



CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

SUMMARY OF  
PUBLIC  
WORKSHOPS -  
SERIES 3:  
DOWNTOWN  
TRANSPORTATION  
ACTION PLAN,  
APRIL 11 & 12, 2007

May, 2007

10-YEAR TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of Minneapolis hosted its third in a series of four workshops in April 2007 for the Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan, Downtown Action Plan component. The purpose of these workshops was to garner specific feedback from the public on the proposed Downtown Transportation Action Plan.

The Downtown Action Plan is the first part of a four-part citywide transportation planning effort. The other three components include a Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan, street and sidewalk design guidelines, and a streetcar feasibility study. The remaining three plan elements will be discussed at future public meetings.

In addition to the workshops, formal comments on the Downtown Action Plan were received from the Downtown Council, the Downtown Circulator Task Force, the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee, and Transit for Livable Communities. These comments are attached.

## **II. WORKSHOP DATES AND LOCATIONS**

Two workshops were held for this third series of public meetings. The dates, locations and times of the workshops are listed below. Each workshop facility was handicapped accessible and each was readily accessible by transit.

**Minneapolis Central Library**

Wednesday, April 11, 2007, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

300 Nicollet Mall – Doty Room

Minneapolis, Minnesota

**St. Olaf Catholic Church**

Thursday, April 12, 2007, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

215 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street – Gathering Room

Minneapolis, Minnesota

## **III. WORKSHOP FORMAT AND AGENDA**

Each workshop began with a 30-minute introductory presentation. The introductory presentation provided an overview of the proposed Downtown Transportation Action Plan, including downtown trends, existing conditions of transportation in downtown, planned improvements to the pedestrian, bicycling, transit, and street systems, and a timeline for improvements. The presentation is available for review on the City's website at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan).

Following the presentation, the participants were invited to break out into smaller working groups. Three working groups were organized around the following topic areas:

- bicycling and pedestrian issues, facilitated by City staff

- transit service issues, facilitated by Metro Transit staff
- property owner issues, facilitated by City staff

#### **IV. PROMOTION OF WORKSHOPS**

The workshops were promoted in a number of ways:

- A press release (see attachment 3) was sent to all neighborhood and citywide publications, and a briefing meeting was held with Star Tribune writer Steve Berg. Articles from the Star Tribune and Downtown Journal and an editorial from the Star Tribune are attached (attachment 4). The meetings were also advertised on the Star Tribune Roadguy blog ([www.startribune.com/blogs/roadguy](http://www.startribune.com/blogs/roadguy)).
- An article was published in “Takeout”, a publication distributed on all Metro Transit buses (see attachment 5).
- A letter and a flyer (see attachment 6a & 6b) were sent to over 1,000 property owners on the following downtown streets: 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N, Hennepin Avenue, Nicollet Mall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue S, Marquette Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Street S, Park Avenue, and Portland Avenue.
- An announcement was included in Mayor Rybak’s bi-weekly email.
- 30 laminated flyers advertising the public meetings were posted at downtown bus stops, and posters were displayed at some of the suburban transit centers (see attachment 7).
- An email advertising the meetings and asking recipients to forward the information to their contacts was sent to the Project Steering Committee, neighborhood organizations, the Mayor and City Council Members, Transit for Livable Communities, and Public Works’ pedestrian and bicycle email lists.
- The City, Metro Transit, and some of the suburban transit providers posted the workshop information on their websites.

#### **V. WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE**

105 people signed the sign-in sheet at the noon-time Central Library meeting. The Central Library meeting was very crowded, and it is possible that not everyone signed in when entering the room. 62 people signed the sign-in sheet at the evening St. Olaf Church meeting. Estimated attendance at the discussion groups was as follows:

	<b>Central Library</b>	<b>St. Olaf Church</b>
Total Attendance	105	62
Discussion Groups		
Transit	20-25	10-15
Property Owner	10-15	5-10
Bicycling/Pedestrian	35-40	30-35

## VI. WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

The following issues were raised during questions following the presentation, during the discussion groups, and via written comments provided at and following the meeting. Approximately 20 emails with comments were received from people who could not attend the meetings. All of these comments are summarized below.

### Pedestrian Issues

- *Nicollet Mall*

Several people mentioned that the sidewalk cafes and Thursday farmers markets reduce the physical space available for walking. The combination of curb-side sidewalk café seating and the curvature of the street make it difficult to maintain adequate space for walking.

Some participants would like to see buses completely removed from Nicollet Mall; other participants who are transit riders discussed the need for convenient transit service on Nicollet Mall.

- *Improved Street Crossings*

Crossing the street is challenging for many pedestrians in downtown. Issues discussed included vehicles blocking crosswalks, wide street crossings, not enough signal time to cross wide streets. Specific recommendations included increased use of pedestrian countdown signals, increased enforcement, improved driver education of pedestrian and bicyclist rights, legalization of red light running cameras, and don't block the box strategies.

- *Accessibility for People with Disabilities*

Several people with disabilities attended the public workshops. Issues discussed included eliminating physical obstructions in the walking path, maintaining as direct a walking path as possible, and using tactile surfaces and audible pedestrian signals help to guide people who are blind.

- *More Appealing Walking Environment*

Several people commented that downtown needs more attractive and appealing streets, including more street trees, planters, pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and trash cans. Several people reported that downtown is "ugly," the buildings are disconnected from the street-level walking environment, and downtown streets lack "identity."

- *Other Pedestrian Issues*

- better skyway access and later skyway hours of operation
- improved provision of walking paths with construction closures
- lack of sidewalks in North Loop neighborhood where loading docks exist

## Bicycling Issues

- *Overall Concerns*

Some attendees reported that the recommendations in the draft plan, while they are supposed to increase and improve bicycling, do not go far enough. Too much auto capacity in downtown is maintained through this plan. Narrowing lanes and eliminating some lanes on one-way streets to provide bike facilities on more streets should be included in plan. In order to achieve increased bicycling in downtown and ensure that improvements are implemented, the plan should include specific modal goals.

