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Develop a Comprehensive, Integrated Transportation Strategy (Theme 3)

Statement of Ideal

Allow residents and visitors to travel safely, efficiently, and economically, shifting away from auto-dependence and increasing choices and opportunities for transit use, walking, and bicycling. The transportation system allows for viable populations for native species, the preservation of scenic vistas, and **safe, unimpeded movement of wildlife**.

What does the theme address?

This theme will guide the town and county as they make transportation policy decisions. The focus of this theme is on developing a transportation system that **meets the mobility and accessibility needs of residents and visitors** in ways consistent with the character of this community as expressed in this Plan. *(Given the statement of ideal, and to link this theme with the community's top priority, transportation policies should be required to address the "movement needs" of wildlife also.)*

This chapter recognizes the need to provide for the **mobility of residents and visitors**. *(What about safe unimpeded movement of wildlife?)* It also recognizes a need to provide this mobility within the context of other community goals contained within this Plan. To achieve this end, this theme examines methods of **managing traffic growth** by shifting auto-dependence. Transit, pathway, and sidewalk system improvements with complementary land use patterns are identified as appropriate means for shifting trips from the automobile to transit, walking, and bicycling. To accomplish this result, the Town of Jackson, Teton County, and Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) must lead in developing and supporting the facilities necessary for these shifts.

Finally, this theme recognizes that the convenience, affordability, and availability of the automobile in today's society limit the traffic reductions that can be achieved by these shifts. As a result, roadway expansions will still be required in some cases, but decisions must be balanced with environmental and community considerations.

Where is this theme a priority?

Future transportation roadway improvements of countywide significance (identified on page 45) will appear on the Future Land Use Plan or a separate map. In

addition, the Pathways Plan, as updated from time to time, will guide pathways, and START plans will guide decisions about future transit. (Note: The planning team is currently working with WYDOT to prepare models of the Future Land Use Plan to understand where needs for road and other improvements exist.) *Traffic modeling report uses different numbers/data than presented in other reports and statements. Numbers should be consistent across all reports, or variations should be explained. Inconsistent numbers are confusing for the public.*

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Summary of this Theme's Topics

This theme addresses the following topics:

Coordinated approach to land use and transportation planning;
Provide for all modes of travel, including transit, walking, bicycles, and vehicles;
Add capacity to roads and streets only where needed, with consideration of “complete streets” that address all modes **off** travel and **considers impacts** on wildlife and the environment;
Ensure road capacity for emergency responders; and
Provide for a consistent funding mechanism to meet the community’s current and future transportation needs. *“Considers impacts” is weak language. Policies should be required to first, prevent, and second, mitigate impacts on wildlife. This theme should address the linkages between rates of growth and traffic demands/infrastructure capacity. This theme should address character issues in an objective way. Road widening will have significant impacts on scenery and the highly valued attribute of Jackson Hole as a small mountain town that provides a high quality of life.*

How does the theme relate to core values?

Environment: Air quality and natural environment quality, *wildlife viability -*

Community: mobility and economic viability, health and safety

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles support these objectives:

Principle 3.1—Maximize the benefits of coordinated land use and transportation planning and decision-making

Why is This Important?

The Town, County, and WYDOT recognize that further population and commercial growth will occur

in Teton County. A main component of this Plan is recognition of the relationships between future

land development patterns and transportation needs. Three key elements of this relationship included

in this Plan are:

1. Maximizing the efficiency of necessary vehicular travel by concentrating a certain amount of residential development in the Town of Jackson.
2. Shifting the need for and maximizing the efficiency of necessary vehicular travel by creating small, concentrated communities in the County (“centers”), thereby bringing housing, jobs,

and other common travel destinations closer together.

3. Reducing anticipated transportation demand by limiting the overall amount of residential development in the County. *Where is this represented in the Plan or Future Land Use Plan Maps? Where else in the Plan is this element of development potential addressed? It needs to be addressed.*

In addition:

Improving mobility within the town and county will require an enhanced acknowledgement of the relationships between land use and transportation and focusing on balancing these relationships within the community.

