

2. Transportation

Minneapolis will build, maintain and enhance access to multi-modal transportation options for residents and businesses through a balanced system of transportation modes that supports the City's land use vision, reduces adverse transportation impacts, decreases the overall dependency on automobiles, and reflects the City's pivotal role as the center of the regional transportation network.

Building the City Through Multi-modalism

Transportation is vital to the City's social, economic and environmental health. The City recognizes the key role of transportation in meeting the City's sustainability goals for reducing carbon dioxide emissions and improving air quality, and strives to help meet them through this plan. The City continues to encourage investment in an interconnected multi-modal transportation system that supports sustainable growth.

Minneapolis seeks to develop transportation strategies that adapt and expand to address emerging needs, opportunities and priorities. The City is in a strategic position to promote access to multi-modal transportation options that serve residents, businesses and recreational services as the city and metropolitan region gain population.

The principal means to efficiently meet the needs of the traveling public is through enhanced transit services. This requires ongoing investment and development of corridors served by light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, and buses. Key features of an effective system, one that ensures continued growth along major transportation corridors and in Growth Centers like Downtown and the University of Minnesota, are reliability and frequency of service. The City will take measures to support reliable levels of service for all transportation choices, including automobile, mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes. By closely linking transportation planning with land use planning, urban design, and economic development strategies the City will promote coordinated implementation of a consistent transportation vision.

Policy 2.1: Encourage growth and reinvestment by sustaining the development of a multi-modal transportation system.

- 2.1.1 Continue addressing the needs of all modes of transportation, emphasizing the development of a more effective transit network.
- 2.1.2 Coordinate land use planning and economic development strategies with transportation planning.
- 2.1.3 Ensure continued growth and investment through strategic transportation investments and partnerships.
- 2.1.4 Preserve the existing transportation grid through right-of-way preservation and acquisition.

Modal Priorities and Neighborhood Context

Planning for a multi-modal transportation system involves establishing priorities at the system or network level as well as the level of an individual street. Transportation throughout the city occurs within public rights-of-way that accommodate a range of users; those that drive, ride, bike or walk. Minneapolis' transportation system is largely based upon the traditional street grid, which provides a high degree of connectivity and flexibility. However, modifications to the street grid to accommodate new development and freeway construction have resulted in wider streets, narrower sidewalks, the loss of local street connections, and conversions of major streets to one-way operation. These changes often altered the character of the surrounding neighborhood, and have the cumulative effect of reducing overall connectivity for all modes of travel. Future growth in Minneapolis will rely on and support the increased use of walking, bicycling and transit modes, as well as a sensitivity to land uses along public rights-of-way.

The challenge to find physical space to accommodate each mode means that not all modes will be accommodated in the same way. The street design realms in the figure above demonstrate the various modal needs in a hypothetical street corridor. Depending on the modal priority for an individual street, these modes will be allocated appropriate amounts of right-of-way. For example, some streets will have bike lanes and some will not; and some streets will have curb extensions while others will not.

Policy 2.2: Support successful streets and communities by balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy.

- 2.2.1 Identify modal priorities on each street to improve the overall effectiveness of each element of the transportation network.
- 2.2.2 Establish and use guidelines for the design and use of streets based on both transportation function and adjoining land use.
- 2.2.3 Promote street and sidewalk design that balances handling traffic flow with pedestrian orientation and principles of traditional urban form.
- 2.2.4 Develop strategies to mitigate and/or reduce negative impacts of transportation systems on adjacent land uses.
- 2.2.5 Engage transportation providers, transportation users, and other stakeholder groups in the transportation planning process.
- 2.2.6 Encourage reconnection of the traditional street grid where possible, to increase connectivity for all travel modes and strengthen neighborhood character.
- 2.2.7 Coordinate with the University of Minnesota, institutions and other large-scale users, as well as regional transportation agencies to manage transportation needs and manage transportation and parking impacts on nearby residential areas.