- *Hennepin Avenue*

Some attendees expressed concern with the proposed alignment of bicycle lanes in the center of Hennepin Avenue, given the proposed conversion of Hennepin to a two-way street, while others expressed concern with conflicts with curbside uses with a curbside alignment. Cyclists are concerned with turning vehicles, particularly given that Hennepin has the highest crash rate for cyclists in Minneapolis and given that drivers normally expect bicyclists to be in the curb lane of the street. Specific suggestions for Hennepin included timing traffic signals for bicycle speeds (15 mph) instead of motorist speeds (30 mph) and separating the bicycle lanes with rumble strips as are used in Madison, Wisconsin.

- *Bike Lane Width*

Some participants said that 5 foot bike lanes are not wide enough in situations where bike lanes are situated between bus lanes and traffic lanes.

- *Education and Enforcement*

Better education and enforcement of traffic laws and safe driving, cycling, and walking are needed, particularly in downtown.

- *Citywide Bicycle Plan*

Some attendees felt that the existing planned bicycle network map is not a complete plan. Minneapolis needs design standards and policies, in addition to recommended facilities.

- *Other Opportunities Discussed*

- Cycle tracks on Portland Avenue between the Midtown Greenway and the Stone Arch Bridge
- Closing certain streets to vehicles on Saturdays or Sundays to help build awareness and excitement with bicycling.
- Reducing the number of lanes on Harmon Place and adding bike lanes and street trees
- Connecting 2<sup>nd</sup> St North across I-35W

## Transit Issues

- *2<sup>nd</sup>/Marquette*  
Transit riders, particularly the sight-impaired, are concerned about finding the appropriate bus when buses begin stopping only every other stop on 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette. Residents of the Crossings Condominiums at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue S and Washington Avenue are concerned about pollution and noise from increased bus volumes on 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette.
- *Nicollet Mall*  
Some people expressed concern about the proposal for buses to stop every other block on Nicollet Mall (at shelter locations), stating that this would make it too difficult for people, particularly the elderly, to get to their bus when shopping at downtown retail stores. Positive comments were received on the Nicollet Mall hybrid bus technology, promotion concepts, and the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Convention Center Greenway.
- *Security*  
Participants expressed concern about security for transit riders. The need for better policing on the street and in transit vehicles was discussed.
- *Marketing and Information*  
Participants discussed the need for better and more marketing of transit, including initiatives to get more people riding transit, better way-finding to bus stops/service, improved dissemination of service changes, better distribution of transit service information in downtown, and “real-time” schedule information.
- *Improving Service Frequency, Speed and Crowding*  
Participants discussed desire for more seating capacity on some buses in downtown, the need for more frequent bus service, the importance of connections between LRT and bus, and frustration with slow-boarding passengers.  
  
Suggested improvements to areas outside of downtown include more frequent service on 42<sup>nd</sup> St S, Limited Stop on University Ave NE, better service to Stillwater, better connections to Amtrak, more suburban connections to LRT and support of Southwest Corridor LRT.
- *Bus design*  
Concerns that new low-floor buses be designed to accommodate loading all types of wheelchairs and scooters were raised. Some people discussed safety concerns with sight-impaired being able to hear the quiet hybrid-electric buses. Also discussed were the desire to have more window transparency and less advertisement on transit vehicles, as well as bus operators announcing bus stops and streets – especially at night.
- *Downtown Fare Zone*  
Several participants discussed the need for an expanded downtown fare zone, both north

along Hennepin and south beyond Elliot Park and Loring Park.

- *Rail Service*

A general interest was expressed in seeing more LRT and/or streetcar service. Residents who had heard about Minneapolis's streetcar study were interested in learning more about where potential routes would be located, the timeline for implementation, and costs/funding of such a system.

## **Property Owners Issues**

- *2<sup>nd</sup>/Marquette*

Parking garage owners/operators were concerned about the impact the double-width bus lanes will have on safe and convenient access to/from parking garages along 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette. They are also concerned that there will be increased traffic congestion and that these inconveniences will reduce parking revenues.

Property owners expressed concern about the volume of pedestrians using 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette, the impact this will have on sidewalk cafés, and the lack of public toilets.

Some participants expressed concern about the safety of the bike lanes on 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette and requested that these lanes be removed and bicyclists be allowed to use Nicollet Mall.

Property owners are concerned about pedestrian traffic and security at the 7<sup>th</sup>/Nicollet bus stop and its impact on retail business.

Representatives from the Crossings Condominiums at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Washington expressed concern about the potential loss of on-street parking and space for moving vans in front of their building. They are also concerned about noise and pollution from buses on 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marquette Avenues.

One participant suggested that, before full reconstruction, the proposed double-width transit lanes be tested by restriping the existing street. It was felt that this would answer the questions that some property owners have about congestion, garage access and egress, the bike lane, safety and general operation.

- *8<sup>th</sup> Street*

Some property owners expressed concerns similar to 2<sup>nd</sup>/Marquette about pedestrian volumes, sidewalk cafés, curbside uses, etc. Concern was also expressed about the potential loss of on-street parking and space for deliveries.

Participants were most concerned about bus stop security, particularly related to the existing bus stop at 7<sup>th</sup> and Nicollet, and the potential location of future bus stops. Participants wanted to know how the east-west spine alternatives would be evaluated and how/when that decision would be made.



- *Hennepin Avenue*  
A property owner from Hennepin Avenue expressed concern about the lack of maintenance of landscaping and streetscaping along Hennepin Avenue. He stated that the improvements were needed and property owners agreed with the assessment for the improvements but were very upset that the improvements are not being maintained and that more attention is not being paid to security.
- *One-way vs. Two-way Streets*  
Some participants expressed concern about the proposal to change existing one-way streets to two-way, stating that these changes are not necessary and would create more traffic congestion and more safety problems for both vehicles and pedestrians.