Considering transportation impacts when making land use decisions will help ensure that the road system and transit system will expand as the community expands, and will be able to support the region at acceptable levels of service. *Who defines "acceptable"? Also, both the community preferences for transportation infrastructure and the fiscal and environmental costs of increased transportation capacity should influence the degree to which the "community expands" and not vice-versa as implied above.*

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Policy 3.1a: Design new development and redevelopment to limit trip generation and achieve walkable communities

Promote mixed-use development patterns as a means of reducing vehicle-trips and to achieve a more efficient land use pattern, and link centers, schools, neighborhoods, parks, and other destinations in communities with a continuous pedestrian network and access to transit facilities. *This is a good "smart growth" approach, but in a context as unique as Jackson Hole, numbers matter. The degree of vehicle trip reduction (overall) will depend on the degree of development intensification that is permitted. For example, if 10 units are allowed on a property where only one unit currently exists, even with significant limited trip generation per unit, the net outcome will still be a dramatic increase in vehicle trips overall, and increased congestion.*

In spite of serious efforts on the part of Town and County to increase bike paths and bus service since the 94 Plan, car trips per household have still increased. In terms of estimating potentials for vehicle trip reduction, there needs to be some acknowledgment of limited non-motorized uses during winter months. Many of these uses will vary by season.

Policy 3.1b: Design new development and redevelopment to support transit usage

New development and redevelopment in Jackson will incorporate design features that support transit usage, such as:

- Locating buildings along the street frontage with transit stops located close to the front door;
- Maximum block lengths (e.g., 600 feet) in areas where they have not already been established, to ensure pedestrian access and connectivity;
- Streetscape amenities such as street trees, benches, cross walks, and decorative paving to enhance the pedestrian environment; and
- Clear pedestrian routes within and between development areas and transit facilities.

Locating most new county development in community mixed-use centers within reasonable walking distance from transit stations will also help support transit usage.

As with most design features, moderation in integrating these features into development can be critical. With integration of these features, urban characteristics are enhanced.

Policy 3.1c: Focus most new residential development, particularly workforce housing, in Jackson and contiguous areas ?, to increase

opportunities for alternative travel modes *Define “contiguous areas.”*

By focusing residential development in town, housing opportunities will be provided in close proximity to employment centers and along primary travel corridors. *Resort districts are also major employment centers. Adequate transit to these locations is critical.*

Policy 3.1d: Promote interconnectivity of neighborhood and subdivision streets

The town and county will require an interconnected street system within and between neighborhoods and subdivisions to allow for efficient transit circulation as well as direct bicycle and pedestrian connections. Dead-end and cul-de-sac streets should only be used where required by topographic conditions.

Principle 3.2—Plan a multi-modal transportation system that supports transit, walking, bicycling, and personal vehicle travel

Why is This Important?

Building a transportation network that supports the diverse travel needs and patterns is critical to the future of Teton County. On a daily basis trips are made by residents, visitors, teenagers, adults, and seniors. Likewise, trips are made for work, shopping and recreation using all forms of transportation.

Planning the future transportation system with a multi-modal approach ensures the “quality of life”

identified in this Plan can be achieved.

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The primary transportation facilities supporting residential, commercial, and industrial areas are roads, because Teton County’s land use patterns over the past few decades, as with many mountain communities in the United States, evolved in part due to the availability and convenience of the automobile.

The traffic generated by present populations of residents and visitors is exceeding the capacity of existing roads and intersections. Future traffic volumes anticipated from continuing auto-dominated travel behavior and dispersed development patterns will far exceed the available road capacity. *(Recognition of the real consequences of the current “exceeding of capacity” is critical. These facts alone should strongly influence land-use decisions in Jackson Hole in the years to come.)*

Alternative modes of transportation are necessary to counter this trend and shifting a larger percentage of travel from the automobile to other modes is an objective of this Plan.

For this shift to occur, facilities are required to accommodate each transportation mode. The street and roadway corridors in this community provide the main base network on which all modes travel.

Road projects should not be considered only from the perspective of benefits to motorists, rather all modes need to be considered.

It is important to realize that the automobile is the primary mode of transportation in our region. To achieve the desired modal shifts, the roadway system must function at an adequate level. A congested roadway system will not enhance transit ridership, as riders will not like endure lengthy transit trips. Also, congested roadways result in corridors that are not conducive to walking and bicycling. *Again, numbers matter. Increased residential and commercial potential will result in increased congestion.*

Policy 3.2a: Incorporate “complete streets” principles into all town street designs and applicable county road designs

The county and town will design and implement streets that safely accommodate all users of

the public right-of-way including: pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and passengers of transit vehicles. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a “complete street” and have separation from vehicle exhaust when possible. *Is “all” necessary? Priorities should be identified and fiscal obligations must be balanced with other community priorities. There are other factors that determine “safe accommodation of travelers” in addition to specific infrastructure. Auto-based traffic volume is an example. Also, how will this policy affect maintenance requirements?*

Policy 3.2b: Pursue “complete streets” principles in all WYDOT road designs

The town and county will work with WYDOT to incorporate “complete streets” design principles in all state highway-designed and funded roads.

