

# A. INTRODUCTION

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## Overview

North Richland Hills, incorporated in 1953, benefits in its central location in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The third largest city in Tarrant County, North Richland Hills (NRH) is only 10 minutes from Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and 15 minutes from Alliance Airport as well as less than 30 minutes to either downtown Dallas or Fort Worth. For the 70,000 people who have made it their home, they have given this city its identity as a family-friendly community with a high quality of life. Traversing the city, Interstate Highway (IH) Loop 820 and Texas State Highway (SH) 121/183 (Airport Freeway) provide convenient freeway access to the surrounding region. Local amenities, including NRH2O Family Water Park and a robust trail and park system, as well as education institutions, from the public-school system to Tarrant County College's Northeast Campus, support opportunities for a high quality of life for both today and tomorrow's residents. Centrality in the region, easy access to employment centers, and numerous recreation and

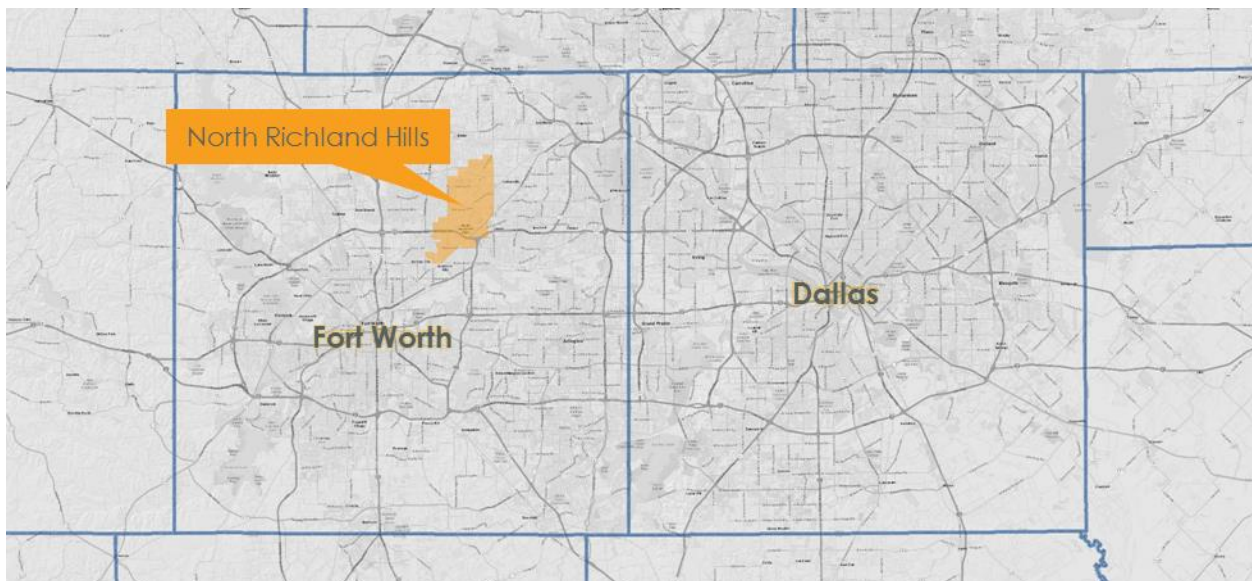
education resources all contribute to making NRH a great place to live and requires the continued planning and evolution of the transportation system to offer access to these opportunities.

## Purpose

The Transportation Plan (Plan), incorporated as part of the larger Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, provides a roadmap for moving NRH's transportation system into the next generation as the community continues to grow and mature. As an update to the City's 2007 Thoroughfare Plan, the Plan takes the step forward to incorporate all road users – people driving, walking, bicycling, and riding transit – to balance the various needs.