### Other Comments

- *Metrics*  
Some participants thought it was important for the Action Plan to have specific numerical objectives for changes in mode share and/or for each mode (bicycle, walk, transit).
- *Park and Portland Two-Way Conversion*  
Comments were received both in favor and against converting Park and Portland Avenues in downtown to two-way streets.
- *LaSalle Two-Way Conversion*  
One comment was received against converting LaSalle Avenue to two-way operations. The street is not wide enough to accommodate two-way operation without removing on-street parking, which is in high demand in Loring Park and Stevens Square. This is especially of concern during the winter when snow further narrows the travel lanes.
- *Basset Creek Valley*  
One comment was received about improving the connection between downtown and the Basset Creek Valley (bounded by I-94, Glenwood, I-394 and Cedar Lake) to the west, where new development is expected, particularly given the anticipated development around the new Twins stadium.
- *Carsharing*  
One participant expressed interest in increased use of carsharing to support increased use of alternative modes of transportation.
- *On-Street Parking*  
Some people discussed the need for more short-term, on-street parking in downtown.

## **VII. OTHER FORMAL COMMENTS**

In addition to the comments received at the public open house, formal comments were received from:

- Transit for Livable Communities, specifically related to bicycling needs in downtown
- Downtown Council, related to business and property owner needs in downtown
- Downtown Circulator Task Force, related to proposed transit service on Nicollet Mall
- Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee, related to bicycling needs in downtown

These comments are attached (attachments 1 through 4).

## **VIII. NEXT STEPS**

While many comments are already addressed in the Draft Downtown Minneapolis concept plan, all comments will be considered, and plan adjustments will be made as appropriate.

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**Attachment 1a: TLC Comments – 3/22/07**

**TRANSIT**  
*for Livable Communities*



March 22, 2007

Council President Barbara Johnson  
City of Minneapolis  
City Hall, Room 307  
350 Fifth Street South  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Mayor R. T. Rybak  
City of Minneapolis  
City Hall, Room 331  
350 Fifth Street South  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Council President Johnson and Mayor Rybak:

We are writing on behalf of the Transit for Livable Communities (TLC) Board of Directors and the members of its Bike-Walk Advisory Committee (B-WAC). The TLC Board of Directors created the B-WAC to advise it on how best to reach the goals of the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Project (NTP), which is a \$21.5 million, four-year federal pilot program created in the 2005 SAFETEA-LU federal transportation legislation. TLC is charged with administering this federal program, which is intended to increase the number and length of trips made by walking and bicycling and to reduce driving.

At its January and February meetings, the B-WAC heard presentations about the draft Ten Year Transportation Action Plan, primarily regarding plans for downtown Minneapolis. We want to acknowledge the strong work on the draft Ten Year Transportation Plan to date, particularly as it relates to important and needed improvements for bus riders and pedestrians.

We believe, however, that the safe accommodation of bicyclists needs further attention in the draft Plan. Because of our particular focus on expanding bicycling and walking mode share through the NTP, we would hope that the City, through its Ten Year Transportation Action Plan, provide transportation policy improvements that enhance the NTP investments and programs to increase bicycling and walking.

**A resolution was passed at the February 27, 2007 Bike-Walk Advisory Committee (B-WAC) recommending that the City of Minneapolis hold a public meeting to specifically discuss the impact of the draft Ten Year Transportation Action Plan (Action Plan) on the bicycling environment in the downtown area. The TLC Board, at its March 13, 2007 meeting, agreed with the B-WAC and recommended that the City devote further attention to improving the bicycle component of the Action Plan.**

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**Attachment 1a: TLC Comments – 3/22/07**

We believe that there are strategies or treatments (such as travel lane reductions and shared bike-bus lanes) that can retain the Action Plan's benefits for public transportation and pedestrians, while still increasing convenience and safe access for bicyclists. As part of ongoing NTP work, TLC is developing a list of specific measures to improve the bicycling environment, some of which may be appropriate to include in the Action Plan. In order to better achieve our common goal of increasing bicycling in Minneapolis, we respectfully request that the City solicit additional input from cyclists and bikeway design experts before the final plan is adopted for the downtown area.

If the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program is to be successful in achieving the Congressional goals of increasing mode share for walking and bicycling, there is no area more important than downtown. Currently, many people who ride bicycles, including highly experienced cyclists, do not feel comfortable or safe riding and parking their bikes downtown.

A downtown that is welcoming and safe to bicyclists will also have positive impacts on the downtown retail and entertainment economy, providing additional shoppers, theatre goers and urban enthusiasts with access to the unique retail and entertainment options that the downtown region has to offer. A downtown region that is safely and conveniently accessed by bicyclists is important—both for the economic success of the downtown region and for the health of the city's residents. We are confident in Minneapolis' commitment to providing these options.

We urge you to address these issues and concerns before approving any major transportation plan. We know that you share our vision of a vibrant downtown that is truly inviting to people moving about using their own power.

Sincerely,

Gregory C. Pratt, President  
Transit for Livable Communities

Joan Pasiuk, Co-Chair  
TLC Bike-Walk Advisory Committee

Katie Hatt, Co-Chair  
TLC Bike-Walk Advisory Committee

cc: Minneapolis City Council  
Jon Wertjes, Public Works  
Charleen Zimmer, Public Works

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**Attachment 1b: TLC Comments – 4/10/07**

Recommendations about Bicycle Access in the Downtown  
Comments on the Draft 10-year Transportation Action Plan  
April 10, 2007

**Background:** At the request of the TLC Board and the Bike-Walk Advisory Council that advises the board on its Bike-Walk Twin Cities (aka NTP) Program, the TLC staff has prepared an initial analysis of concerns about bicycle access and safety raised by the Downtown section of the Access Minneapolis 10-year Transportation Action Plan (Downtown Action Plan). The purpose of this analysis is to provide context for B-WAC members and other TLC leaders in preparation for participation in the City of Minneapolis' public meetings on April 11 and 12 on the Downtown Action Plan. In addition, it may help frame additional education and advocacy efforts as the Downtown Action Plan moves into final approval processes.

