Meeting Introduction – Welcomes, Introductions and Ice Breaker
As an “ice breaker” participants were asked to describe in a sentence their definition of a sustainable regional approach to transportation and mobility. Their answers are below:

- Multimodal transit that works for everyone
- Connecting different land uses
- System that provides access for all citizens of Erie and Niagara Counties no matter their needs
- Links population to jobs and key services
- Does not pollute the atmosphere
- System equally serves and improves mobility and the social, economic, and environmental setting
- Supports healthy communities
- Supports growth and expansion
- Respects the user over the process
- Gets people where they want to be when they want to be there
- Affordable
- Built on community values
- Something that we can maintain fiscally in perpetuity
- Reduces our reliance on fossil fuels

**Working Team Contributor Comments:**

- One that is affordable, reliable, energy efficient, safe, and transports people all over WNY *(Erin Carmina)*
- A safe and multimodal system connecting people and goods to the places they need to be *(Douglas Scheider)*
- A system that increases fuel efficiency, encourages walk-able cities and towns, plans ahead for our region's freight needs and broadens transportation options in rural communities *(Meg Lauerman)*

**Review of key issues and data points**
The facilitator presented a series of slides on key issues and data points that, in part, describe the current conditions for land use and development in the region including growth of the urbanized area, the extent of areas of high housing vacancy, and more. Participants were asked whether the issues and data points presented accurately and fully “told the story” of land use and development in our region and were invited to help correct, elaborate, or detail the picture presented. Those suggestions are below:

**Key issues to frame our discussion**

- A growing number of bridges in our region are considered “deficient.”
- Structure and functionality (lane width/lack of sidewalks) could be included in definition of “deficient” when taking into consideration bridge conditions

**Regarding data from Brookings**

- Not normalized for commute times in the region
- Wait times are out of context and not realistic for our region
- Number of transfers?
- Data don’t indicate quality of jobs people have access to
- Persuading people to take transit instead of car – we need use data and statistics. What’s the quality of transit?
- It’s impractical to run transit to low density developments
- Building neighborhoods by getting them to think about helping one another – neighbor helping neighbor
- Land use patterns won’t support transit – look at other ways to get people to transit (e.g., car share)
- Transit is a second thought in most developments
- Realistically, being located more than a quarter mile from a transit hub starts to make access difficult
- Areas in the city isolated from public transit – does not serve the population most in need
- It’s both an urban and suburban issue
Freight Traffic to more than double in coming decades

- Portage Bridge in Letchworth needs to be completely replaced, especially since it is a critical link in East-West movement of goods
- This region is an extension of Toronto. Buffalo is a low cost alternative for logistics companies and helps avoid delays at border
- Logistics Center opportunity – international logistics hub – East-West rails line connections in Buffalo Niagara is good.
- Marketing ourselves to Toronto – We need to have an active engagement with Canadian regional transportation – mass transit in and between US and Canada – how are we handling cross-border transportation?

- Driver for Rail Station improvements in Niagara Falls – point of entry for rail traffic from Canada
  - Rainbow bridge as passenger corridor for US-Canada connections
  - Provide a true international connection
- Consideration for and involvement of Canada – population projection in Canada – 1 million extra people in Southern Ontario
- Need to think of Southern Ontario as an extension of our region. Make sure we’re feeding off of the growth plan for the Toronto MSA
- Niagara Region in Canada is the 2nd largest retirement community in Canada

Other issues in the data:

- Maintaining new lane miles every year and the cost to municipalities
  - Citizens less aware of how highways are funded vs. transit
  - Education at the municipal level – saddling future generations with maintenance costs
  - Can GBNRTC come up with financial impacts of light rail and street car – maintenance costs compared to road costs?

