Transportation

Transportation refers to the form and function of transportation systems, including private vehicles, public transportation, and walking and biking infrastructure. Transportation made up 27% of Columbia's greenhouse gas inventory in 2015. Local, on-road transportation of passengers in privately-owned vehicles account for the majority of these emissions in Columbia.

Climate change may lead to more intense rain events and flooding, affecting road conditions in Columbia. Floods could temporarily block roadways and trails. Warmer temperatures and extreme heat may weaken pavement and require more maintenance. On the other hand, warmer winters may mean fewer instances of freezing and thawing and therefore less demand for other types of maintenance. Columbia residents who rely on walking or biking may be more exposed to extreme heat and poor air quality.

Strategies and Actions

Expanding public transit and building bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing reliance on personal vehicles for transportation. This includes funding public transit expansion and prioritizing walking and biking infrastructure. Implementing the City's Vision Zero plan will be important for success.

Building sidewalks, bike-lanes, crosswalks, and other infrastructure can fill-in connectivity gaps identified in City plans. Additionally, creating walkable communities through mixed-used development and infill can connect neighborhoods to schools, community centers, and local businesses. This will help reduce the distance people need to travel to meet basic needs.

When people do need to travel in vehicles, Columbia can help encourage low emissions vehicles. Within the City's own operations, GoCOMO, Columbia's transit system uses 9 electric buses. City fleets can add electric and hybrid vehicles and the City can encourage private adoption of zero-emission vehicles by increasing the number of electric charging stations in public parking areas.

All of the transportation strategies and actions require the City to play a bigger role in advocating for the use of multi-modal transportation to get about Columbia. Efforts to change the public perception of traveling any other way than by personal vehicle is needed to achieve success in reducing transportation emissions.

Goal T-1. Reduce travel by car.

Strategy T-1.1: Prioritize safety and convenience of walking, biking, and riding transit.		
T-1.1.1	Prioritize transportation funding for Vision Zero engineering improvement projects to create safe streets for people walking, biking, and riding transit.	Priority
T-1.1.2	Revise street design standards that prioritize people walking, biking, and riding transit while also accommodating vehicles.	Priority
T-1.1.3	Prioritize transportation funding to achieve mode share goals.	Priority
Strategy T-1.2: Build a thriving public transit system.		
T-1.2.1	Improve efficiency, convenience, and reliability of bus service and infrastructure (e.g., increase frequency, shorten wait times, construct bus stop shelters).	Priority
Strategy T-1.3: Create a bikeable community.		
T-1.3.1	Build and maintain a network of on-street protected bike lanes on streets with speed limits above 30 mph. Build other bike facilities (bike boulevards, etc.) on streets with lower traffic/speed.	Priority
T-1.3.2	Establish a bike share program.	Other
Strategy T-1.4: Create a walkable community.		
T-1.4.1	Accelerate building sidewalks, crosswalks, and other walking infrastructure in high-need areas and to fill connectivity gaps as identified in Sidewalk Master Plan.	Priority
T-1.4.2	Install universal design accessibility features at crossing locations to ensure the crossing is accessible for everyone (e.g., pedestrian traffic signals, audible signals).	Priority
Strategy T-1.5: Shift land use patterns to shorten trips and reduce the need to drive.		
T-1.5.1	Revise zoning codes to favor walkable, connected neighborhoods in the existing built environment, near schools, and new development.	Priority
T-1.5.2	Incentivize infill and mixed-use development (e.g., through alternative code compliance, fee waivers, density bonuses, investment prioritization, development impact fees, tax benefits).	Priority
T-1.5.3	Revise zoning codes to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units (i.e., mother-in-law units).	Priority
T-1.5.4	Preserve and enhance affordable housing as well as infill development, especially near bus service.	Priority
T-1.5.5	Partner with Columbia Public Schools to adjust school siting requirements to prioritize building schools in walkable and bikeable areas.	Other
T-1.5.6	Eliminate downtown parking minimums and reduce surface parking while requiring new developments to invest in centralized parking.	Other

Goal T-2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles.

Strategy T-2.1: Encourage use of low- to zero-emissions vehicles.		
T-2.1.1	Introduce a policy to replace City fleet vehicles and buses with electric and hybrid options at time of replacement, and require emissions standards, testing and biofuel preference for any combustion vehicles remaining in the fleet.	Priority
T-2.1.2	Create EV roadmap to increase number of electric charging stations in public parking areas (e.g., schools, parks, libraries, city-owned parking garages, near city hall) and in commercial and high-density residential areas	Priority
T-2.1.3	Encourage installation of EV charging capacity in single family and multifamily residences (e.g., how to address residences that lack garage access).	Priority
T-2.1.4	Incentivize purchase of electric vehicles through rebates on vehicles and/or residential chargers.	Other
Strategy T-2.2: Reduce use and ownership of personal vehicles.		
T-2.2.1	Solicit a car share program, such as Zipcar or Get Around, to provide cars in a central location.	Other
T-2.2.2	Identify locations and partners to facilitate carpooling, telecommuting options, and parking buyback programs for municipal and other employers in the region.	Other
Strategy T-2.3: Improve efficiency of vehicle traffic.		
T-2.3.1	Implement street design to improve road and vehicle efficiency (e.g., roundabouts, synchronize traffic signals, road diets).	Other