The City's transportation system will continue to evolve as the context and users diversify. The arrival of TEXRail, the commuter rail connecting downtown Fort Worth to Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, brings change to NRH through the

Figure A-1. North Richland Hills Location Map



development of two stations within the city – Smithfield Station and Iron Horse Station. Additionally, the rise of technology in mobility has the potential to transform the landscape of cities in the Metroplex. From transportation network companies (TNCs) – e.g. Uber, Lyft – to automation in vehicle driving and delivery, as well as shared mobility options including bikeshare, rideshare, carshare, and other means for sharing transportation, the users and technology interacting within the public right-of-way is becoming more complex.

**The purpose of the Plan is to serve as a guiding tool for making balanced multimodal transportation decisions for both access and mobility.** The Plan provides policy and tools to help designers, engineers, community advocates, and developers utilize and/or reshape the right-of-way to meet the needs for North Richland Hills' citizens today and tomorrow.

## Plan Organization

The Plan is organized into five chapters. Building from the context of the past, to the present state of the system, then toward the framework of the future and implementation, each chapter advances the timeline of transportation planning and context within North Richland Hills. Further organization and topics of each chapter is described below.

**A. Introduction** describes the need for updating the transportation plan, highlights the Plan's organizational format, key partners in transportation implementation, and relevant plans, both past and present, impacting NRH transportation planning and infrastructure. The chapter also outlines the Plan's four goals.

**B. Current Context** profiles the existing issues and needs within the transportation system, including safety, congestion, and infrastructure gaps.

**C. Future Context** focuses on the anticipated future of NRH related to accessibility, mobility, operations, and the interface with land uses.

**D. Transportation Plan** describes the multimodal network (vehicular, walking, bicycling, transit, goods movement) needed to address the future needs of the City.

**E. Action Plan** outlines prioritization methodology for project implementation. This chapter also contains the policies, programs, and projects for short-, medium-, and long-range implementation.

