1. Executive Summary

The purpose of *Access Minneapolis,* the city's Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan, is to identify specific actions that the city and its partner agencies (Metro Transit, Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Minnesota Department of Transportation) need to take within the next ten years to implement the transportation policies articulated in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (2008[1]),* the city's comprehensive plan.

The Citywide Action Plan is one of six documents comprising *Access Minneapolis*. Other elements of the Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan include:

- *Downtown Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan*, which was approved by City Council in June 2007.
- *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks*, which was received and filed by City Council in April 2008.
- *Streetcar Feasibility Study*, which was received and filed by City Council in January 2008.
- *Pedestrian Master Plan,* which will be presented to City Council in summer 2009.
- *Bicycle Master Plan,* which will be presented to City Council in fall 2009.

The Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan was developed with assistance of a Project Management Team made up of partner agencies and a Project Steering Committee made up of 30-plus key stakeholders including representatives of affected public agencies, city advisory committees, nonprofit organizations, businesses and residents.

Access Minneapolis is a city initiative that recognizes that the city's transportation systems are important to both the economic viability and the livability of the city; that the scale and design of transportation systems must be compatible with the city's built, natural and cultural contexts; and that future transportation needs must be met through a wide range of transportation modes, reducing the reliance on the automobile. The Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan reflects an urban vision that gives high priority to meeting pedestrian, bicycle and transit needs within a multi-modal transportation system.

Trends

The city of Minneapolis is expected to add almost 60,000 residents and 40,000 jobs by 2030. The *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* directs this future growth toward activity and growth centers and along higher density corridors. Other trends that are reflected in the Action Plan include:

- Recent increases in walking and bicycling, both to work and for all trips, and a recognition of the health benefits of these activities
- Recent increases in transit ridership, particularly LRT
- A large percentage of short trips which could be accommodated by a more robust set of transportation choices
- Low auto ownership in high density residential areas
- Increasing availability of supportive services such as carshare that make alternative modes of transportation more feasible

[1] The *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth,* approved by City Council on July 11, 2008, contingent on the successful completion of formal plan review by the Metropolitan Council.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans

The completion of the Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan was delayed so that master plans could be completed for both the pedestrian and the bicycle systems in the city. Drafts of these master plans have been drafted and will be completed in 2009. Thus, the Action Plan does not include specific details about bicycle and pedestrian systems – these details and associated recommendations are documented in the *Pedestrian Master Plan (2009)* and the *Bicycle Master Plan (2009).*

