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TRANSPORTATION

KEY THEMES:

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

- ▶ Implement the county's "All Abilities Transportation Network" Policy.
 - ▶ Transportation and land use planning should be linked to ensure development that encourages transit ridership.
 - ▶ Collaborate with municipalities on service delivery, right of way and access management issues.
- ▶ Planned capacity expansion of I-94, I-35W and Highway 36 by MnDOT.
- ▶ Reclassify Lexington Parkway to a Class A Minor Arterial and extend to Shepard Road in partnership with the City of Saint Paul.

TRANSIT, BIKING AND WALKING

- ▶ Riverview Corridor, a modern streetcar line between Mall of America, the Airport and Downtown Saint Paul, will be in operation.
 - ▶ Rush Line, a bus rapid transit line between Downtown Saint Paul and White Bear Lake, will be in operation.
 - ▶ Gold Line, a bus rapid transit line between Downtown Saint Paul and Woodbury, will be in operation.
- ▶ The B Line, an arterial rapid bus line, between Saint Paul's Midway and Minneapolis' Uptown neighborhoods will be in operation.
 - ▶ Add additional service at the Union Depot, including a second daily Amtrak trip to Chicago.
- ▶ Prioritize multi-modal transportation, including bicycling and walking.
 - ▶ Trails will be coordinated at municipal, local, regional and state levels in order to form a comprehensive, All-Abilities system.

VISION

Transportation decisions will be guided by the county's All Abilities Transportation Network Policy. The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners is committed to creating and maintaining a transportation system that provides equitable access for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual preference, health, education, abilities, and economics. This is broadly defined as an "All Abilities" Transportation Network. Transforming this commitment into reality requires consistent leadership and collaboration, and must incorporate the best ideas from across the region, state and country. The policy unifies county transportation efforts under a shared vision and implementation strategy to create an integrated and fully interconnected, multimodal transportation system.

Ramsey County's core transportation principles are:

- Ensuring equitable access to people of all abilities to use the county's transportation network.
- Ensuring safety for all when using the county's transportation network.
- Implementing an integrated and fully interconnected transportation system using a variety of modes.
- Aligning transportation network principles with comprehensive planning.
- Incorporating sensitivity to environment and context in all transportation planning.
- Incorporating meaningful engagement with communities.

These principles are to be applied to a hierarchy of prioritized transportation system users that ensures that the most vulnerable users of the transportation network are always considered first during transportation planning and implementation:

- Pedestrians
- People Who Bike
- People Who Use Transit
- People who Drive
- Freight Operators

Planning, design, and implementation will follow applicable standards and best practices. Inclusive dialogue and evaluation, with decisions being transparent and based on authentic engagement with our communities, will guide the implementation of projects.

The county vision supports a routine review process of land use plans by agencies with authority to make and enforce decisions in order to minimize fragmentation. These agencies would coordinate and expedite the plans that ensure land is used in concert with the values of the whole community as well as individual and community interests.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following summarize Ramsey County's primary policies as they relate to transportation and transit:

- Advance and implement the county's All Abilities Transportation Network Policy.
- Maintain safe travel on all county roadways through access management, functional classification, Travel System Management (TSM) and other programs.
- Provide a roadway system that supports the economic viability to ensure truck access and structural capacity on county roadways.

Within its authorities, Ramsey County should:

- ✓ Apply equity principles to guide transportation planning and projects.
- ✓ Include meaningful and effective community engagement in planning processes.
- ✓ Review site designs to ensure that provisions are implemented for travel demand management (TDM), TSM, access management, pedestrians, bicycles and transit.
- ✓ Partner with municipalities on maintaining the functional integrity of roadways. Permitting officials in Ramsey County should establish contacts with municipal staff to ensure early involvement with access location decisions.
- ✓ Provide a forum of county, state and municipal staff, held on a regular basis, to discuss land use issues and their effects on the county system of roadways.



TRANSPORTATION PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of transportation projects are categorized by short-term and long-term implementation:

SHORT RANGE IMPLEMENTATION

Short-range implementation includes projects that repair and improve immediate roadway deficiencies. These projects are included in the five-year [Ramsey County Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) process. The Ramsey County Public Works Department is responsible for monitoring and maintaining all of the roadways and bridges under the jurisdiction of Ramsey County. The department utilizes the TIP to manage the funding and prioritization of reconstruction and maintenance projects for roads and bridges. Other projects in the TIP include traffic signals, sidewalks, paths, and environmental projects. The focus of funding in the TIP has been shifting from expanding existing roads to preserving and managing existing facilities, with emphasis on multimodal transportation planning and programming.