**Appendix A:** Roadway Design Decision Process

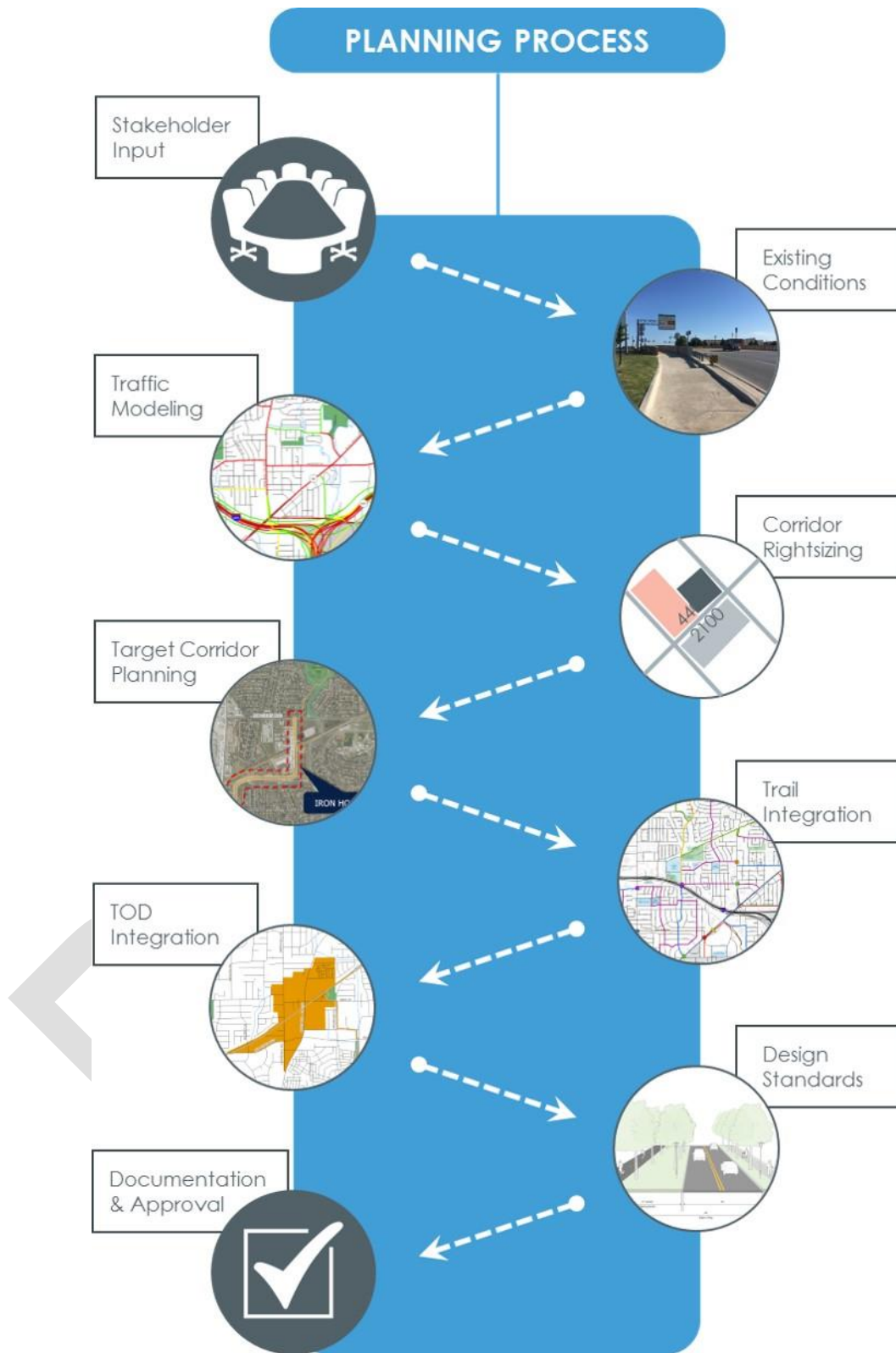
**Appendix B:** Target Corridors

**Appendix C:** Roadway Rightsizing Guidance

**Appendix D:** Active Transportation Pattern Book

**Appendix E:** Public/Stakeholder Input

**Appendix F:** Action Plan Details



## Partners

Planning, funding, construction, and operations have various stakeholders throughout the transportation system in North Richland Hills requiring coordination throughout the project lifecycle, including state, regional, county, and local jurisdictions, agencies, and departments. The primary stakeholders impacted by the Plan and who will be active partners in implementing the Plan are described below.

### Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

TxDOT is responsible for the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the state highway system. Located within TxDOT's Tarrant District, TxDOT roadways in NRH include IH Loop 820, SH 121/183, SH 26 (Boulevard 26), Davis Boulevard (FM 1938), and Precinct Line Road (FM 3029). TxDOT prepares the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Long-Range

Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP) which incorporate regional transportation project needs for statewide consideration and funding.

### North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

NCTCOG serves as the Dallas-Fort Worth region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to assist local governments in planning for common needs and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG develops the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which outlines regional transportation needs which are eligible for federal funds.

### Tarrant County

Tarrant County is responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of roadways in the unincorporated areas of the county. The County serves to connect the area regionally between cities. County bond programs, like the 2006 Bond Program, help the City expand regional roadway facilities.

Table A-1. Key Transportation Documents and Responsible Agencies

	Who Develops?	Who Approves?	Time/ Horizon	Contents	Update Requirements
<b>CIP</b>	City	City Council	1 to 5 years	Transportation investments	Every year
<b>UPWP</b>	FHWA/FTA/MPO	MPO	1 or 2 years	Planning studies and tasks	At least once every 2 years
<b>MTP</b>	MPO	MPO	20 years	Future goals, strategies and projects	Every 5 years (4 years for non-attainment and maintenance areas)
<b>TIP</b>	MPO	MPO/Governor	4 years	Transportation investments	Every 4 years
<b>LRSTP</b>	State DOT	State DOT	20 years	Future goals, strategies and projects	Not specified
<b>STIP</b>	State DOT	FHWA/FTA	4 years	Transportation investments	Every 4 years



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Tarrant County and NRH have an on-going relationship working together on construction and maintenance of major facilities.

