planning and designing future transportation improvements and land use developments to help ensure the design elements of future projects take into consideration and reflect the physical, cultural, social, environmental, and aesthetic values of the community.
2. Identify how transportation improvements along Highway 12 can support initiatives and strategic actions for enhancing the downtown area. Consult the finding and

recommendations of the Willmar Downtown Plan (dated May 2010) when planning and design improvements in the downtown area.

3. To the extent possible, maintain and enhance the “small-town” character of Willmar by providing context-sensitive design elements including lane widths, intersection curb radii, landscaping, lighting, pedestrian crossing facilities, etc.
4. The City will periodically survey area residents and business owners along Highway 12 corridor to gauge their perception of the corridor including the transportation and land use strengths, areas of concern, and opportunities for improvement.

Goal 4: Seek opportunities to encourage and facilitate the expansion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Objectives:

1. Where applicable, pedestrian/bicycle safety features will be integrated into transportation and land use improvements as part of applying complete streets principles.
2. Within and beyond the Highway 12 corridor, the project partners will strive to provide opportunities to support active living and healthy lifestyle activities such as establishing an interconnected local and regional trail system (e.g. Lakeland Drive and Highway 12 east).
3. In the eastern portion of the corridor study area, the City will ensure planned development/redevelopment consider future accommodations for pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

Goal 5: Implement the Transportation Vision Through Strategic Funding, and Objective and Definitive Decision Making, with the Collaboration of Jurisdictions (MnDOT, Kandiyohi County, and the City of Willmar).

Objectives:

1. Plan for and preserve future opportunities along Highway 12 for necessary transportation system improvements, including right-of-way and pedestrian/bicycle facilities.
2. Realize necessary transportation system improvements in a cost-effective and timely fashion.
3. Empower governmental agencies to pursue state and federal transportation funding and evaluate non-traditional transportation funding mechanisms.
4. Utilize available funding programs such as the Municipal State Aid Street (MSAS), County State Aid Highway (CSAH), Trunk Highway funds, and other revenue sources to maximize and leverage funds for transportation improvements.
5. Encourage business owners, residents and community groups to be active participants in seeking funding by contacting local, state and federal decision makers in support of transportation funding.