LONG RANGE IMPLEMENTATION

Traffic forecasts and multimodal planning are utilized to evaluate future travel needs. Items such as capacity and congestion are monitored and incorporated into the county's long-range planning process. Traffic volumes are monitored to identify potential changes in congestion and roadway capacity as development and/or redevelopment occurs within Ramsey County. Recommendations for roadway improvements based on capacity needs, like those based on structural deficiencies, are presented in the five-year TIP process. In addition, Travel System Management (TSM), as an alternative to capacity improvements, is a focus of Ramsey County. [Transportation Analysis Zones](#) are used for both short term and long term planning.

Ramsey County Role in Land Use

Ramsey County has a limited role in land use planning, thus the county's role is one of coordination. Land use decisions impact the county system of roadways. Because the county does not have jurisdiction over land use planning, it is especially important for Ramsey County to work with municipalities within the county, sharing information and reviewing new development and redevelopment projects.

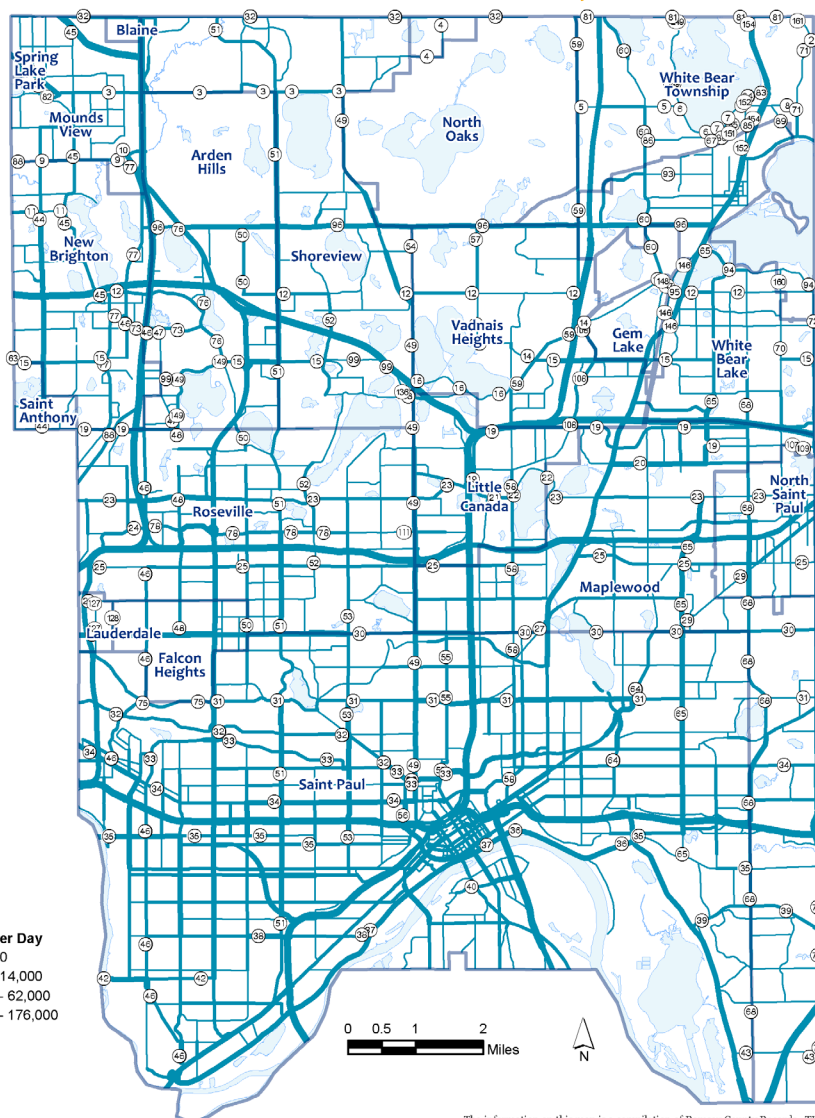
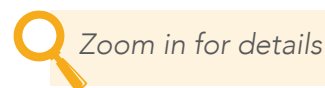
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Although Ramsey County has limited control over land use decisions, the county provides and maintains a system of minor arterial roadways within the county. Minor arterials are high volume roadways that provide a link between trunk highways and local routes, emphasizing mobility rather than land access. The county road system absorbs most of the impact created by increased traffic volume that accompanies growth and redevelopment. Communities should strive to develop access plans that provide adequate access without compromising the integrity of the roadway system. For example, multiple driveways onto a roadway may be beneficial to a development, but they are not beneficial to the community because excessive access restricts the mobility and degrades the safety of a roadway. As areas develop or redevelop, Ramsey County will cooperate with the municipalities to manage access. The Ramsey County Public Works Department has developed the Ramsey County Access Management Policy. The goal of this policy is to bring the county road system into closer compliance with MnDOT access spacing standards and to improve the functionality and safety of the system.