TLC continues to support the goals and strategies outlined in the Downtown Action Plan to ensure that transit will become the motorized mode of choice for the City. Combined with the goals of the Bike-Walk Twin Cities Program to increase the travel mode share of both walking and bicycling, and in light of the goals of the City's Sustainability Plan (approved by the Minneapolis City Council, 3/31/06), the Downtown Action Plan will reduce Minneapolis' dependence on travel by single-occupant automobile. However, it is essential that the Downtown Action Plan, and the Access Minneapolis 10-year Transportation Plan as a whole, address walking, bicycling, and transit as key transportation strategies together.

The existing Downtown Action Plan does make some significant improvements that should be noted. The Plan recognizes the existing gaps in the downtown system for bicyclists based on where the current bike facilities are. The goal to make these facilities connect to other existing facilities is extremely important, as one of the greatest shortcomings of downtown bicycling facilities is their lack of continuity and connectivity. The Plan also recognizes that bicycling is a beneficial activity that should be promoted and recommends the establishment of incentive programs. However, the Downtown Access Plan should be improved to provide better access and safety for bicyclists as outlined in the following analysis.

**1. Conduct additional analysis addressing bicycling**

*Discussion:* The Downtown Action Plan should include more analysis of how well the current downtown road and bikeway system works for bicyclists, and ways it could be improved. The plan does a good job of evaluating how well the current roadway system works for transit users, but does not include a similar level of analysis for bicyclists.

With approximately \$21 million directed toward improving bicycling and walking mode share through the Bike-Walk Twin Cities Program, Minneapolis now has a unique opportunity to align new resources with strategic policy reform to improve access and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. But there are even more significant reasons that the Downtown Action Plan must focus more attention on bicycling and walking:

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## Attachment 1b: TLC Comments – 4/10/07

- According to the 2000 US Census, 43 percent of the residents living downtown do not have access to a private motor vehicle (compared to 18 percent city wide).
- Cordon counts (conducted by Mpls. Public Works Department) suggest that more than 60 percent of bicycling activity in downtown Minneapolis is occurring on streets without special bicycle facilities.
- A significant percentage of cyclists are traveling the wrong way on streets with special bike facilities, (especially Marquette Ave. where nearly half of the cyclists are northbound on the southbound contra-flow lane).
- Hennepin Ave. (between 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Ave.) has the highest bike/motor vehicle crash rate of any street in Minneapolis with special facilities and has a higher crash rate than most streets without special bike facilities. Crash reports and count data reveal that the two-way on-street facility on Hennepin has four times more crashes than University Ave SE even though University Ave. has nearly twice the number of bicyclists.
- Cordon counts also reveal that bicycling to and from downtown Minneapolis declined from 1998 to 2003 by more than 10 percent.

### 2. Complete a full bicycle policy plan, not just an enhanced bikeways map

*Discussion:* The current Minneapolis Bike Plan, while a good starting point, should not be considered a complete planning document. It is basically a map and does not contain goals, policy recommendations, analysis, or design guidelines. The Minneapolis Bike Plan Map, although ambitious when it was adopted in 2001, is now six years old.

Today, peer cities including Portland, Seattle, and even Chicago, are working to ensure that all city streets safely accommodate bicyclists. For example, Chicago has a Complete Streets Policy; Portland, OR has adopted new street design standards that promote walking and bicycling; other cities, including Copenhagen, have adopted a policy that allows cyclists two-way access on all one-way roads for motorists. (Generally, contra-flow bike lanes will be used by wrong-way cyclists unless a regular-flow bike lane is also provided; two-way bike lanes, as on Hennepin Ave., conflict with current bikeway standards and should only be kept as a component of the bicycle infrastructure if special bike signals are put in place protecting cyclists from left-turning motorists.)

With funds from the Bike-Walk Twin Cities Program, Minneapolis has committed to conducting a comprehensive pedestrian plan which will examine both investments and policy reform. The City should fully address this range of issues in the 10-year Action Plan, or commit to amending the Plan in the next year with more fully developed recommendations for improving walking and bicycling.

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**Attachment 1b: TLC Comments – 4/10/07**

**3. Specific concerns**

The following recommended changes to the Draft 10-year Transportation Action Plan would dramatically improve conditions for bicyclists in downtown Minneapolis while adding people moving capacity to the overall transportation system.

**Where bike lanes currently exist.**

a. Hennepin Ave. Hennepin Avenue is an important bicycle corridor because of its many destinations and because it provides a direct link across much of the city including a key river crossing. As the only Minneapolis location (for ten blocks) with special bike lanes providing cyclists two-way travel on a one-way, this stretch has become the most popular on-street cycling corridor in Downtown Minneapolis, even though accessing this facility (and exiting from it where it abruptly ends) can be quite challenging.

While we support the goal of extending this facility four blocks south to Loring Park and two blocks north to the Mississippi Bridge (*Access Minneapolis*, p. 14), the current 'center of the street' design is wholly incompatible with the planned two-way conversion. Unless left-turns by motorists are severely restricted, it can only exacerbate the inherent safety problems associated with two-way bike lanes located in the center of a major arterial (a treatment that is strictly discouraged by AASHTO and all other bikeway design standards). While the Access Plan appears to recognize the shortcomings of the current treatment, it still calls for retaining "the two-way bike lane in the center of the street." It should be noted that already this 10-block section of Hennepin Avenue has an unacceptable high rate of bicycle crashes. The current proposal could be expected to double the number of bike crashes, as it doubles the number of left turning movements. Many bicyclists however, are fond of the bold design, as it provides greater conspicuity for bicyclists. More evaluation and study is needed.

b. Marquette Ave and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S. Presently there is sufficient roadway width to add a regular-flow bike lane on each of these streets to reduce the number of cyclists using the contra-flow lane the wrong direction. However, with the proposal to add a second bus lane and widen the sidewalk, we recommend that the inside bus lane be a combined bike/bus contra-flow lane (common in many cities) in order that there may be sufficient space for a regular flow bike lane.

c. 10<sup>th</sup> Street – With (3) 12' travel lanes, the 4' bike lane could easily be widened to 6' or 7'. With an ADT less than 10,000, 10th St. is also a good candidate for a 3 to 2 lane conversion, allowing for an extra wide bike lane as well as a contra-flow bike lane.

d. Portland/Park – Plan calls for removing bike lanes from Park and consolidating them on Portland, as both are to become two-way streets. Portland Avenue could become the north-south "gem" connecting the Stone Arch Bridge and to the Midtown Greenway if done correctly. We suggest that Portland Ave. become the pilot for Copenhagen style "cycle tracks" – extra wide one way facilities on each side of the street buffered by parked cars and landscaping. The 55' cross section could support: 9' southbound cycle track, 8' parking lane/boulevard, (2) 11' travel lanes, 9' parking lane and 9' northbound

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## Attachment 1b: TLC Comments – 4/10/07

cycle track. With an ADT of fewer than 10,000, Portland Ave is a perfect candidate for such an innovative treatment.