Primary Transit Network

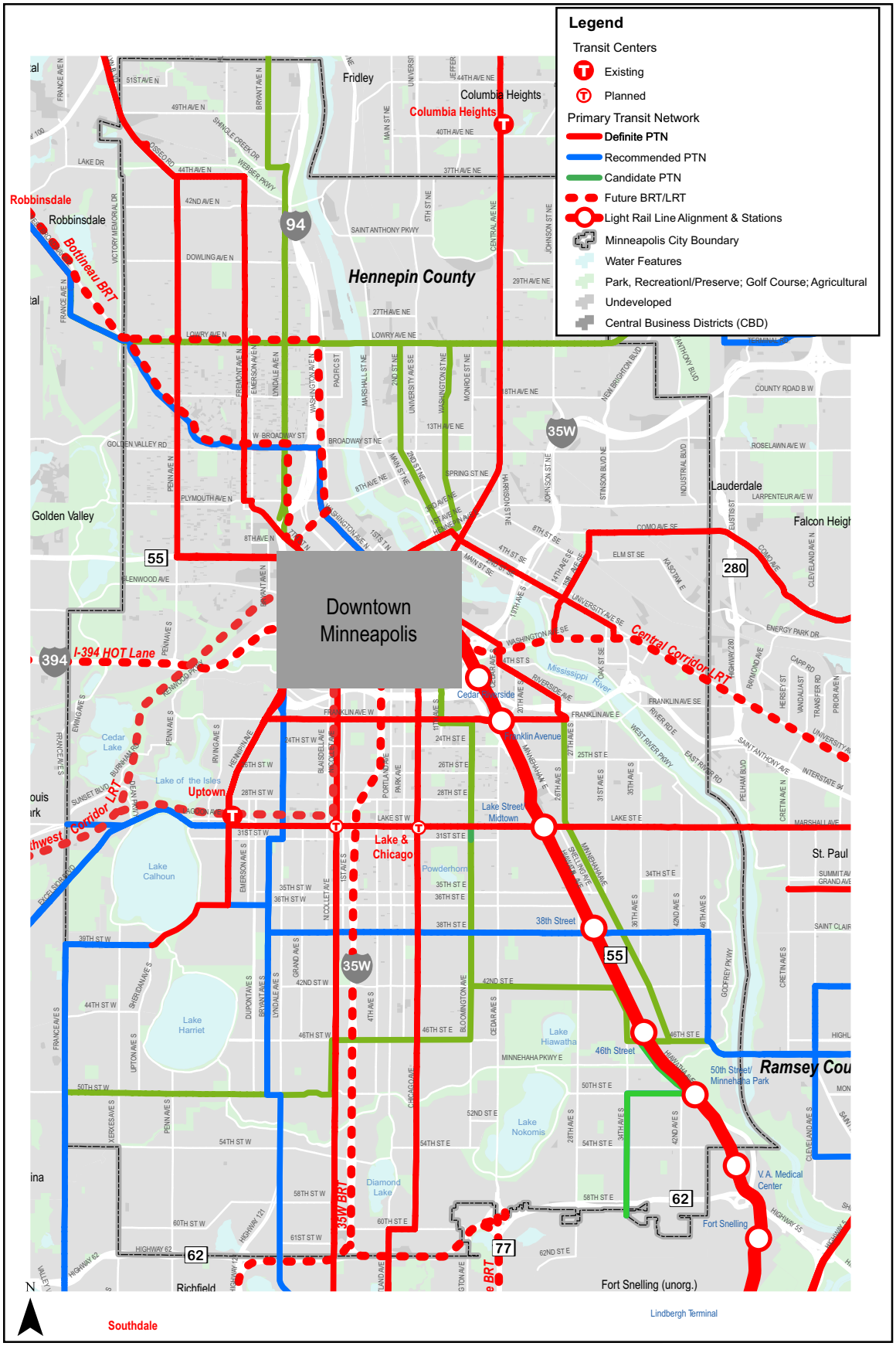
Transit services in the city of Minneapolis are provided by Metro Transit, the regional transit operator. Peak period express services to/from downtown Minneapolis are also provided by several suburban transit operators. The expansion of the regional transit system is very important to the city. New regional transit facilities identified in the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* and *2030 Transit Master Plan* include Northstar Commuter Rail, Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT), Southwest Corridor LRT, Bottineau Boulevard Transitway, I-35W Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Cedar Avenue BRT. In addition, the 2030 Plan identifies a new category of arterial street BRT that includes Central Avenue, West Broadway, Nicollet Avenue and Chicago Avenue.

While these regional facilities are needed to carry people to and from the city and are very well used, Minneapolis also needs a much finer-grained transit system that will serve individuals living within the city who need or desire to rely on transit, walking and bicycling as their primary modes of transportation. In order to accomplish this, Minneapolis will work with its partner agencies, particularly Metro Transit, to establish and maintain a Primary Transit Network (PTN) of high frequency, all day transit service (see Figure 1). The goal is for this service to operate every 15 minutes or better all day for at least 18 hours a day, seven days a week. These services will be provided by the region's regular route service, building upon the high frequency routes already in place. Bus routes on the PTN network already account for approximately 55% of ridership on the Metro Transit system, and these routes accounted for 24% of the average weekday ridership growth on the Metro Transit system from 2003 to 2008.

Designing Complete Streets

Historically, the design of city streets (as well as county and state roads) has been based primarily on traffic volumes, the functional classification of the roadway, and state-aid design standards. The city is changing how design, operation and maintenance decisions are made in order to better balance the needs of all transportation modes and better coordinate land use and transportation.

It is the intent of the plan to foster the practice of providing complete streets that support and encourage walking, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users. Components of a complete street include street and sidewalk lighting, pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, public transit facilities, street trees and landscaping, street furniture, stormwater management, traffic management, on-street parking, traffic lanes, and streets and sidewalks that have a scale and character compatible with the physical context of the surrounding community. The terminology "complete streets" does not imply a particular design or modal priority, but rather a decision-making and design process that considers the needs of all of the above users and needs for the street right-of-way.



Source: MetroGIS, Met Council, and the City of Minneapolis

FIGURE 1 - PRIMARY TRANSIT NETWORK

A street design typology was developed as part of *Access Minneapolis* to accomplish these objectives by more directly linking land use, street design and urban form. This design typology is based upon the land use features in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* and includes the following street design types (see Figure 2):

- Commuter Street
- Commerce Street
- Activity Area Street
- Community Connector
- Neighborhood Connector
- Industrial Connector
- Parkway Street
- Local Street
- Alley

These street types formed the basis for new design guidelines for streets and sidewalks, which were developed through Access Minneapolis and are currently being implemented. For more information on street design typology and associated design guidelines, see Appendix D and *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks.*

Recommended Actions

The following recommended actions are responsive to eight objectives. These recommendations and associated actions are detailed in Chapter Three:

Objective 1: Make transportation design decisions based on place type in addition to street function.