Current Trends

Despite the projected population growth, traffic growth is expected to remain relatively flat due to changing consumer habits, flexible work schedules and advances in traffic management technology. Nevertheless, transportation investment is not expected to keep pace with growth and minor arterials will serve an important function as traffic is diverted from state principal arterial highways onto the county minor arterial system. Based on the population growth figures of the Development Framework, the Metropolitan Council has created a Regional Transportation Model to predict traffic growth. Ramsey County utilizes the Regional Model to predict traffic volumes on its system. The [2040 Estimated Traffic Volumes Map](#) was provided by the Metropolitan Council, for more detail please zoom and scroll.

2016 Average Annual Daily Traffic



Vehicles per Day
 — 5 - 4,100
 — 4,101 - 14,000
 — 14,001 - 62,000
 — 62,001 - 176,000

This dataset represents the most current AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) on sampled road systems in a particular given year. In this case 2016. AADT is a theoretical estimate of the total number of vehicles using a specific segment of roadway (in both directions) on any given day of the year. This estimate represents the total number of cars per year divided by 365 and is developed using factors that adjust for season, day of the week, and vehicle type. This information is displayed using the road centerlines within the state.

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TRANSPORTATION

Transportation and land use planning should be linked to ensure development is favorable to transit, biking and walking.

Within its authorities, Ramsey County will:

- ✓ Plan for the needs of the most vulnerable transportation system users first.
- ✓ Encourage compact development that will provide a mix of housing, jobs and services within easy walking distance.
- ✓ Cluster jobs and commerce.
- ✓ Design developments and transportation improvements to accommodate walking, biking and transit use.
- ✓ Use the Connected Ramsey Communities Network as a framework to connect neighborhoods to key destinations such as parks, trails, schools, employment, healthcare facilities, retail and grocery stores.

Linking transportation and land use planning will help people thrive and prosper by providing access to a greater variety of transportation choices. Due to the relationship between land use and transportation, Ramsey County will work with municipalities to plan for future growth and transportation needs together.



ROADWAYS

Traffic Safety

Ramsey County monitors crashes at its intersections and along transportation corridors. Although crash data is not directly used to analyze the regional transportation model, safety on the county's road system is crucial to the integrity of the system. Unlike traffic volume data, crash histories are not projected into the future, but are reviewed to identify patterns and prevent the perpetuation of past problems.

The Ramsey County Public Works Department uses the Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MnCMAT) to review high crash locations to identify patterns that are correctable and locations on the county system that would benefit from traffic control or geometric improvements. Crash data is used to identify projects for the federal Hazard Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP), Central Safety Fund, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), and other funding programs, as appropriate.

Future Expectations

In order to influence the future and change expectations, the county needs to continue its cooperation with municipalities for sharing responsibility for the delivery of services. For example, the county and municipalities should work more closely together on right of way and access management issues.

The county needs to study municipal land use plans to review economic growth and redevelopment areas identified by the municipalities to better coordinate access management and major trip generators.

These efforts will increase the efficiency and maintain the capacity of the county roadway system through coordinated development.

Coordinated development will reduce the trend to increase the capacity of the county roadway system by adding through lanes.

Density is directly related to an area's transportation needs. Because Ramsey County does not have jurisdiction over land use, it is especially important for the county to work with municipalities and other agencies, sharing information and reviewing new development and redevelopment projects.

