



# Hindsight's 20/20

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Metroplan

10/23/2019



Jim McKenzie –  
Executive Director  
(28 years with  
METROPLAN)

# It's 2017

## and 28 consecutive years of agency administration

## Just walked out the door



Richard Magee – Deputy  
Director  
(42 years with  
METROPLAN)



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# And Metroplan was in the public eye!



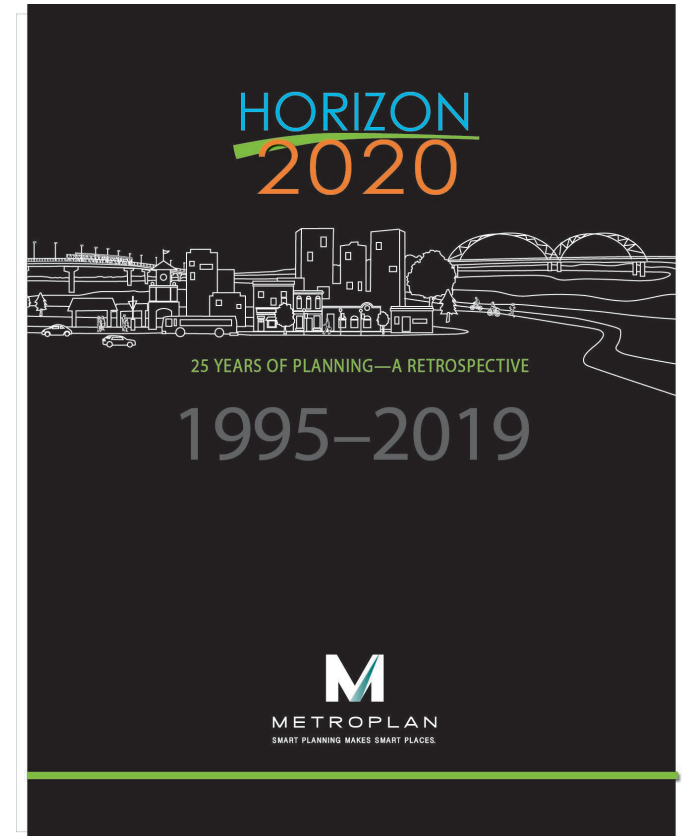
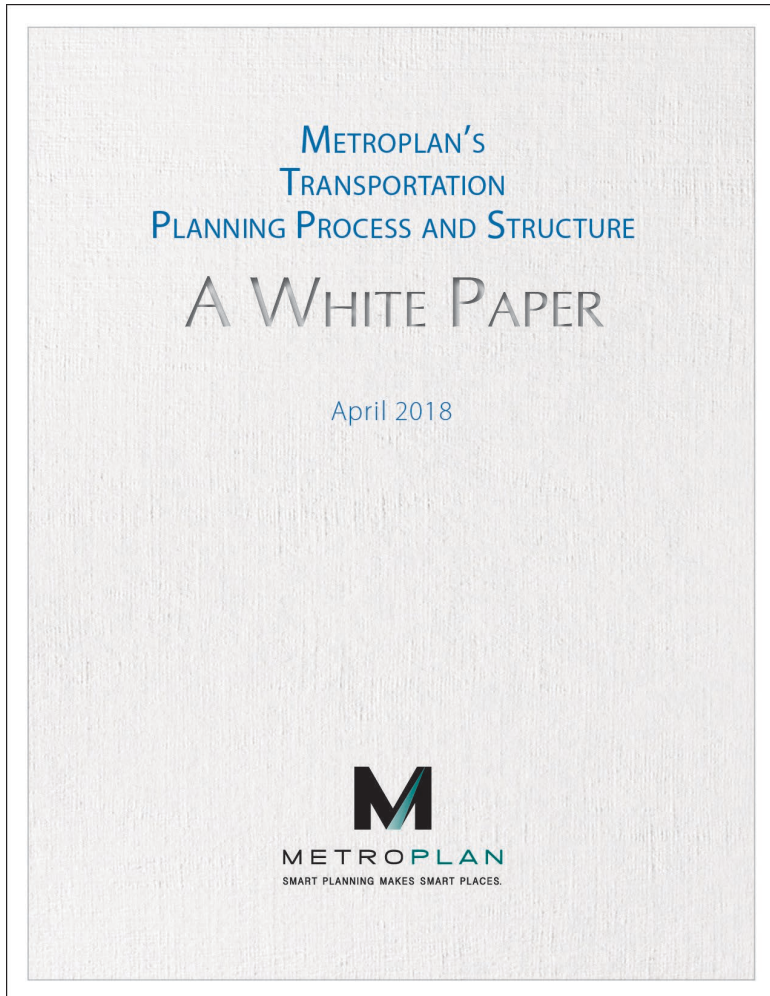
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# They say hindsight's 20/20

But I'm nearly going blind

Life can only be understood  
backwards;  
but it must be lived  
forwards.