**Other Streets** – Generally all streets in downtown Minneapolis have sufficient pavement width to accommodate bicycles through the addition of bike lanes on both sides, given current ADT (traffic volume) levels.

**Streets that would have sufficient space for bike lanes by narrowing travel lanes to 11 feet include:**

- a. 5th Street (west bound only)
- b. 6th Street (currently (3) 14' lanes and a 10' parking lane.
- c. Washington (but better still to eliminate at least one travel lane, add boulevard, cycle tracks?)
- d. 11th Street (contra-flow lane could be added)
- e. Chicago (south of 6th)

**Streets that would have sufficient space through travel lane conversions.**

- a. 3rd Street (4 to 3 lane conversion or elimination of parking from one side of street) ADT 12,300
- b. 8th Street The Action Plan proposal is to expand this corridor from 3 one-way lanes to 4 lanes (two in each direction) requiring additional pavement. This will worsen conditions for cyclists. With an ADT of 8,200, this road could easily be converted to two lanes (from three) allowing for bike lanes, or cycle tracks (using the parked cars as a buffer) on both sides.
- c. 7th Street With an ADT of 13,500, this is also a good candidate for a 4 to 3 lane conversion. Presently the street is 4 lanes with 10 foot lanes in some sections. 7th Street is an important corridor for safe access to and from North Minneapolis by those on foot and on bicycle.
- d. 9th Street Another great candidate for 4 to 3 lane conversion with bike lanes.



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## **Attachment 2: Downtown Council Comments**

**Minneapolis Downtown Council  
March 22, 2007**

### **Access Minneapolis Policy Position and Recommendations**

#### Access Minneapolis: Fundamental Tests

1. We must not do harm to today's successful businesses or buildings.
2. Next, we must avoid damaging downtown's fragile retail environment.
3. We must avoid harming or even stopping major projects started or announced.
4. We must have confidence that the proposal accommodates downtown's future needs well.
5. We must understand financial feasibility of the plan.
6. Supporting Access Minneapolis does not indicate support for assessments to pay for it.

#### Policy Recommendation One: The Two-Way Hennepin Avenue/First Avenue

This Proposal Should Move Forward.

#### Policy Recommendation Two: Marquette/Second Roadway & Transit Service

- A. The dedicated bicycle lanes should be removed from Marquette Avenue and Second Avenue.
- B. The sidewalks/roadway dimensions on these streets should remain as they are today.
- C. All of the traffic signals should be retimed to promote traffic flow.
- D. Mid-block traffic signals for parking ramp access/egress should remain optional until we try the system without them.
- E. The city's policy that sworn police officers only may be hired as traffic coordinators should be repealed.
- F. The business community should not be required to pay special assessments for renovations of these streets.

#### Policy Recommendation Three: 8th Street Proposed Roadway Changes & Transit Service

- A. This proposal should be abandoned.
- B. The concentration of transit on this street is too damaging to Macy's.
- C. Transit and safety issues are unsolved in this proposal.
- D. No building owner or major tenant has come forward to support this proposal.
- E. The Minneapolis Club opposes this proposal.
- F. HCMC opposes this proposal.

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## **Attachment 2: Downtown Council Comments**

### Policy Recommendation Four: East/West Transit Corridor

- A. We recommend that **Fourth Street** should be the major east/west corridor for bus service in downtown.
- B. The location coincides with Metro Transit's busiest route (#16) and is near the most popular transit option (LRT).
- C. The location is very convenient to LRT, the Central Corridor and NorthStar Commuter Rail.
- D. The location has far fewer competing demands than 7th or 8th Streets have.
- E. 4th Street is a recommended policing location by the 1st Precinct.

### Policy Recommendation Five: Transit Stop & Corridor Safety

We recommend the Minneapolis Police Department become entirely responsible for safety at downtown transit stops.

### Policy Recommendation Six: Nicollet Mall Transit Service

- A. We support the proposal to move express routes to the Marquette/Second Avenue locations.
- B. We recommend that bicycles be allowed to use Nicollet Mall all of the time.
- C. We support the proposal that supplies modified free bus service on Nicollet Mall, though there may need to be further consideration given to increasing service to tighten the proposed headways.
- D. Transit safety on Nicollet Mall must be vigorously enforced.
- E. Service to the Convention Center must be excellent.



UNITED STATES | ENGLAND | GERMANY | CHINA

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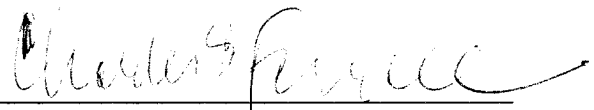
April 27, 2007

Access Minneapolis  
c/o Charlene Zimmer  
City of Minneapolis  
Public Works Department  
350 South Fifth Street, Room 203  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1315

Re: Downtown Circulator

Attached are comments by the Downtown Circulator Task Force. Thank you for your consideration of and response to our previous comments by letter dated January 22, 2007. We urge you to consider these comments seriously in your decisions regarding Downtown circulation.