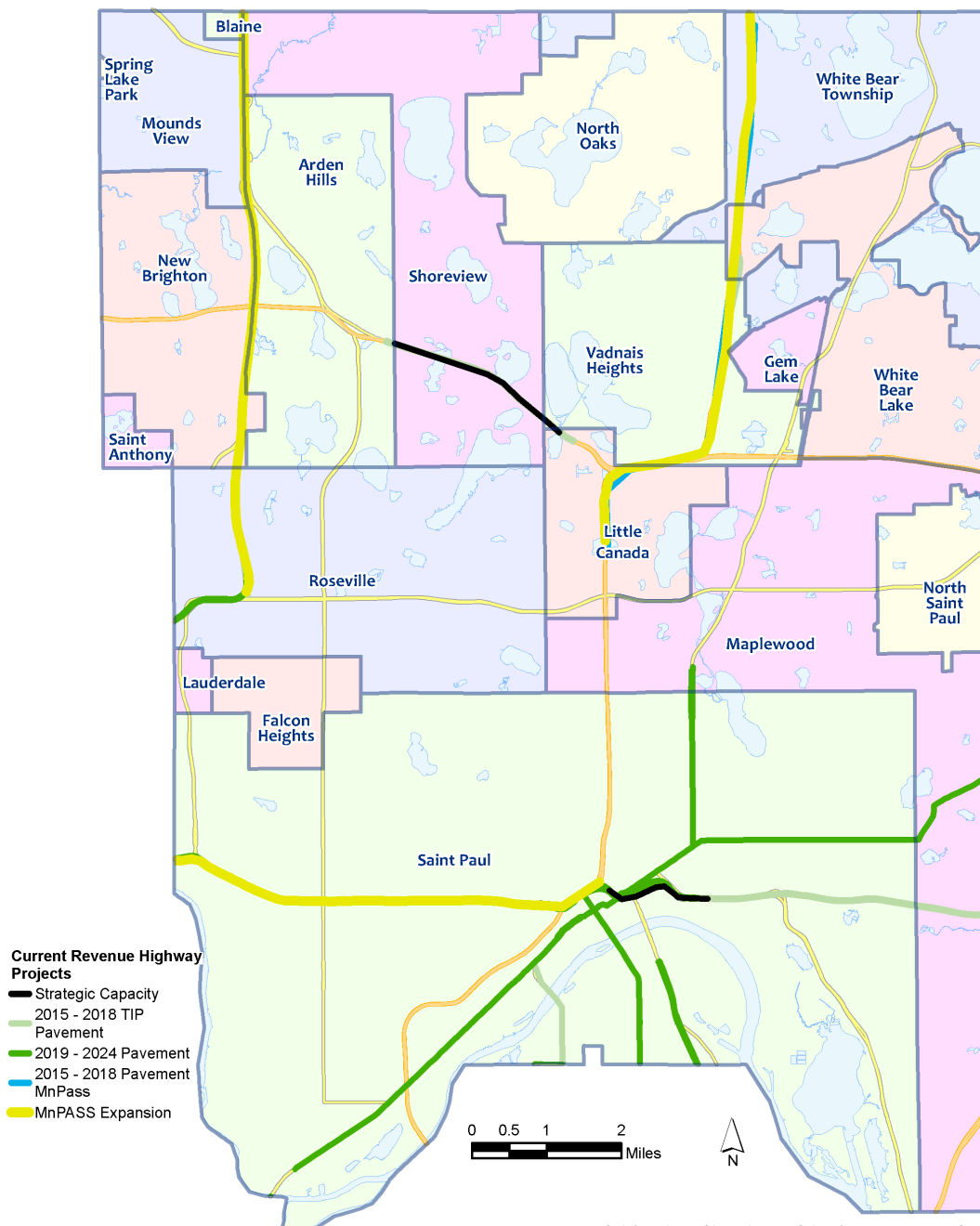
Within its authorities, Ramsey County should:

- ✓ Review site designs to ensure that provisions are implemented for travel demand management (TDM), TSM, access management, pedestrians, bicycles and transit.
- ✓ Partner with municipalities on maintaining the functional integrity of roadways. Permitting officials in Ramsey County should establish contacts with municipal staff to ensure early involvement with access location decisions.
- ✓ Provide a forum of county, state and municipal staff, held on a regular basis, to discuss land use issues and their effects on the county system of roadways.

Metropolitan Highways

Ramsey County will continue to coordinate efforts with the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), municipalities and other entities throughout these major highway projects.

2040 Highway System Planned Investment for Ramsey County



Identified Projects in Highway Current Revenue Scenario from the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan was adopted Jan. 14, 2015. This data is from MNDOT and was used to produce regional maps in the TPP. It is to be used at a regional scale for planning purposes only and is not intended for site specific uses. Data reflect planned features and are subject to changes of the 2040 TPP.