Policy 3.2c: Pursue a comprehensive valley-wide pathway system to increase transportation choices for residents and visitors

The town, county, and WYDOT will continue to support and implement the development of a system of non-motorized pathways based on the current Pathways Master Plan. *These different modes (pathways, etc.) should be integrated in a way that will not impede wildlife movements nor disturb environmentally sensitive areas.*

Policy 3.2d: Complete Jackson’s sidewalk system to maximize safety and ease of pedestrian movement

The town will identify gaps and deficiencies in its sidewalk system and establish priorities and funding mechanisms for completing the system. New developments and redevelopment projects will contribute to building a connected sidewalk system and ensure that sidewalks are safe.

Who identifies these gaps? For example, why is the Redmond corridor identified as a key priority for sidewalk enhancement?

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Policy 3.2e: Extend and enhance transit service to major employment, housing, commerce, and recreation locations or centers

The town and county will coordinate with START transit system to plan for transit service to Teton Village, Wilson, South Park, Town Square, Grand Teton National Park, and other centers. Implement Transit Development Plan - *Great goal, but who will fund this? To what extent will “new development” that drives the need for enhanced transit options fund these programs?*

Policy 3.2f: Provide transportation options for emergency service delivery and egress

Principle 3.3—Provide for a consistent funding mechanism to meet the community’s current and future transportation needs

Why is This Important?

Transportation funding for maintenance and capital improvement projects is projected to significantly decline at the federal and state level over the next decade. However, the demand for improved transportation facilitates is increasing. To achieve the transportation objectives in this Plan it is critical to:

- Identify multiple public and private funding sources from non-traditional programs,
- Develop a consistent and sustainable funding source to fund and promote alternatives such as

transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities that get vehicles off the road. (*Lower development potential also gets “vehicles off the road.”*) (A range of financial resources are available to the Town and County for implementation of this Plan, including general fund sources already in place, but also including sources currently not established.)

Involve the private sector (employers, resorts, developers, retail shops, etc.), which also has a major role to play in ensuring the mobility of their employees and customers and thereby ensuring their own long-term viability. *Clarify “involve”.*

Recognize the extent of our region’s transportation system now reaches to other counties, both within Wyoming and to adjacent states and coordinate with communities beyond our jurisdiction to find future solutions needs comprehensively and responsively. *This recognition is critical. Commercial development potential in Jackson Hole (i.e. job creation) has, and will continue to have, tremendous impacts on commuting/traffic demands in the region.*

Policy 3.3a: Establish a long-term, sustainable, reliable and equitable funding mechanism for long range local and regional transit and multi-modal planning

The town and county will work with WYDOT and other state, federal, and regional partners to identify and implement a stable, long-term funding mechanism to meet the transportation needs of the community. *How will land-use decisions be affected by this funding capacity?*

Principle 3.4—Provide a safe and interconnected roadway network that is balanced with all community goals

Why is This Important?

Although this Plan promotes strong alternative modes and demand management elements, there will be a need to add capacity to the Teton County roads and streets network as the region grows. It will be important to:

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Identify and recommending additions and expansions to roadways that include consideration of pedestrians, bicycles, and bus transit. *WHAT ABOUT WILDLIFE? How can this principle promote balance “with all community goals” without strong emphasis on the impacts of increased road capacity on wildlife?*

Provide alternative routes by **constructing new corridors** and increasing the capacity of the existing system by adding lanes and improving intersections are two forms of roadway expansions that will increase roadway capacity. *?? The public did not favor new road construction. Also, new roads would fragment wildlife habitat and impact scenic vistas.*

Consider character and design in implementation of these projects and including significant improvements to the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit environments to achieve targeted modal shifts.

Policy 3.4a: Continue to work with WYDOT to balance the need to widen state highways or provide new connectors with “Complete Street” objectives

The town and county will continue to work with WYDOT to ensure that improvements to the state highway system to widen roads or provide additional connectors (i.e., with more than one route for destinations) also accommodate **pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users** to the maximum extent possible. *And wildlife*

Policy 3.4b: Evaluate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections when planning roadway corridors, and incorporate them when possible and wildlife corridors

Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities shall be evaluated and incorporated into the planning

of new or enhanced travel corridors to the maximum extent possible.

Policy 3.4c: Consider roadway widening to be a viable option only after detailed analysis of alternatives and future multimodal transportation demand

While this Plan recognizes that roadway widening may be warranted in some circumstances, the town and county will only approve such action **after careful consideration of alternatives** to determine if future transportation demands can be met without roadway widening. *Reduced development potential overall is a feasible, cost-effective and proactive alternative that should always be applied.*

Policy 3.4d: Establish a Level of Service D (at intersections) as a standard for tolerating congestion and travel delays and for determining road upgrades

The town and county will establish a Level of Service D at intersections as a means for determining when improvements or other mitigation measures are required.