### Trinity Metro

Trinity Metro, formerly the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (FWTA), serves as the transit provider for NRH, including TEXRail and bus transit around the Tarrant County region. Trinity Metro is responsible for the planning, design, implementation, and operation of transit within NRH.

### Neighboring Communities

Transportation facilities extend beyond NRH into the adjacent communities. Coordination on project planning and implementation between NRH and these neighboring communities is important for maintaining a cohesive and effective transportation network.

### NRH Planning & Zoning Department

The Planning & Zoning Department is responsible for preparing, maintaining, and implementing planning documents that guides development in the City of North Richland Hills. The department sets citywide and corridor- or area-specific goals and policies to guide future growth to benefit the citizens of NRH.

### NRH Public Works Department

The Public Works Department is responsible for the City's network of infrastructure within the public right-of-way, including the design, construction, operations, and maintenance of roadways, storm drain systems, and water and sanitary sewer systems. The department also manages and implements the City's capital

improvements program (CIP) which is funded through federal, state, and local sources and requires coordination with other agencies.

### NRH Parks & Recreation Department

The Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for the City's more than 800 acres of park land, 34 parks, facilities and trails and 30 miles of hike and bike trails.

## Related Plans

Coordination with transportation planning and initiatives by Partners at the State, Regional, and local level is important to developing a comprehensive transportation plan. Programmed transportation improvements and corridor and small area visions as described below informed the planning process to retain funded projects, leverage previous planning efforts, and maintain consistency.

### 2017-2020 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

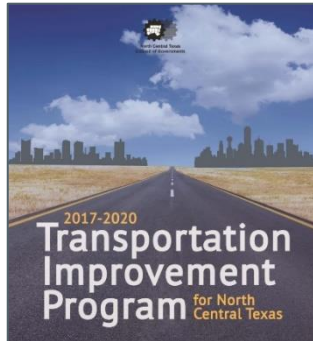


TxDOT's STIP incorporates metropolitan and rural area Transportation Improvements Programs (TIPs) as required under Title 23, US Code, Section 135 – Statewide

Transportation Planning. The plan contains MPO and rural TIPs, for a four-year period, that list the projects and their programmed costs in a fiscally

constrained model. Federal dollars cannot be expended on a project unless that project is listed in the STIP. Projects within North Richland Hills found in the STIP are described in **Chapter C**.

## 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)



NCTCOG, Dallas-Fort Worth's MPO, develops a new TIP every two years in cooperation with TxDOT, local governments, and transportation

agencies. Regional transportation projects are tracked through the TIP which stages projects with committed funds through the four-year period. Approved funding from federal, state, and local sources is listed for each project in NRH with expected timing of projects. These projects are further described in **Chapter C**.

## Mobility 2045

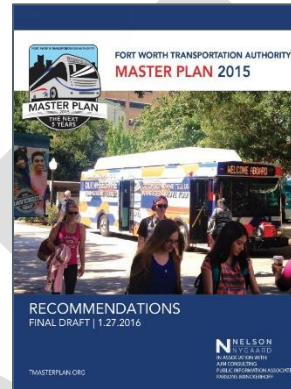


Mobility 2045, NCTCOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), is the defining vision for the multimodal

transportation system in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Adopted in June 2018, the plan identifies transportation solutions that offer the region's residents with travel choices. The plan coordinates cities, counties and other transportation partners to plan road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation improvements for the 20-year horizon of the region.

The regional projects considered in **the MTP informed priorities for NRH's Transportation Plan to integrate with regional mobility needs**. The travel demand model developed as part of Mobility 2040 served as a key tool for forecasting travel network needs in NRH. No major model changes were made within NRH in the Mobility 2045 update.

## Transit Master Plan



The 2015 Transit Master Plan is the culmination of extensive engagement by Trinity Metro to assess the market of Tarrant County for transit needs and evaluating existing service and

potential improvements.

The Transit Master Plan is framed by four goals to support transit:

1. Enhance – Make transit an attractive choice.
2. Connect – Connect people and places.
3. Simplify – Make transit easier to use and more convenient.
4. Sustain – Create a system that will be successful over the long term.