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Prepared by Ramsey County Enterprise GIS | RCGISMetaData@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
2040ComprehensivePlan_highwayinvestment 2/14/2018

TRANSPORTATION

The following metropolitan highways, portions of which are located within Ramsey County, are planned for expansion during this timeframe:



Interstate 94



Interstate 35W



State Trunk Highway 36

The county acknowledges that the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan sets aside over \$1 billion to be used for management projects on metropolitan highways. While these specific projects are not yet defined, management projects—such as construction of interchanges—could be funded in this category. The county continues to cooperate with transportation expansion projects, and is actively involved with MnDOT in assisting and modeling, which is required through the course of a projects' development and implementation. In the 2018 Surface Transportation Program regional solicitation, Ramsey County applied for funding to modify the I-35E/County Road J (CSAH 60 and CR 81) interchange. These changes were approved by the MnDOT/FHWA/Metropolitan Council Interchange Planning Review Committee. Anoka County has initiated a similar improvement at the County Road J/I-35W interchange and has received approval. The Rice Street/I-694 interchange project that will be constructed in 2019 will implement access management improvements, significant geometric and traffic control changes, and pedestrian improvements at that critical junction of a minor arterial and interstate highways.



Functional Classification

Roadways are classified according to their main function, whether it is providing mobility for through trips, or access to adjacent land. There are four classes of roadways within Ramsey County: principal arterials, minor arterials, collector streets and local streets. Due to the functional consolidation of roadways within Ramsey County, the majority of roadways on the county system will be high volume roadways providing a link between trunk highways and local routes. Because these roadways will emphasize mobility rather than land access, the majority of roadways under county jurisdiction must have a functional classification of minor arterial. This allows the county to maintain a level of continuity throughout its system through the utilization of uniform maintenance, design and construction standards.

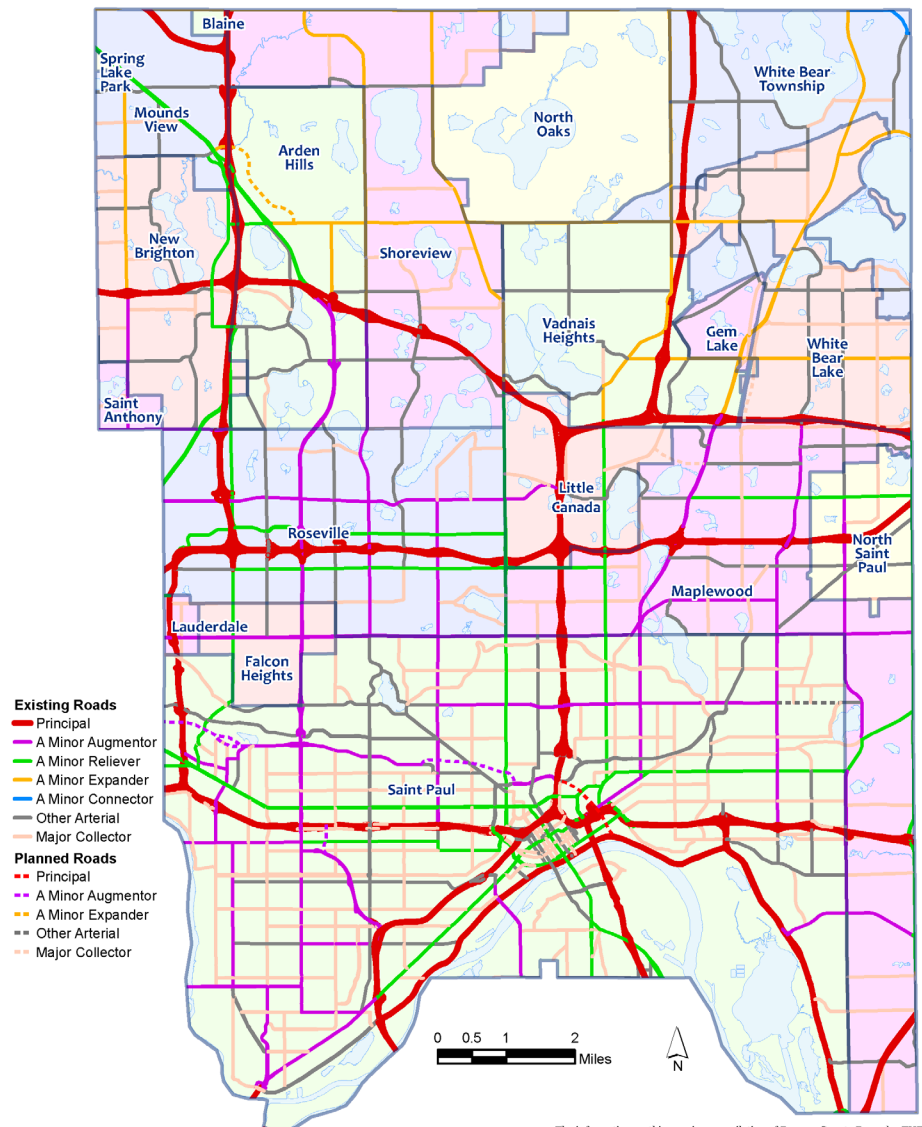
The county vision encourages the county to be proactive in clarifying the consequences of travel decisions for the community. Because the county roadway system is designed to service medium to short trips (2-6 miles) at moderate speeds, it is important to