DOWNTOWN CIRCULATOR TASK  
FORCE

By:   
Charles S. Ferrell, Chair

cc: Members of Downtown Circulator Task Force  
Attachment: Comments

fb.us.1998142.01

## **Comments on Access Minneapolis “Alternatives for Downtown Core Circulation”**

These comments also take into account “Nicollet Mall Transit Service: Fare Ideas and Concerns,” a copy of which is attached.

### **Alternative A – Dedicated Circulator Vehicles**

Alternative A, the approach developed by the Downtown Circulator Task Force, clearly remains the best transportation alternative, particularly for:

- Distribution of LRT passengers. A dedicated circulator vehicle can “wait for the train” for timed-transfer connection without delaying other passengers, and has ample capacity for a concentrated bunching of incoming LRT passengers.
- Tourists and occasional users. A dedicated circulator vehicle is more understandable by tourists and occasional users.
- Convention Center. A dedicated circulator vehicle can easily provide service directly to the front door of the Convention Center.
- The Future. History has demonstrated that a complete system – in this case, a dedicated circulator system – is not as vulnerable to budget cuts or changes in Metro Transit management as a solution that is primarily a change in bus routings and schedules.

Alternative A appears to offer a solution to all or most of the current objections to the Access Minneapolis plan. All or most of the objections to other elements of the Access Minneapolis plan could be eliminated by fundamentally redesigning downtown transit service on the basis of intra-Downtown shuttles and peripheral bus transfer stations—the original “Nicollet Mall Shuttle” concept. We encourage Access Minneapolis to study this approach.

### **Alternative B – Use of Regular Route Buses**

Alternative B, which uses local bus service on Nicollet Mall to provide intra-core circulation, cannot be considered to be a meaningful alternative to Alternate A unless Alternative B is *designed, funded and governed by binding agreements from the outset* to ensure the following:

- No fare collection within the core circulation zone.
  - A policy that permits a free ride is not sufficient if it requires the rider to know the procedure for obtaining a free ride. Only if all ride free will it be understandable and welcoming to tourists and occasional users.
  - The Circulator Task Force supports the creative approach of free service on Nicollet Mall for Southbound Route 10 and Northbound Route 18, as described in “Nicollet Mall Transit Service: Fare Ideas and Concerns” but
    - the frequency for free trips as currently proposed is inadequate;
    - these regular route buses would not have the ambience desired to attract visitors;
    - careful attention to on-bus and bus stop signage will be essential in order to reduce the confusion between free buses and fare-required buses.

- Acceptable service to the Convention Center for occasional users. The approach as proposed to date for Alternative B is not acceptable. Either routes (some or all) need to be modified to serve the front door of the Convention Center or else the one block pedestrian link must be substantially upgraded for understandability, convenience, image, and safety.
- All vehicles used to provide core circulation service must be both:
  - Distinctive in appearance and immediately distinguishable by an occasional user from the regular bus fleet – when within the free fare zone. This key element needs more attention than it has received to date.
  - Low emission, low floor, wide doors, and perimeter seating.
- The schedule must provide acceptable headways, including:
  - 2-3 minute peak hour;
  - 4-5 minute midday;
  - Appropriate coordination with the LRT schedule and “wait for the train” timed transfer for LRT passengers;
  - Schedule reliability such that the planned headways are actually maintained. Note that to maintain a 3 minute headway leaves little room for schedule variance due to delays encountered outside the free fare zone.
  - Removal of other buses from Nicollet Mall so as to permit acceptable speed by the buses that remain on Nicollet Mall. Does the double bus lane have to go into effect before removing express buses from Nicollet Mall? If so, implementation of Alternative B will be substantially delayed, and a short term strategy to commence circulator service should be considered.
  - Based on experience the Task Force is very skeptical how it can assured that the foregoing criteria will be maintained on an ongoing basis in the event of changes in Metro Transit management, budget issues, etc.
- Signage and Marketing plan and budget to educate circulator riders. Alternative B needs a more comprehensive signage and marketing plan and budget than Alternative A, because Alternative B is more prone to misunderstanding and apprehension by users.

## **Immediate Actions**

All LRT riders are entitled to free use of all Downtown local route buses via a free transfer, but this option is not well known to or understood by visitors. All LRT vehicles should add signage and audio announcements describing the free transfer option:

- how to use a transfer,
- where to board the bus,
- which bus numbers to use.

# Nicollet Mall Transit Service: Fare Ideas and Concerns

## Transit target markets

- Regular customers commuting to work/school (90% **current ridership**)
- Occasional local customers for shopping, medical, social (5-10%)
- Potential new regular customers
- Occasional out-of-town customers on business, conference/convention

## Downtown Minneapolis Fare Zone 2006 (\$.50)

- Entire length of Routes 10, 11, 17, 18 carry **8.5 million** rides annually generating ~ \$7 million of revenue
- Downtown fares generated by all routes accounts for 600K rides and \$300K of revenue annually
- **Downtown fare generated by Nicollet Mall Routes ~ \$100K annually**  
**(a) 90% of revenue is generated by Routes 10,11,17,18**

## Transit Service Goals

- Convenience - "Any bus will do"
- Consistent service every 5" or better
- All buses operate between Washington Ave and Grant St
- Improve average operating speed to 7 MPH
- On & Off street communication, marketing and signage.
- Cleaner/Quieter transit vehicles - hybrid buses
- Easy fare payment/bus boarding - customers using LRT have free transfer
- Improve on-street facilities and environment - shelters/lighting

## Fare Ideas & Concerns

### 1. Free Fare Zone for all buses on Nicollet between Washington Ave and Grant St.

#### i) Pros

- (1) Free for all customers
- (2) Easy and attractive to occasional/out of town customers
- (3) Easy to use during lunch hour
- (4) Enhance police presence (at a cost)

#### ii) Concerns

- (1) Potential fare inspection operationally difficult on buses vs LRT
- (2) Will require introduction of proof-of-payment
- (3) Schedule delay for majority of customers if fare inspection is required at both ends of Nicollet Mall
- (4) Attraction to troublemaker's to the free bus along Nicollet and use as a temporary shelter for homeless.
- (5) Confusion for customers using buses operating on other streets in downtown zone
- (6) Costs ~ **\$750K to \$1.1 M annually**
  - (a) Lost revenue from downtown zone \$90K+ annually
  - (b) Customers going beyond - downtown fare evasion/lost revenue