Policy 3.4e: Evaluate the impacts of roadways and other transportation improvements on wildlife corridors, and incorporate crossings

where appropriate – *This policy should be at the center of all transportation policies. Our community should not concentrate and facilitate excessive increases in development potential in the valley if it increases the chances of road widening, given the known impacts that wide road crossing can have on certain wildlife species.*

Roadway and transportation project improvements will be evaluated for their impact on identified or known wildlife migration corridors, and appropriate mitigation measures such as wildlife crossings (i.e., bridge design to accommodate wildlife underpass) **should** be incorporated into project design. *“Will” needs to replace “should”.*

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Potential Road Projects

The following roadway projects are suggested as priorities for detailed evaluation and “Complete Street” analysis. The roadway projects were selected based on the influence each area has on the network and issues that have emerged since the previous Plan update was completed (2003).

1. Indian Springs connector between Highway 22 and South Park Loop Road.
2. Upgrade Snow King – Maple Way as an parallel east/west corridor (as determined in the 2001 Maple Way/ Snow King Design Charrette)
3. Reconstruct the Highway 22/89/26 intersection (the “Y”) to improve all modes of travel and serve as a community gateway.
4. Pursue a multi-lane roadway with WYDOT on Highway 22 between town and Highway 390 that provides trail connections, wildlife overpass, and dual bridges across the Snake River.
5. Redesign Highway 390 from Highway 22 to Teton Village based on “Complete Street” design.

Also, Work with WYDOT to transfer ownership/responsibility of Highway 390 to Teton County so that design standards can be more flexible.

On-going traffic modeling has demonstrated the need for these projects.

Suggested Strategies (Theme 3—Transportation)

Note: The planning team will flesh out this section more during the next phase of work.

Suggested strategies include:

Theme 3 Suggested Strategies

Amend Street Standards – Complete Streets - Implement standards to address a “complete streets” program. Develop a “complete streets” toolkit for developers to use when preparing plans in the development approval process.

Shared Approach – Complete Streets - Work with WYDOT’s Planning, Design, and Policy Division to implement a shared vision for complete streets. **Consider hiring a trip reduction coordinator.** *Is this the most cost-effective way to meet community goals?*

Reconstruct Streets to be “Complete” - Prioritize and reconstruct “incomplete” streets with enhancements for all modes. This includes specific projects that address motor vehicle traffic delay **at major intersections.** *Good priority.*

Implement Transit Development Plan - Work within the timeline identified in the Transit Development Plan to increase bus service to key destinations and replace existing

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buses with a “green” fleet of vehicles. Coordinate with National Park Service and the airport to provide transit to the park (i.e., Moose, Jenny Lake, town connections) and airport.

Implement Trails Master Plan - Work within the timeline identified in the Trails Master Plan to implement the proposed trail network.

Regional Transportation Authority - Form a Regional Transportation Authority with taxing authority to address multimodal travel demands. To adequately address the transportation needs identified by the community, a multi-county cross-state RTA may be required to plan, fund, construct, and address regional travel needs.

Leverage Transportation Funding - Use available local and WYDOT capital project costs to leverage state and national funding programs for non-motorized travel.

Rights-of-Way for Private Roads - Allow creation of public rights-of-way as an alternative to private roads

Possible Indicators (Theme 3—Transportation)

1. Travel time between centers
2. Resident vehicle miles traveled – home based work trips per capita
3. Miles of pathways constructed
4. Miles of bicycle lanes constructed
5. Transit boardings & alightings
6. Modal shift analysis (every two years)

7. Conduct travel time surveys between centers on bicycle, bus, and automobile and replicate the surveys annually to track progress

And, analysis of wildlife-vehicle collisions and mitigation programs –

In general, this theme/chapter should directly address the linkages between transportation and wildlife population viability, particularly in terms of connectivity and fragmentation. How do major transportation routes (and potential expansions) affect wildlife movements throughout the valley?

Also, pathways should be configured to maximize the benefits of open space for both wildlife and people in new developments. Pathways should be configured in a way to minimize fragmentation of open space and/or potential wildlife habitat.

When implementing the Pathways Master Plan, prioritization should be given to pathways that have greater potential as essential alternative transportation routes than those primarily for recreation. While system-wide connectivity of pathways should be a top goal, it is critical to examine factors that distinguish alternative transportation-based pathways from recreation-based pathways. This is particularly important in the assessment of traffic demands (trip reduction factors, etc.) in new development applications.