Soren Kierkegaard  
(Danish Philosopher)



# Metroplan Transportation Planning Structure and Process

WHITE PAPER

Summary Briefing

# Purpose

For consideration of the Metroplan Board

- Critical look at the organization and responsibilities
- Current structure and committees
- Historic record of agency

Candid Assessment

Optimization of Agency Operations



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# White Paper Overview

Part I – Purpose and History (Requirements)

Part II – Current Structure and Roles

Part III – Critique of Planning Structure and Process(SWOT)

Part IV – Other Models

Part V -- Options for Restructuring



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# Part III. Critique of Planning Structure and Process

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)
- RPAC, TCC, Metroplan Staff + Board Interviews
- Areas of Analysis
  - Planning Program
  - Advisory Committees
  - Metroplan Board
  - Metroplan Staff
- *S.W.O.T. Analysis Report*



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# Regional Organizations Surveyed

- Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission
- North Central Texas Council of Governments
- Metroplan Orlando
- Capitol District Transportation Committee
- Capitol Area MPO
- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency



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# Metroplan Orlando

- The **Regional Leadership Council** acts as super policy committee – chairs and vice-chairs of Board, MAC, CAC, and 2 tech committees
- **Municipal Advisory Committee** – for smaller municipalities. Chair of MAC on Board
- **Community Advisory Committee** – Citizen members 15 appointed by jurisdictions, 16 at-large by application for specific groups

All three of these became part of the new Metroplan Little Rock



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# Was it a Success?

- How

- Empowered and Expanded Executive Committee
- New Small Cities Council
- New meeting structure
- Shared Citizen and Technical Committees

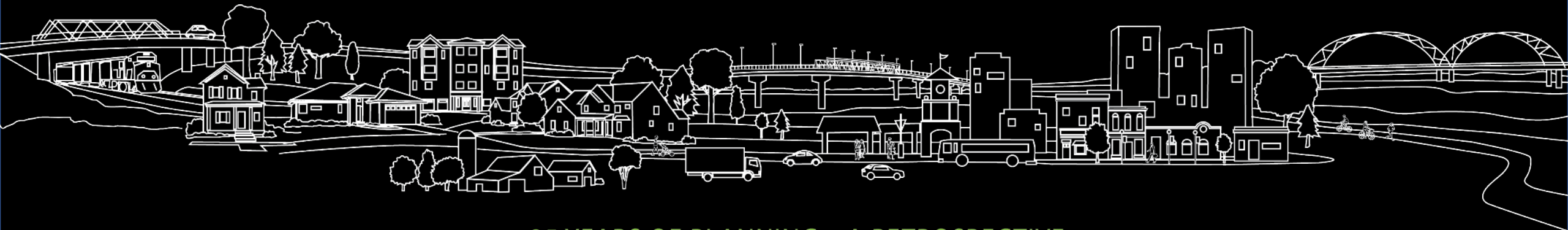
- Why

- Open process
- Addressed lingering issue
- Expertise

Jim McKenzie is still available for consultant – contact me [ccovington@Metroplan.org](mailto:ccovington@Metroplan.org)