Creating a Walkable City

Walking is the most affordable and accessible mode of transportation, particularly for shorter trips. It serves everyone who lives, works, and plays in Minneapolis because everyone is a pedestrian at some point in a trip. Walking is a key component of the City's public realm: parks, sidewalks, and plazas are the basis for the pedestrian environment. Walking supports the public transportation system, as transit riders must access buses and trains as pedestrians. Walking also supports active lifestyles and healthy citizens.

Policy 2.3: Encourage walking throughout the city by ensuring that routes are safe, comfortable, pleasant, and accessible.

- 2.3.1 Ensure that there are safe and accessible pedestrian routes to major destinations, including transit corridors, from nearby residential areas.
- 2.3.2 Identify and encourage the development of pedestrian routes within Activity Centers, Growth Centers, and other commercial areas that have superior pedestrian facilities.
- 2.3.3 Develop and implement guidelines for streets and sidewalks to ensure safe, attractive, and accessible pedestrian facilities.
- 2.3.4 Maintain the street grid, reconnecting it where possible, and discourage the creation of superblocks that isolate pedestrians and increase walking distances.
- 2.3.5 Continue to enforce standards for building placement and design based primarily on the needs of pedestrians.
- 2.3.6 Provide creative solutions to increasing and improving pedestrian connectivity across barriers such as freeways, creeks and the river, and commercial areas, such as shopping centers.
- 2.3.7 Minimize and consolidate driveway curb cuts as opportunities arise, and discourage curb cuts where alleys are available.

Making Transit More Effective

Sustainable economic growth in the City of Minneapolis depends upon frequent and reliable transit service. In order to accommodate the projected growth in jobs and population, transit must become an attractive option for more travelers. The City will accomplish this by engaging in partnerships that coordinate transportation, land use and economic development planning at local and regional levels.

The focus of much of this work is the designation of a Primary Transit Network (PTN), a citywide system of frequent and reliable service being developed as a long-term, dependable travel option. The PTN includes both regional transitways (LRT, BRT, and commuter rail corridors) and high-frequency local transit corridors typically located on the City's commercial and community corridors. Map 2.13 shows the existing and planned PTN network. The City can accommodate growth and support increased density along these corridors and at key destinations as described in Chapter 1, Land Use. By building the City around these corridors, demand for transit service grows, which in turn necessitates improved transit service and facilities. Using transit becomes more attractive to more people more of the time.

Policy 2.4: Make transit a more attractive option for both new and existing riders.

- 2.4.1 Collaborate with regional partners to prioritize transit service and capital improvements along a network of corridors where standards for speed, frequency, reliability, and quality of passenger facilities are maintained.
- 2.4.2 Concentrate transit resources in a manner that improves overall service and reliability, including service for seniors, people with disabilities, and disadvantaged populations.
- 2.4.3 Encourage higher intensity and transit-oriented development to locate in areas well served by transit.

Creating a Bicycle-Friendly City

Bicycling is increasingly an important part of life for many Minneapolis residents and visitors. It reflects the City's commitment to a sustainable, healthy city. In addition to a premier network of recreational trails, the City is building a network of on- and off-street bicycle facilities to serve a variety of travel needs that include shopping, commuting to work and school, and recreation. These efforts will be complemented by public and private partnerships that address other needs of bicycling such as parking, safety, and education. Motorist awareness and bicycle safety education campaigns promote overall commuter confidence and encourage cyclists.

Policy 2.5: Ensure that bicycling throughout the city is safe, comfortable and pleasant.

- 2.5.1 Complete a network of on- and off-street primary bicycle corridors.
- 2.5.2 Strive to accommodate bicycles on all streets. When other modes take priority in a corridor, provide accessible alternate routes.
- 2.5.3 Continue to integrate bicycling and transit facilities where needed, including racks on transit vehicles and bicycle parking near transit stops.
- 2.5.4 Implement and expand zoning regulations and incentives that promote bicycling, such as racks, storage lockers and changing facilities.
- 2.5.5 Provide public bicycle parking facilities in major destinations such as Downtown, Activity Centers and Growth Centers.
- 2.5.6 Identify and utilize sources of funding for long-term maintenance of facilities, education and outreach.