The plan outlines the implementation of future transit service, including the TEXRail commuter rail, premium bus service, and new non-downtown transit centers to enhance regional connections. TEXRail offers services NRH with two stations, Smithfield and Iron Horse. Regional connections from TEXRail as well as local premium bus service



## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

increase NRH's access to employment centers.

These transit enhancements were considered in the development of NRH's Transportation Plan to consider first-mile/last-mile connections to stations, right-of-way space allocation for on-street routes, and circulation and access near transit centers.

### Capital Improvement Program (CIP)



The City's CIP outlines the local capital projects and maintenance programs. Financially constrained, the CIP is detailed in the yearly Capital Budget led by the Public Works

Department. Individual projects are listed for scope of work, funding sources, and estimated schedule for completion. These projects include both major facilities, such as those included in a Transportation Plan, as well as local residential and commercial streets.

### Boulevard 26 Corridor Strategy

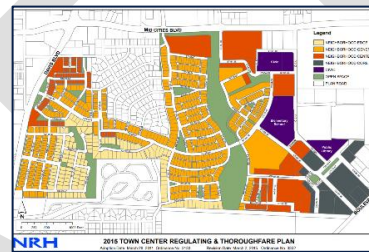


The Boulevard 26 Corridor Strategy was adopted in 2004 and encompasses Boulevard 26 south of Loop 820, including parts of Rufe Snow and Glenview Drives. Once a regional draw for all Northeast Tarrant County, the Boulevard 26 Corridor's market potential

and vision for investment was developed in this strategy plan.

Urban village centers along the Boulevard 26 Corridor are reimagined for adjacent land uses, urban design elements, and development types. These visionary elements were incorporated in NRH's Transportation Plan through the consideration of context-sensitive flexibility in design sections for specialty areas like Boulevard 26.

### HomeTown NRH

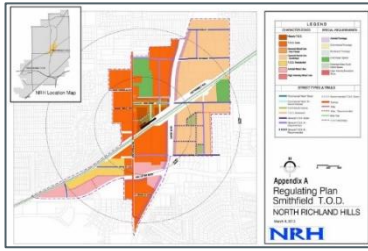


HomeTown, the city's town center district, is a specialty area with unique

zoning and development standards to the district that promote a sustainable, high quality, mixed use development scenario in an integrated manner. Thoroughfare types for the district are outlined in the adopted plan with designations distinct from the City's Thoroughfare Plan functional classifications. After an extensive public input process, the updated HomeTown plan was approved by the City Council in 2011.

Including avenues, commercial streets, residential streets, and roads, HomeTown's thoroughfare types were considered and incorporated into the overall NRH Transportation Plan as the city advances connectivity and integration of the roadway network between neighborhoods, including HomeTown.

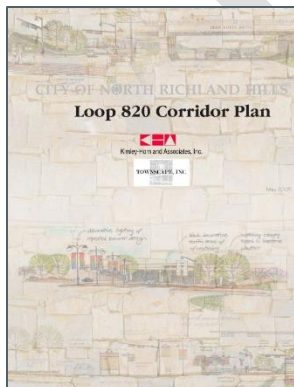
## Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Code



The City of NRH developed a Transit Oriented Mixed Use Develop-

ment Code, adopted by City Council in 2009 with revisions approved in 2013, to govern future development around the proposed TEXRail Smithfield and Iron Horse rail station sites. Engagement with surrounding property owners and stakeholders was vital in the development of this code as a supporting area roadway network was developed for future accessibility. Key aspects of the code include unique character districts, building and streetscape guidelines, civic and open spaces, and parking.

Unique street types within an area roadway network are also identified in the development code, including commercial streets, TOD boulevard, general TOD streets, and avenues. This network and thoroughfare typology was considered and incorporated into the City's Transportation Plan to better integrate the roadway network between neighborhoods surrounding the TOD districts.