ensure that the appropriate functional classification has been assigned.

Generally, the appropriate functional classification for roads under county jurisdiction is that of minor arterial. Ramsey County will periodically review the functional class of its roads and re-classify them as appropriate. In conjunction with the review of functional class, the county will review the appropriate jurisdiction for roads and the county will assume jurisdiction of minor arterial roadways and may consider transferring jurisdiction of collector and local roads to municipal jurisdiction. Transfer of jurisdiction to local governments will be negotiated, so that it is done under conditions acceptable to the county, the municipality and in conformance with State rules. At the time of approval of this Comprehensive Plan, Ramsey County has not



Functional Class Roads in Ramsey County



The functional class roads contain major roads and highways; the planned functional class roads contain approximate locations of planned major roads and highways. The specific classifications assigned to the roadways by the Land Transportation Committee, Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and Transportation Advisory Board as specified in the transportation planning process, using federal rules and guidelines. Planned functional class roads are meant to indicate the classification of planned new roads. Opening of planned functional class roads MAY cause designation changes to the existing functional class network.

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identified any roads for imminent transfer to local jurisdiction. Similarly, the Minnesota Department of Transportation reviews the appropriate functional class and jurisdiction of its roadways and identifies changes to each. Transfers from State to County jurisdiction are negotiated and implemented in accordance with State Rules pertaining to the jurisdictional transfer of roadways. Informing the community of the purpose of each of the four classes of roadways allows the community to choose the best route and method of travel, thereby increasing traffic flow and efficiency for the community. The county's Functional Class Roads map identifies the functional classification of the county's main roadways.

The City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County have proposed a change to the functional class of Lexington Parkway (CSAH 51) from a Class B Minor Arterial to a Class A Minor Arterial – Augmenter, between West Seventh Street (TH 5) and Larpenteur Avenue (CSAH 30) to bring the road into conformance with its functional class to the north and to make it eligible for federal funding. A future segment between Shepard Road, a Principal Arterial Highway and West Seventh Street has also been proposed for Metropolitan Council approval. As a result of discussions with the City of New Brighton regarding Old Highway 8 (CSAH 77), Ramsey County will request the reclassification of Old Highway 8, between County Road D (CSAH 19) and CSAH 46, from Class B Minor Arterial to Class A Minor Arterial- Reliever in 2019. A recent corridor study performed on Rice Street (CSAH 49) analyzed safety and traffic operations and recommended further study and a trial of alternate lane configurations. Follow-up work will begin in 2019.