- 2.5.7 Promote motorist awareness and bicycle safety education campaigns.

Managing Vehicle Traffic

As population and employment continue to grow, demand for travel in all modes increases. Even with an emphasis on creating a more balanced, multi-modal transportation system, the roadway network needs to accommodate additional vehicle traffic. However, the overall capacity of the roadway network within the city will remain fairly constant with system expansion only at select locations. Some major roads, including the system of state and regional highways, will give priority to vehicle traffic over other modes. Many of these corridors also have dedicated facilities that give priority to transit and carpools, which help reduce demand for single occupancy vehicle travel and increase mass transit options for commuters.

Policy 2.6: Manage the role and impact of automobiles in a multi-modal transportation system.

- 2.6.1 Encourage the implementation of Travel Demand Management (TDM) plans and programs that identify opportunities for reducing the generation of new vehicle trips from large developments.
- 2.6.2 Support the use of toll facilities that improve transportation options and generate revenue for transportation projects.
- 2.6.3 Implement strategies, such as preferential and discounted parking for car- and vanpooling, fuel-efficient taxi services, and car sharing programs, that increase vehicle occupancy and reduce the number of single occupant vehicles.
- 2.6.4 Increase the operational efficiency of the roadway network through the use of advanced technologies for traffic operations.
- 2.6.5 Encourage the design and completion of needed improvements to the street network, including the freeway system, which promote the efficient, safe movement of traffic.
- 2.6.6 Maintain street infrastructure in good condition to maximize the life of existing facilities.

Managing Freight Movement

The safe, efficient, and reliable movement of freight is vital to a healthy local and regional economy. All industries, especially manufacturing, construction, wholesale, and retail trade, rely on a multi-modal freight system to transport goods. Truck traffic comprises most of the local and regional freight system in Minneapolis, with

additional regional and international connections via rail, barge, and air.

The City of Minneapolis will accommodate the maintenance and expansion of freight infrastructure where benefits to the local and regional economy are apparent and where impacts to surrounding land uses are minimal. In the long term, some freight infrastructure will be phased out in order to further other goals of this plan.

For almost 100 years, shipping on the Mississippi River has been an alternate transportation option for Minneapolis businesses. While Minneapolis may elect for business reasons to close its barge shipping terminal, it will continue to provide storage locations for dredged materials. It also will not take any active steps to discontinue shipping on the river by other businesses as long as that remains a viable transportation option for them.

Policy 2.7: Ensure that freight movement and facilities throughout the city meet the needs of the local and regional economy while remaining sensitive to impacts on surrounding land uses.

- 2.7.1 Support the Metropolitan Council's freight clustering strategy by continuing to encourage the consolidation of industrial land uses in Industrial Employment Districts.
- 2.7.2 Support the continuation of existing freight rail infrastructure where consistent with land use policy.
- 2.7.3 Invest in safety improvements along viable railroad corridors.
- 2.7.4 Maintain a network of truck routes that ensures the safe and efficient delivery of goods to Minneapolis businesses and that directs truck traffic to a limited number of streets with appropriate weight limits.
- 2.7.5 Consider plans to close the City-owned Upper Harbor Terminal, while still supporting shipping on the Mississippi River in other ways.
- 2.7.6 Encourage joint use of rail lines by freight and passenger rail where feasible.

Managing Parking

Effective parking management is an important strategy in a multi-modal transportation system. Most land uses need some parking to ensure they are economically viable. On-street parking in particular can provide convenient access, while buffering sidewalks and outdoor seating from the impacts of auto traffic. On the other hand, excessive parking can promote automobile usage and traffic congestion, create pedestrian unfriendly environments, and damage the traditional urban character of an area.