Let's Skip Ahead 6 Months

# HORIZON 2020



25 YEARS OF PLANNING—A RETROSPECTIVE

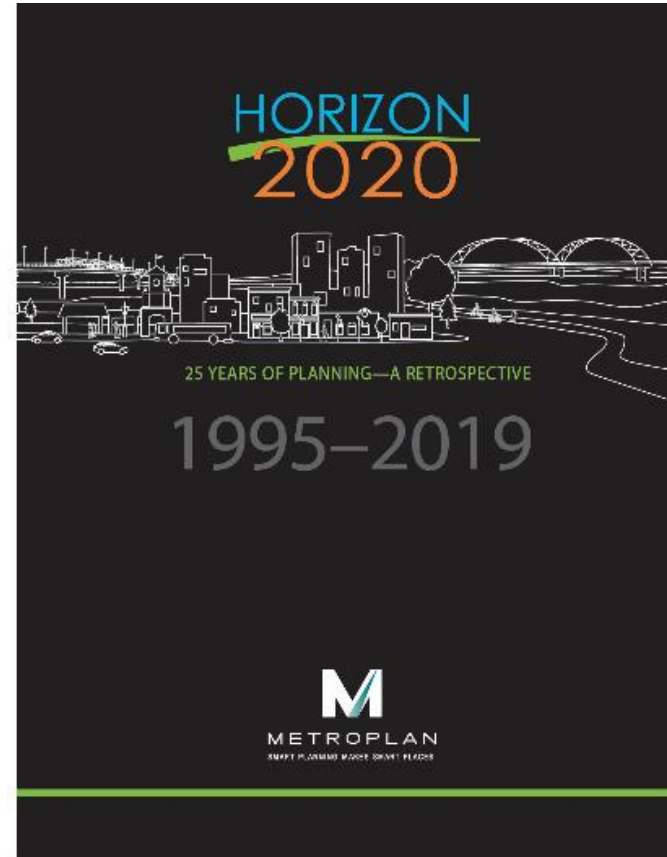
# 1995–2019



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# What does the Horizon Hold

- ✓ Published document
- ✓ Social Media Outreach
- Speakers Panel



# Deliberate Goals

- Positive result of planning process
- Retain historic record
- Candid assessment
- Education of new committee members
- Appreciation of prior board members, committees and staff
- Concise



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# METRO 2020

*METRO 2020 is intended to be the beginning of a new vision for Central Arkansas. That vision is of an economically vibrant region with a high quality of life that includes an efficient transportation system, environmentally sensitive development and reasonable mobility for all.”*

—METRO 2020 (1995)



# METRO 2020 VISION STATEMENT

- ***METRO 2020 Vision:*** *The Metropolitan Transportation Plan will contribute to a more livable and efficient environment in Central Arkansas. This plan should significantly change how we are presently allowing our transportation system and our communities to develop by defining an intermodal transportation system that:*
  - *Maximizes the mobility of people and goods;*
  - *Minimizes transportation related fuel consumption and air pollution; and,*
  - *Establishes a strong link between the provision of transportation facilities and how we use our land.*



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# Freeways

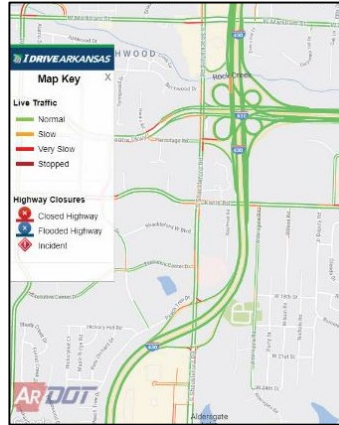
## A Balanced Approach to Mobility



### Additional Demand



### Balanced Transportation System

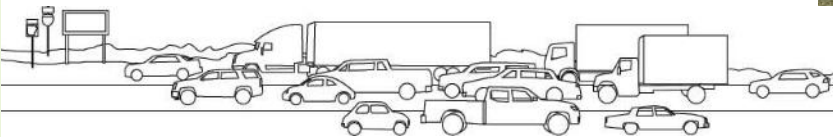


## KEY TAKEAWAY

Freeway size cannot be determined by Metroplan policy alone. Solutions require the buy-in of all partners and supporting infrastructure throughout the regional transportation system. The question is: Should the region continue to add lanes alone, or instead invest in alternatives that improve the efficiency of the entire system?



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# Transportation + Land Use and Development



|                                     | 1995         | 2020         |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Vehicle Miles Traveled (per person) | 27.6 miles   | 32.5 miles   |
| Commute Times                       | 21.4 minutes | 23.1 minutes |
| Solo Car Commute                    | 79.8%        | 84.0%        |
| Walk/Bike Commute                   | 2.70%        | 1.3%         |
| Transit Pop Served                  | 181,100      | 166,400      |



## KEY TAKEAWAY

Local land development practices continue to perpetuate a growth pattern that hinders alternative transportation modes, and doubles down on expensive roadway widenings.



