Discussion Theme Summary

We wrote this summary of the situation assessment discussion by organizing the discussion comments into themes and summarizing those themes, as well as integrating information gathered from attendees through polls during the meeting.

The 119 attendees of the situation assessment meeting on bike, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure data came from a variety of organizations: various Federal government agencies (32%); state or local departments of transportation or metropolitan planning organizations (22%); academia (17%); nonprofit organizations (10%); private companies/corporate organizations (8%); industry or professional associations (8%); and other type of organizations (3%). There was no representation from tribes or tribal governments. Attendees' organizations typically produce data, consume data to achieve a variety of outcomes (e.g., navigation, research, planning), or assist other organizations – directly or indirectly – in producing and consuming data.

Attendees think the purpose of bike, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure data is to improve navigation (i.e., trip planning) for those using bicyclist, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure; to improve planning and implementation to expand these kinds of infrastructure, especially related to ADA compliance, physical accessibility, and safety; and to support more research and analysis. Attendees also noted that they plan to use these data to influence policy and justify prioritizing investment in bicycle, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure.

Attendees' underlying motivation to collaborate on bike, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure data is to prioritize and improve active transportation and physical accessibility. They see collaboration around data standardization and interoperability as underlying the ability to do more and better research; improve planning, decision-making and performance management; and ultimately support policy and investment that promotes active transportation. They believe this will lead to lower barriers in transportation that improve quality of life, realize safety, environmental, and health benefits, and make progress towards modal and social equity.

According to attendees, the best possible outputs from a collaboration around these data include the adoption of data standards, clarifying data collection methodologies, and the development of end products – such as publicly accessible data covering the nation, data production and consumption tools, and adjacent or derivative data products – which fulfill specific use cases. Attendees are interested in outcomes like clarified data governance and shifting policy around bicycle, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure data collection and maintenance. They believe these outputs and outcomes will lead to downstream safety, environmental, health, social, and cultural benefits.

Attendees voiced uncertainty about every part of bicycle, pedestrian, and accessibility infrastructure data, including data collection, standardization, licensing, access, integration, quality, curation, archiving, and more. But they identified a few things that they take as "givens". First, attendees understand there to be a data gap: data often doesn't exist, and when it does exist, data suffers from poor quality, due in part to lack of standardization and the ground truth being constantly in flux. Second, attendees think that the availability of data is representative of both geographical and modal inequities: different places will have different willingness and ability to create and maintain these data and these

data are often considered non-essential compared to data related to other modes, such as driving, which leaves data collection and management under- or un-resourced. Third, they agree that barriers to creating these data are not technological, but institutional, political, legal, and related to funding.

Attendees noted that – for successful collaboration – it is necessary to include knowledge, expertise, and experiences related to the process of creating, using, and maintaining these data, with special emphasis on engagement with end users of the data; those who have had prior success in collaborative data governance; and those who can help fund work in this space.