- Who is driving transportation decisions? NYDOT/County vs. Local Municipality
- Think 20, 30, 40 years down the road
- When looking at transit costs – federal funding programs – look at long term costs in decision-making – this should be looked at for the Buffalo-Amherst extension cost. If not available now it will be down the road
- Data that’s missing – transit ridership – bike counts – walking
- Look and see where job growth is occurring and how people are getting there
- Look at criteria used to make transportation decisions used by DOT engineers
- Not every road on the ground can support goods movement – DOT needs to change its one size fits all approach
- Destruction of the Humboldt Parkway – decisions like this are counter-productive
- Quality of life as opposed to lack of congestion – pedestrian/bicycle data. Talk about Humboldt parkway, land values
- Cutting off our water access
- Focus on people first
- Transportation funding has shifted from simply extending roads to new development to quality of life improvements (streetscaping, access to transit, etc.) This is a change in mentality
• Need buy in from the DOT – driven by lack of federal funding – focused on getting bigger bang for the buck – building streets for more than just vehicles
• Access capacity on streets? – Regional data model being developed that would look at these issues – looking at trip generation – where access capacity is – choke points – where alternative models may make sense
• Parking – cost of parking and parking garages
• Data on Single Occupancy Vehicles

Working Team Contributor Comments:

• I think that this describes our regions transportation issues and concerns in a concise manner, and the visuals also help to get the information across. The national percentages and reports was also helpful to see…another suggestion would be including other specific cities (one in a similar situation to ours and one that is not) (Erin Carmina)
• I believe the slides somewhat miss the mark on the transit issue. I think without data on who needs to go where, the numbers presented are misleadingly optimistic. For example, for someone living on the west side, a daily transit commute to UB North isn’t really a viable option (Douglas Scheider)
• Broadening public transit in cities makes sense, but often shuts out our rural citizens, where transit is less practical. Also, these slides do not differentiate between types of roads- suburban streets have significantly less utility than highway connections which bring access to jobs and economic development- and have federal funding for road maintenance (Meg Lauereran)

Review of Draft Goals
The working team was presented a set of draft goals derived from a review of past planning in the region, the research of the 1RF staff, and a review of “vision and values” by the Private Sector Council, Local Government Council, and the two Community Congress events. Participants were asked to consider if the goals are appropriate? Complete? Require adjustment? Their comments are below:

• It will be easier to resolve goals if we have some kind of overarching principle to follow
• Goal #2 – there are also environmental impacts – promote energy and environmental conservation and protection
• Using “broaden” in first goal – implies wrong message – more about being efficient. Maybe use “provide” or “encourage.” Make clear it’s about increasing options not the system.
• Include safety as a goal – foster safer complete streets. People need to feel comfortable using an alternative mode
• Reduce VMT
• Multi-generational investments – infrastructure that facilitates improvements in future generations
• Regarding freight goal: add some language like “not at the expense of other goals.”
• Develop lasting infrastructure
• Freight and passenger investments
• Identify funding and finance mechanisms for goals
• Keep implementation in mind
• Add an affordability goal – for user and provider
• Address better cooperation between state and federal partners
• Better return on transportation infrastructure investment. Think about the life-cycle costs of transportation investments
• Second last bullet – is there a way to accomplish this without undermining other goals
  • Air quality
Other negative externalities

- Should the group develop Goals AND guiding principles?
- Take advantage of existing infrastructure to accomplish goals – maximize what we already have
- Promote human health should suffice for last goal – don’t need to separate air quality out

Working Team Contributor Comments:

- I think that the first one definitely "hits the nail on the head" of being an important topic I often hear about when WNY's transportation systems are brought up. The remaining goals are also very important and relevant to our region. What about the cost of these goals though? I think that is going to be the biggest deterrent to these goals coming to fruition (Erin Carmina)
- I am concerned about the language in the first statement, beginning "broaden transportation..." both because it seems that "young" and "old" are adjectives describing "individuals," which is confusing, and because "especially," to me, has a sense of excluding, to some extent, groups that are not named. Maybe something like, "..access for all, including the young, the old, individuals..." Additionally, in the statement about "maintain and invest in infrastructure," although it sounds like an idea I probably like, I have no idea what a "Complete Street" is, out of context. So, definition there will help. Finally, the "develop a transport system that is energy efficient," and the "design and manage our transport system" statements both seem to be driving towards a similar idea, which is something along the lines of "invest in the health of the people and natural resources of the region by developing a transit system which is energy efficient, promotes energy conservation, and has minimal negative impact on air, water, and soil," or something. Overall, these seem great (Douglas Scheider)
- These are good, general goals, but their utility/attainability cannot be measured without action steps. A focus on projects that will facilitate the movement of workers to jobs, schools, hospitals -- and ease the ability of employers to attract professionals to relocate to our region-- will bring long-term economic stability (Meg Lauerman)

Needs for future meetings:
- Regional maps
- Projected population densities
- Current system overlays
- Suite of maps to use for every meeting?