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# Achievements

METRO 2020's successes can be illustrated by projects Metroplan either directly funded or participated in, including the following:

- New railgrade separations
- Big Dam Bridge
- Two Rivers Park Bridge
- Arkansas River Trail System
- White Oak Bayou Bridge
- River Rail Streetcar
- Jimmerson Creek Bridge
- Enhanced River Market
- Enhanced sidewalk coverage
- Downtown pedestrian bridges
- Bike trails/bike lanes
- Bike racks on buses
- New Rock Region METRO bus fleet
- Short- and long-term Transit Plan
- Median divided roadways
- Roundabouts
- Enhanced residential development
- Argenta Arts District
- Access managed roadways
- Jump Start
- Downtown Benton and Conway

**METRO 2020 demonstrated a willingness to rethink transportation and development priorities. This had definable results ... Its hard to imagine reverting to pre-METRO 2020 practices.**



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# Lessons Learned



METRO 2020 acted as the first step towards a future that would take much longer than 25 years to achieve.

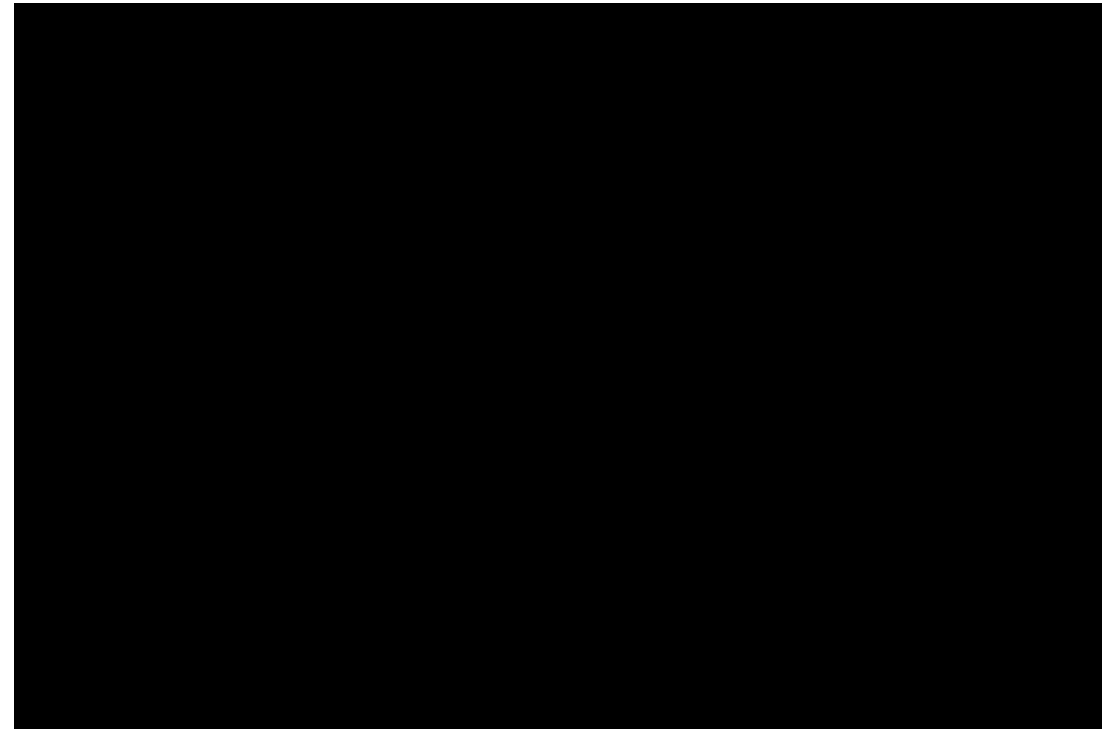
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Engage the public earlier, more often, and meaningfully –not only during development, but especially after plan adoption.
2. Awareness of regional goals must extend to local councils and commissions.
3. Cities must commit to local policies that support regional goals.
4. Funded projects should closely align with the long-term vision, even if driven by immediate need.
5. Metroplan cannot mandate. All regional partners must embrace a genuinely collaborative spirit to achieve any vision.



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# Have Fun!!!!!!



# Your Challenge

- Go find your plan for 2020 and conduct you own retrospective
  - [ccovington@Metroplan.org](mailto:ccovington@Metroplan.org)
- Minneapolis – Help me with a 30 years after ISTEA Session



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# With regrets to Randy Travis

## “1982”

### First Verse

- Operator, please connect me with 1995
- I need to make apologies for what I didn't do
- I sure do need to tell her
- That I've thought the whole thing through
- And now it's clear that she is what
- I should have held onto

### Chorus

- They say hindsight's 20/20
- But I am nearly going blind