1.1. Apply design guidelines to all infrastructure projects.
1.2. Apply design guidelines to all development projects.
1.3. Resolve inconsistencies between design guidelines and state-aid standards.
1.4. Modify streets to meet design typology over time.

Objective 2: Ensure that all streets in the city are safe, convenient and comfortable for walking.

2.1. Implement the Pedestrian Master Plan.

Objective 3: Provide a well-connected grid of bike lanes.

3.1 Implement the Bicycle Master Plan.

Objective 4: Provide the best possible transit service on a Primary Transit Network (PTN).

4.1. Improve PTN speed and reliability through signal improvements.
4.2. Improve PTN speed and reliability through bus stop location and design improvements.
4.3. Improve PTN speed and reliability through fare payment technology improvements.
4.4. Improve the frequency and span of services on the PTN.
4.5. Improve transit shelters and street furniture.
4.6. Improve snow removal at transit stops.
4.7. Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the PTN.
4.8. Improve transit information at transit stops.
4.9. Support implementation of regional transitways.
4.10. Support investigation of arterial Bus Rapid Transit corridors.
4.11. Continue evaluation of streetcar service on the PTN.

Objective 5: Encourage people to walk, bike and take transit rather than drive.

5.1. Support carsharing programs.
5.2. Encourage carpooling.
5.3. Continue the Bicycle and Pedestrian Ambassador Program.
5.4. Provide incentives for walking, biking and transit use.