As the city and the metropolitan area grow in population, the ability to accommodate

an increased workforce requires the efficient and appropriate use of existing parking spaces. Economically and environmentally, the best use of existing parking can be supported by promoting car- and vanpooling, car sharing, and shared parking. These and other city-wide initiatives promote a safe, comfortable and pleasant commute, balancing the demand for parking with objectives for economic and environmental vitality.

The City is committed to a policy direction designed to reduce car use, and thereby moderate both vehicle traffic and demand for parking. This includes land use policies and parking strategies that encourage increased use of transit, walking, biking, and carpooling. To address parking and mobility issues comprehensively, these strategies need to address the supply, management, and demand for parking spaces.

Policy 2.8: Balance the demand for parking with objectives for improving the environment for transit, walking and bicycling while supporting the City's business community.

- 2.8.1 Implement off-street parking regulations which provide a certain number of parking spaces for nearby uses, while still maintaining an environment that encourages bicycle, pedestrian, and transit travel.
- 2.8.2 Design and implement incentives for shared parking and on-site car sharing programs, as well as carpooling and vanpooling.
- 2.8.3 Maximize the efficient use of off-street parking by developing district parking strategies in high density mixed-use areas such as Activity Centers and Growth Centers.
- 2.8.4 Consider eliminating minimum parking requirements for certain small-scale uses as well as parking requirements in areas served by off-street parking facilities that are available to the general public.
- 2.8.5 Continue to prohibit new commercial surface parking lots and to restrict the size of accessory surface parking lots in Downtown.
- 2.8.6 Encourage management of on-street parking in commercial areas primarily for short-term use by adjoining land uses.
- 2.8.7 Promote transit, walking, and biking as safe and comfortable transportation alternatives through reduced parking requirements, encouragement of employee transit incentive programs, and improved facilities.
- 2.8.8 Encourage employers to offer economic incentives that support transit use, such providing as employee transportation allowances as alternatives to free parking.
- 2.8.9 Ensure that parking facilities do not under-price their parking fees as

compared to transit fares except to support carpooling and vanpooling as primary commuting modes.

- 2.8.10 Continue to implement discounted packages for carpooling and vanpooling in City-owned or controlled parking facilities, and in leading by example, encourage private parking facilities to do likewise.

Funding and Pricing Strategies

Funding

Achieving the goal of a multi-modal transportation network will require substantial investment in new transit, bicycling, and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as funding for the ongoing maintenance and operation of these facilities. The scope and influence of these investments range from neighborhood-oriented projects such as streetscape enhancements to those of national significance such as intra-regional passenger rail lines. Across this spectrum, partnerships with appropriate agencies will be instrumental in turning plans into reality.

Regional transit lines such as light rail transit, bus rapid transit, and commuter rail are typically financed through a combination of local, state, and federal dollars. The City of Minneapolis recognizes the importance of accessing federal resources for Minnesota transit projects and will continue to advocate for dedicated sources of transit funding to match federal funds.

While federal and state programs are important to building a multi-modal city, the City of Minneapolis will also continue to pursue innovative funding strategies that focus on local economic development outcomes and include the participation of private funding sources, including the development community. For example, a new local streetcar line may be funded in part by developers whose projects benefit from the enhanced transit service.

Pricing

In recent years, various government agencies have begun to influence short-term transportation decisions through incentives and disincentives. For example, Metro Transit has worked with local employers to encourage regular transit use through its Metropass program, which offers deeply discounted bus and train passes. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has begun managing travel demand on some highways using High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, allowing drivers to bypass congestion for a fee that adjusts dynamically to traffic conditions.

The City of Minneapolis will continue to support these and other programs that equate transportation decisions with market choices, and work toward tying daily choices to the long-term future. In addition to supporting other agencies, the City can play a direct role in developing a sustainable transportation system.