- (c) 5-10% evasion of regular fares from 4.25 million outbound rides  
~\$260-520K annually
- (d) Enhance police presence/fare inspection; four-six FT officers  
~\$320-480K annually (including benefits)

## 2. Downtown Transit Pass for Visitors

- i) Pros
  - (1) Focused on the market of interest on this project
  - (2) Could be packaged for 2-3 days or a weekend pass
  - (3) Use any bus throughout downtown
  - (4) Distributed by MEET Mpls, Convention Ctr, Hotels, Businesses, Transit Stores specific to the target market
- ii) Concerns
  - (1) Cost associated with passes/production
  - (2) Distribution agreement needed
  - (3) Limited market

## 3. Lower downtown zone fare from \$.50 to \$.25

- i) Pros
  - (1) Everyone has a quarter
  - (2) Use any bus throughout downtown
  - (3) Maintains customer accountability
  - (4) Can be easily communicated/marketed
- ii) Concerns
  - (1) Revenue cost ~ **\$190K annually**
    - (a) half of total downtown Mpls fare zone ~ \$150K annually,
    - (b) Apply to Downtown St. Paul Fare Zone (half of total ~ \$40K annually)
    - (c) Could be offset by new rides

## 4. "Free Bus" for downtown only Nicollet buses

- i) Pros
  - (1) Route 10 southbound every 10", Route 18 northbound every 7-8" (no cost)
  - (2) No fare enforcement necessary/maintains customer accountability
  - (3) Frequency could be upgraded by adding a downtown only bus
  - (4) Easily communicated/marketed as all buses saying "Nicollet Mall"
- ii) Concerns
  - (1) Not all buses are the same, possible customer confusion
  - (2) Lost revenue from downtown zone **\$45K+ annually**

## 5. Supplement #4 with "downtown circulator"

- i) Pros
  - (1) No fare enforcement necessary/maintains customer accountability
  - (2) "Free Bus" frequency upgraded with downtown only "circulator bus"
  - (3) Easily communicated/marketed as all buses saying "Nicollet Mall"
  - (4) Front door routing possible
- ii) Concerns
  - (1) Not all buses are the same, possible customer confusion
  - (2) "Free Bus" upgrade to 5" frequency (2004/5 circulator + Rts 10, 18) costs **\$2.4M annually**

## **Attachment 4: Minneapolis BAC Comments**

### **Recommended revisions to the Downtown Action Plan by the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee May 2, 2007**

#### **Current Access Minneapolis Wording**

- *Additional Bike Lanes Downtown* – as sealcoating or other projects are done on downtown streets, the street will be evaluated for the inclusion of bike lanes, considering lane widths, competing uses for space, connectivity to streets outside downtown, presence of freeway ramps, and possibly other factors. Where space is available within the existing curbs and the street is suitable for high levels of bicycle use, a bike lane will be included in the project.

#### **BAC Revision Wording**

- *Additional Bike Lanes Downtown* – as sealcoating or other projects are done on downtown streets, bike lanes will be added to streets where possible by adjusting lane widths, removing excess lanes, and exploring the possibility of combined transit/bike lanes. Consideration will also be given to competing uses for space, connectivity to streets and trails outside of downtown, and the presence of freeway ramps. Where space is available and the street is suitable for bicycle use, bike lanes will be included in the project.
- *Speed Limits* – 25 mph speed limits should replace 30 mph speed limits on streets which include bicycle lanes.



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## Attachment 5: Press Release



Communications Department ▫ 301M City Hall ▫ 350 S. 5th St. ▫ Minneapolis, MN 55415

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### News Release

**Contact:** Charleen Zimmer, 612-673-3166

View this release online at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/newsroom](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/newsroom)

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*Minneapolis City Goals:* A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ One Minneapolis ▫ Lifelong Learning  
Second to None ▫ Connected Communities ▫ Enriched Environment ▫ A Premier Destination

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## Meetings give the public a chance to talk about transportation in downtown

March 16, 2007 (MINNEAPOLIS) The City of Minneapolis is hosting two public meetings to discuss draft recommendations for transportation improvements in downtown Minneapolis. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback on plan recommendations and to discuss key transportation issues facing downtown.

### Downtown Action Plan workshops:

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Wednesday, April 11, Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall – Doty Room

5 p.m. – 7 p.m., Thursday, April 12, St. Olaf Catholic Church, 215 S. 8th St. – Gathering Room

The Downtown Action Plan is the first part of a four-part citywide transportation planning effort. The other three components include a Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan, street and sidewalk design guidelines, and a streetcar feasibility study. The remaining three plan elements will be discussed at future public meetings, which will be held in the coming months.

The Downtown Action Plan recommends a system approach to meeting transportation needs in downtown, including improvements for pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and automobiles.

The public meetings will include presentations on plan recommendations, followed by an opportunity for discussion of key plan elements and individual questions. Pre-registration is not required. Folks are encouraged to arrive at the scheduled meeting start time to see the presentations before the discussion, but people are welcome to drop in any time to view plan maps and talk with project staff.

Upon request, the City will provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities or who are in need of a translator. Please submit accommodation requests or requests for additional information to Charleen Zimmer, Project Manager, at 612-673-3166 or [Charleen.Zimmer@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Charleen.Zimmer@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) at least a week before the meeting.

# # #

## Attachment 6: News Clippings

StarTribune.com | MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Last update: April 10, 2007 – 6:00 PM

# Editorial: Downtown needs a transportation update

Minneapolis is becoming more than just a commuter city. Downtown Minneapolis badly needs the extreme makeover planned for its transportation grid. Preparing for public meetings today and Thursday, city officials paused recently to describe the downtown they hope to achieve by 2017: one that's far greener, more walkable, livelier at street level, safer, better for transit and retail, and more user-friendly for visitors, residents and commuters.