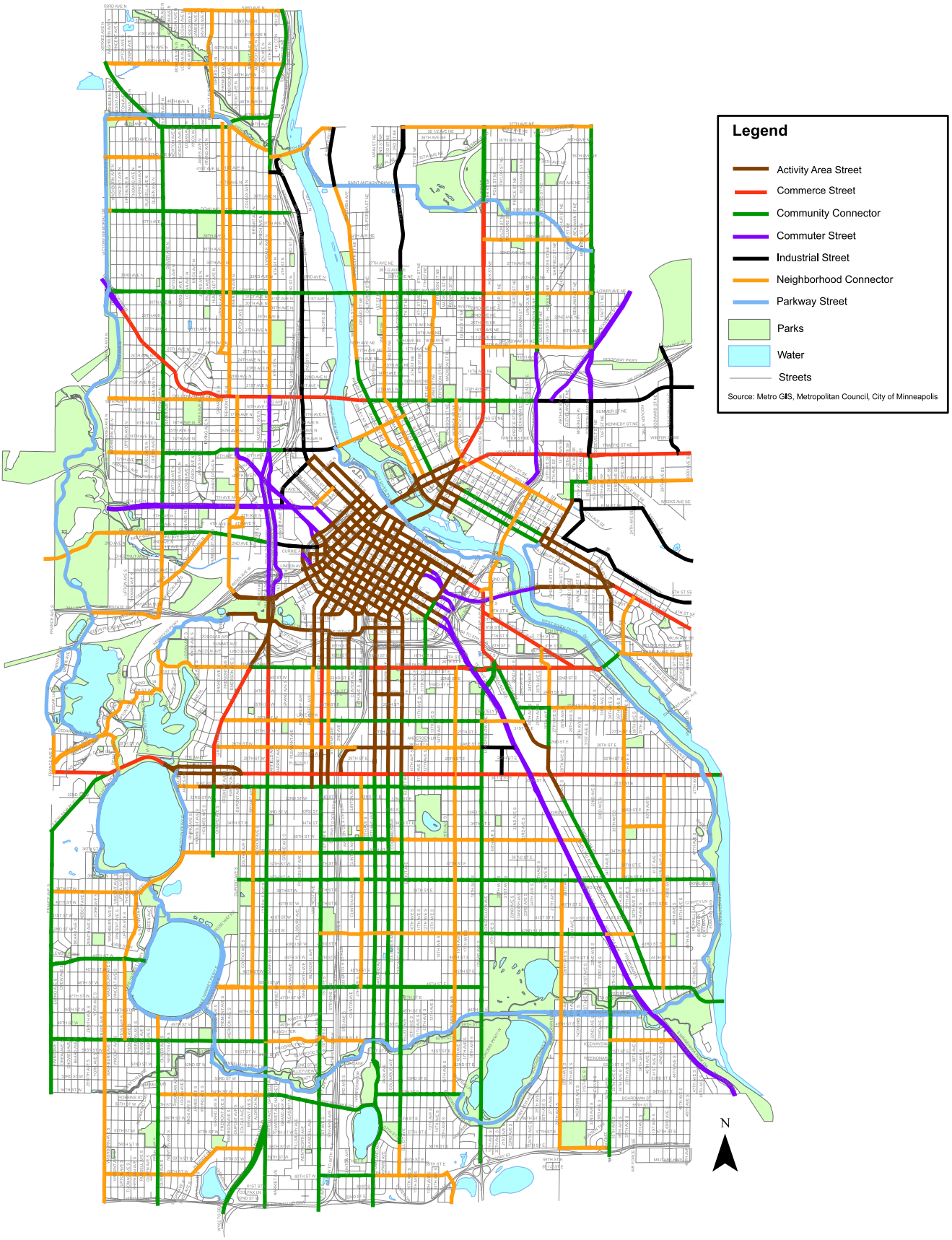


FIGURE 2 - STREET DESIGN TYPES

Objective 6: Optimize the use, safety and life of the street system.

6.1. Implement projects as funded in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
6.2. Maintain infrastructure in good condition to maximize the life of existing facilities.
6.3. Retain the city's street grid system.
6.4. Upgrade the crash data base.
6.5. Retime the traffic signal system.
6.6. Update traffic signals.
6.7. Install accessible/audible pedestrian signals.
6.8. Evaluate intersections for "No Turn on Red".
6.9. Implement anti-gridlock techniques such as "Don't Block the Box".
6.10. Seek legislation authorizing red light cameras ("Stop on Red" program).
6.11. Explore and implement applicable ITS technologies.

Objective 7: Manage and operate streets to support all modes of transportation.

7.1. Continue to install traffic calming measures on local residential streets.
7.2. Incorporate traffic calming measures into *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks.*
7.3. Improve public understanding of traffic calming and traffic control devices.
7.4. Identify improvements for one-way pairs.
7.5. Adjust signal timing for pedestrian crossings.
7.6. Conduct traffic management pilot projects.
7.7. Investigate the removal of traffic signals when requested.
7.8. Investigate Safe Routes to Parks and Safe Routes for Seniors programs.
7.9. Support traffic safety education and enforcement activities.

Objective 8: Make consistent decisions for curbside uses.

8.1. Update specialty zones.
8.2. Update technology for metered on-street parking.
8.3. Enforce parking restrictions at intersections.
8.4. Re-assess existing parking restrictions during peak periods.
8.5. Develop parking replacement strategies for street reconstruction projects.
8.6. Continue the designation of critical traffic and parking areas.

Funding the Transportation Action Plan

The city of Minneapolis is facing significant financial challenges. Current resources are not adequate to fund basic transportation operating and maintenance costs. The city's ability to do major maintenance, street reconstruction and bridge replacement is limited. Yet, the city must address safety concerns, operate an efficient transportation system, extend the life of infrastructure through ongoing maintenance, provide for the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, improve accessibility for the disabled population, support new development, protect the environment, use natural resources prudently, manage parking resources to support business, and sometimes provide expanded transportation facilities and services. In order to meet all of these needs, the city must take advantage of every opportunity to leverage funding, promote economic development, increase efficiency and improve the return on its investment.

While the Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan recommends actions that the city should take over the next ten years, it should be recognized that many of these recommendations are currently not funded. The plan acknowledges that the ten-year timeframe and the implementation of the recommended actions will be subject to the availability of funds and to decisions that are made through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC) process.

The Action Plan recommends the following actions relative to transportation funding:

9.1 Seek additional federal, state and regional funding.
9.2 Support CTIB funding of regional transit projects.
9.3 Optimize return on investment.
9.4 Continue use of the Uniform Assessment.
9.5 Continue use of Special Service Districts.

Implementing the Action Plan

As noted above, the timeframe for implementing the actions recommended in the Action Plan will be dependent on funding availability and the results of the CIP/CLIC process. In addition, many of the Action Plan's recommendations rely on support and actions by partner agencies including Hennepin County, Metro Transit, Metropolitan Council and Mn/DOT as well as ongoing coordination among internal city departments. Thus, the plan identifies several actions intended to improve implementation and sustain the plan's recommendations over time. These recommendations include the following:

10.1 Establish a city-Metro Transit "Primary Transit Network" agreement.
10.2 Establish an interagency PTN implementation team.
10.3 Expand coordination with CPED sector teams.
10.4 Establish mutual priorities with Hennepin County.
10.5 Update the department's internal approach for setting priorities for the CIP.
10.6 Update approach for setting priorities for traffic management activities.
10.7 Update the State of Infrastructure report.
10.8 Develop a long-range project-based plan based on the street needs assessment.
10.9 Identify synergies for better return on investment.
10.10 Resolve constraints associated with funding sources.