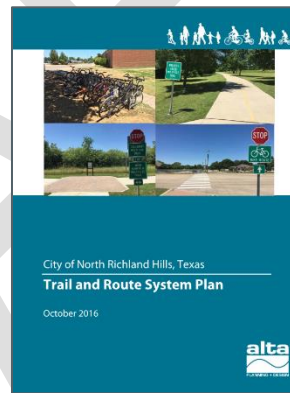
## Loop 820 Corridor Plan

In anticipation of the North Tarrant Express project, which widened NE Loop 820, the City prepared a corridor plan along Loop 820

considering adjacent properties and associated land uses as well as likely changes in traffic patterns due to new ramp locations. Adopted by City Council in 2005, the plan serves as a guide for future development surrounding Loop 820 to maintain business, entertainment, and civic area vitality.

The land use, urban design, and transportation considerations for the various districts outlined in the corridor plan were considered as part of the overall NRH Transportation Plan to maintain the vision of this document developed through public input.

## Trail and Route System Plan



In 2016, the NRH Parks and Recreation Department developed the Trail and Route System Plan which builds on the extensive trail system NRH has in place and

provides a framework for future investments in bicycle infrastructure. The plan focuses on improving connectivity to local destinations, tying into the regional trail network, improving safety and accessibility for all bicyclists, and improving active transportation for NRH residents. The plan outlines a vision and goals for active transportation in NRH with recommended bicycle facility routes by type.

This plan forms the basis of active transportation planning incorporated into this multimodal Transportation Plan with route types verified for conflicting traffic volumes in the planning process.

### Adjacent City Thoroughfare Plans

Thoroughfare plans in communities adjacent to NRH were considered for regional continuity and connectivity. These include:

- Keller
- Richland Hills
- Watauga
- Colleyville
- Fort Worth
- Haltom City

## Transportation Goals

The transportation network forms the skeleton of the city and must serve to support the larger vision of the community. Transportation goals were developed through input and discussion with City Council and stakeholders. While these goals are distinct from general community goals, they point back to the community goals to promote transportation as a key element of community success.

In February 2019, the NRH City Council updated the community goals which serve as the policy direction for the community. The nine goals are as follows:

1. Quality Community Development & Revitalization
2. Efficient & Effective Transportation System
3. Safety & Security
4. Financial Stability
5. Positive City Image
6. Sense of Community

7. Targeted Economic Development
8. Local & Regional Leadership
9. Efficient & Effective Delivery of City Services

These goals informed the development

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*-Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

of the four transportation goals that highlight the City's mobility priorities. These goals help to align policies with program funding, practices, and projects.

#### 4 Transportation Goals:

- » Expand Mobility & Access
- » Focus on Implementation
- » Improve Economic Vitality
- » Enhance Quality of Life

The goals are further illustrated as follows:

## Expand Mobility & Access

- » Evaluate specific existing and planned roadway corridors for future transportation needs.
- » Integrate trails, transit, roadways, and sidewalks into a more comprehensive plan for all forms of transportation.
- » Promote interconnected neighborhoods for all modes of travel.
- » Explore use of new technologies to enhance transportation options.
- » Develop policies and standards for off-street connectivity, dead-end streets, and new cul-de-sacs.

## Focus on Implementation

- » Maintain the cleanliness and good repair of existing transportation infrastructure.
- » Coordinate local and regional initiatives to leverage local transportation dollars.
- » Maintain and enhance streets and transportation infrastructure in older and substandard areas.

## Improve Economic Vitality

- » Improve access to employment, commerce, education, and community resources.
- » Provide for the efficient movement of goods and services.
- » Strengthen the integration of transportation and land use.
- » Provide and maintain infrastructure capacity in line with growth or decline demands.
- » Plan for Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

## Enhance Quality of Life

- » Focus on moving people safely and efficiently.
- » Encourage transportation design standards appropriate to the neighborhood context.
- » Comply with state and local air quality standards.

Associated with each goal are policies and actions. These serve as strategies that guide the advancement of the Plan to achieve the City's goals. Implementation actions are developed and described further in the document.

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Figure A-2. Transportation Goals Connected to Community Goals