### PUBLIC MEETINGS

Today: 11:30 a.m., Doty Room, Central Library.

Thursday: 5 p.m. St. Olaf Catholic Church, 2nd Av. and 8th St. S.

See the complete plan at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan)

That's a tall order, but the proposed changes are long overdue. The current downtown was conceived in the 1950s to accommodate cars and suburban commuters. Skyways and ultrawide, one-way streets were designed to shelter weekday office workers and to provide a quick escape when the day's work was done. But that's an inadequate model for a downtown that's no longer just an eight-hour place. A multilayered city is emerging, one that's not only for working and fleeing but also for housing, culture, entertainment and, potentially, a revival of retail. The city's consultants have tried to balance all of those interests in their proposed design, mindful that transportation changes will influence not only how people move, but how the city develops, looks and feels. Under their plan:

- Skyways would stay and streets feeding freeway ramps would remain one-way. But some streets would revert to two-way traffic to create a more "community feel," notably Hennepin and 1st avenues and the downtown portion of Portland and Park avenues.
- Buses would be concentrated on double-width lanes along Marquette and 2nd Avenues, allowing transit to move twice as many people three times faster. Hybrid buses would act as shuttles on Nicollet Mall, providing free service at the Convention Center. Riders would get real-time arrival information at many bus stops. The idea of shifting east-west bus service to 8th Street has proved controversial, however, as no business wants crime-ridden Route 5 stopping near its doors.
- A dozen streets would get trees, other plantings and furniture, way-finding signs and regular cleaning as a way to improve the dismal walking environment. The bicycle system would also be enhanced.

We support most of those changes while wishing that more streets could return to two-way traffic, or be narrowed to accommodate wider sidewalks and more greening. Indeed, city rules should be changed to allow raised curbside planters as buffers between pedestrians and auto traffic. That kind of greening promotes physical activity, deters crime, reduces urban heating and filters storm-water runoff. We wish also that taxi stands, on-street parking and better lighting would be considered in the plan.

Overall, the effort is solid, but now comes the hard part: finding the money, the political will and the corporate cooperation to make it all happen.


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## Attachment 7: Metro Transit Takeout

# TAKEOUT

### Share your views

on the downtown Minneapolis transportation plan



The City of Minneapolis is hosting two public meetings to discuss draft recommendations for a plan to improve the City's downtown transportation system. One of the key transit proposals in the plan concentrates bus routes on fewer streets downtown. Most express buses would be on Marquette Avenue and Second Avenue South, operating in double-width lanes so buses could pass each other. That change would allow up to 180 buses operating per hour as compared to the current 60. Routes would stop every other block, rather than each block. Four alternatives are being studied for current service on 6th through 9th streets — two which use 8th in both directions, one using a 7th-8th one-way pair and the other using an 8th-9th one-way pair. Express routes on Nicollet Mall would move to the Marquette Avenue and 2nd Avenue South bus lanes. The remaining local routes on Nicollet would stop every other block, rather than every block. When finished, the city's plan will address a full range of transportation options and issues, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit and automobiles.

**Meeting details:**

**Wednesday, April 11**  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Central Library  
300 Nicollet Mall  
Doty Room

**Thursday, April 12**  
5 to 7 p.m.  
St. Olaf  
Catholic Church  
215 South 8th Street  
Gathering Room

**For more information, contact:**  
Charleen Zimmer,  
project manager,  
at 612-673-3166 or  
Charleen.Zimmer@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

**For plan details:**  
visit [metrotransit.org](http://metrotransit.org)  
and click on "Improving Transit" (see "Access Minneapolis").

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**Attachment 8a: Property Owner Letter**

March 23, 2007

Dear Downtown Property Owner:

The City of Minneapolis is hosting two public meetings to discuss draft recommendations for transportation improvements in downtown Minneapolis. We are asking the public to provide feedback on plan recommendations and to discuss the key transportation issues they see facing downtown. We urge you to attend these meetings to learn about proposed actions that may affect your property or your tenants and employees.

**Wednesday, April 11, 2007**

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Central Library

300 Nicollet Mall – Doty Room

**Thursday, April 12, 2007**

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

St. Olaf Catholic Church

215 S. 8th St. – Gathering Room

The Downtown Action Plan recommends meeting transportation needs in downtown by improving the entire system for pedestrians, bicycles, transit and automobiles. Specific changes are proposed for Hennepin Avenue, First Avenue North, Nicollet Mall, Marquette Avenue South, Second Avenue South and possibly Eighth Street, Park Avenue and Portland Avenue.

The public meetings will include presentations on plan recommendations, followed by a discussion of key plan elements and individual questions. Pre-registration is not required. Folks are encouraged to arrive at the scheduled meeting start time to see the presentations before the discussion, but people are welcome to drop in at any time to view plan maps and talk with project staff.

Please share this information with your employees, tenants, and/or neighbors. Attached is a flyer advertising the public meetings. For more information, please visit: [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan). An electronic copy of the attached flyer may also be downloaded from the Web site and e-mailed to your contacts who may be interested.

Sincerely,

Charleen Zimmer

Access Minneapolis Project Manager

**Attachment 8b: Property Owner Flyer**

# Do you live, work, own property or own a business downtown?

The City of Minneapolis needs your input on  
improving transportation.



Give us your opinion on the draft 10-Year  
Downtown Transportation Action Plan for  
walking, cycling, transit and autos

**Wednesday, April 11, 2007**

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Central Library

300 Nicollet Mall – Doty Room

**Thursday, April 12, 2007**

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

St. Olaf Catholic Church

215 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street – Gathering Room

For more information, visit:

[www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan)



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# Do you ride public transportation?

The City of Minneapolis needs your input on improving transportation downtown.



Give us your opinion on the draft 10-Year Downtown Transportation Action Plan for walking, cycling, transit and autos

**Wednesday, April 11, 2007**

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Central Library

300 Nicollet Mall – Doty Room

**Thursday, April 12, 2007**

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

St. Olaf Catholic Church

215 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street – Gathering Room

For more information, visit:

[www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan)



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