Policy 2.9: Promote reliable funding and pricing strategies to manage transportation demand and improve alternative modes.

- 2.9.1 Advocate for dedicated sources of transit funding at the state legislature.
- 2.9.2 Develop local sources of funding as well as the means to leverage private sources of funding for transit needs and capital improvements.
- 2.9.3 Link transit improvements, such as streetcars, to economic development outcomes.
- 2.9.4 Advocate for freeway toll facilities that improve transportation services and generate revenue for transit.
- 2.9.5 Support programs that encourage regular transit use, such as the Metropass program, and lead by example.

Supporting a Vibrant Multi-modal Downtown

Downtown Minneapolis is the hub of the regional transit system. In addition to being a workplace for over 140,000 people, it is also home to over 20,000 residents. People make over 520,000 daily trips into and out of Downtown in their cars, trucks using light rail and busses, or by bicycle or on foot.

The health of the City as well as the region depends upon confronting transportation challenges and ensuring continued investment and growth. It is essential that Downtown have a transportation system that meets the needs of employees, visitors, and residents alike. Without adequate use of walking, bicycling and transit, the street network cannot support significant growth. As the city grows, multi-modal transportation planning will ensure that travel to and throughout Downtown is efficient, understandable, reliable, and safe.

Policy 2.10: Support the development of a multi-modal Downtown transportation system that encourages an increasingly dense and vibrant regional center.

- 2.10.1 Concentrate transit facilities, services and amenities along a limited set of Downtown streets in order to improve efficiency, reliability and quality.
- 2.10.2 Encourage transit use Downtown, including promoting incentives to make transit more convenient and affordable for Downtown users.
- 2.10.3 Identify and develop primary pedestrian routes that encourage walking throughout Downtown and which are the focus of particular infrastructure improvements.
- 2.10.4 Improve the pedestrian environment Downtown, to ensure it is a safe,

enjoyable, and accessible place to walk. Encourage strategies such as wider sidewalks for pedestrian movement, trees and street furniture, improved transit facilities, additional bicycle facilities, and on-street parking and other curb-side uses.

- 2.10.5 Improve wayfinding and vertical circulation between the street and skyway system, particularly along primary transit and pedestrian routes.
- 2.10.6 Encourage changes to freeway access that are consistent with Downtown growth plans, support other modes of travel, and improve system connectivity.
- 2.10.7 Improve local transportation across freeways, including promoting adequate spacing and connectivity of streets and improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities on local streets crossing the freeways.
- 2.10.8 Manage the growth of the parking supply consistent with objectives for transit, walking and bicycling.
- 2.10.9 Promote car sharing programs for both commercial and residential projects.
- 2.10.10 Support the education and implementation activities of the Downtown Transportation Management Organization (TMO).
- 2.10.11 Provide parking incentives in City-owned parking facilities for carpools and vanpools, and encourage private parking facility owners to do the same.

Advocating for Competitive, Sustainable Global Aviation

As one of the 20 busiest airports in the world, the Minneapolis-St.Paul International Airport is an economic driver in the region and the state. Although it is not located in the city, it is part of the city's multi-modal system, and provides global access for freight and passengers. The airport, as governed by the Metropolitan Airports Commission, is connected to the city by light rail, bus, and automobile.

Policy 2.11: Minneapolis recognizes the economic value of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport but will advocate measures to reduce its environmental impacts.

- 2.11.1 Advocate for a broader, more integrated statewide approach for making the most cost effective use of the state's existing facilities serving all residents of the state with a safe, sustainable and environmentally acceptable aviation system.
- 2.11.2 Promote convenient multi-modal access between the airport and the city, including automobile, truck, transit, and where appropriate bicycle, and pedestrian travel.
- 2.11.3 Protect facilities such as radio beacons, lighting and other aids used in airport navigation, from physical encroachment and electronic interference.