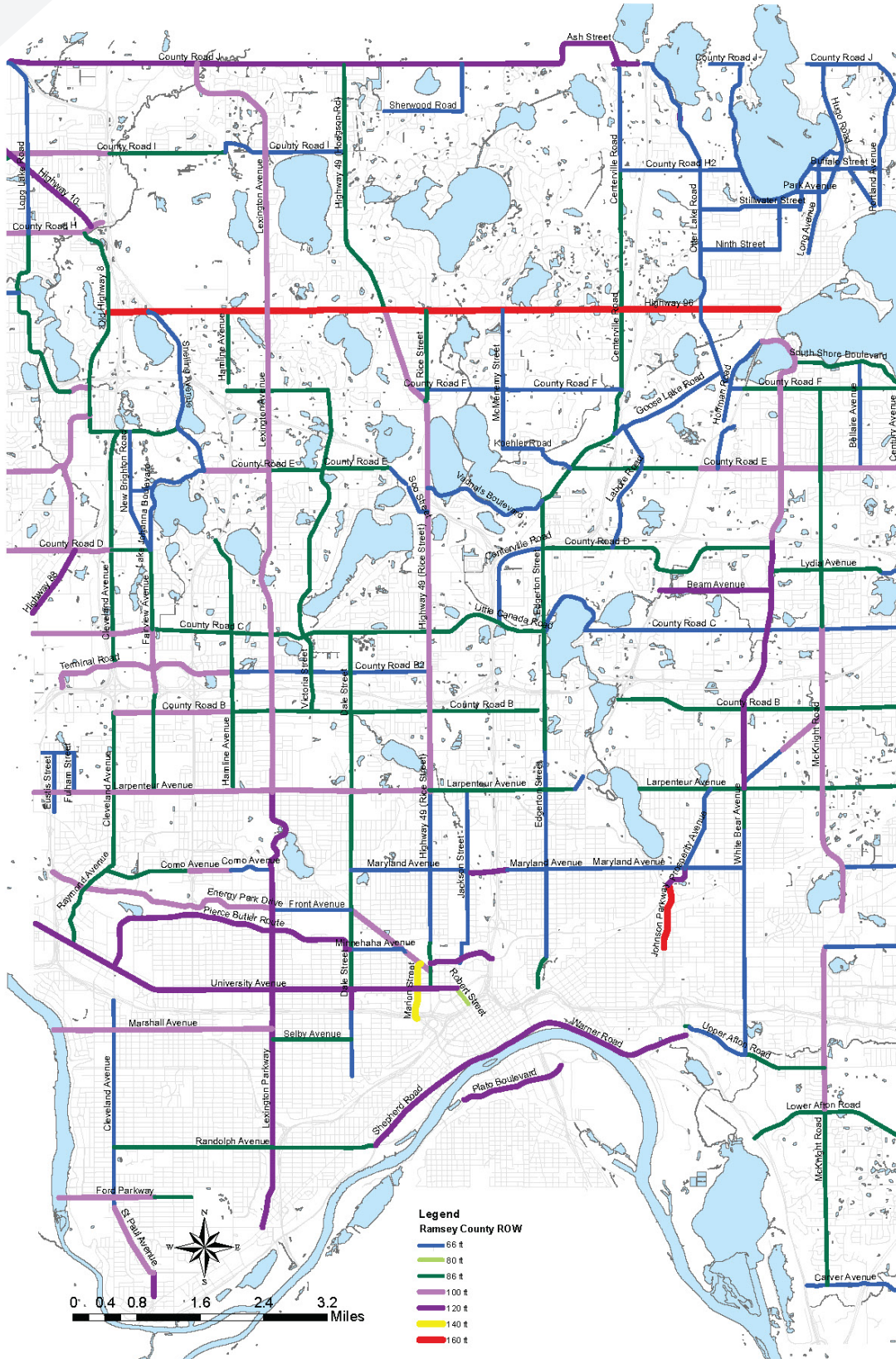
Right of Way

Ramsey County's Department of Public Works is responsible for the existing Major Street Plan and the maintenance of the existing right of way planning process. Reserving highway right of way for public use guides county highway planning. Acquiring adequate rights of way along the county highway system continues to be used as a long-range planning tool incorporating applicable state and federal regulations. Ramsey County will study "road diets" or the conversion of four-lane roads to three-lane roads. Candidates for road diets could include Maryland Avenue, Rice Street, Larpenteur Avenue and Dale Street. However, candidates have not been determined at this time.

Whenever municipalities within and adjacent to Ramsey County embark on a redevelopment plan, the county's Public Works Department reviews the site plans. The right of way planning process involves the following review:

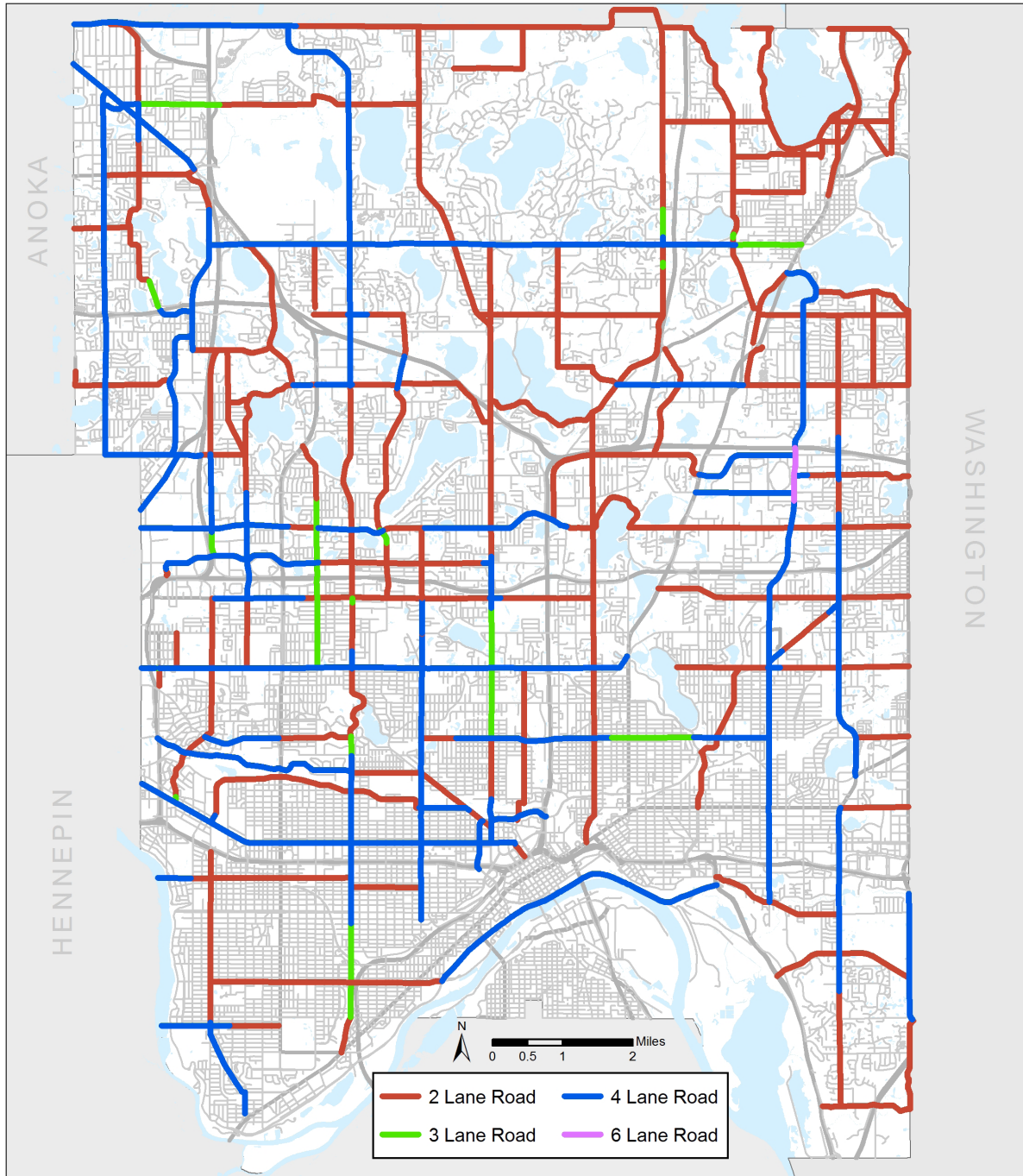
- Determine the width of facility necessary to accommodate projected vehicular traffic volumes and potential multimodal uses;
- Consider on-street parking needs;
- Consider additional roadside width needed for traffic signals, sidewalks, bikeways, snow storage, signing, utilities, etc.;
- Consider additional roadside width needed for amenities, such as landscaping;
- Consider all eventualities, including the review of municipal setback requirements;
- Establish right of way widths whenever redevelopment occurs, to ensure they are sufficient on higher volume roadways; and
- Evaluate stormwater treatment requirements and right of way needs.

Preliminary Major Street Plan 2018



Existing Lanes on Ramsey County Roads

Map produced 5/6/2019 by Ramsey County Public Works



Travel and System Management (TSM)

TSM strategies are technical programs and methods to improve the efficiency and effective capacity of the transportation system. These strategies may include signal timing, access management, transit improvements, and freeway management (e.g. ramp metering, video surveillance, and providing travel information). The focus of system management must be to move more people, not more vehicles. The goal is not to build additional roadways, but to help current roadways operate efficiently. Therefore, management of the highway system should provide incentives to those willing to share rides and reduce single occupant vehicles as well as providing for a smoother flow of vehicles. The vision also supports a system operation that will focus on increasing the occupancy of the vehicles that use the system while continuing to accommodate alternatives that cater to the individual.

One TSM strategy—signal timing—is utilized by Ramsey County. All county traffic signals are signals that minimize stops, delay, and fuel consumption. County traffic signals are set to keep traffic moving. The amount of traffic determines how long a light remains red or green. The goal is to coordinate as many cars as possible traveling as a group without encountering a red light. This system works well when there are heavy volume arterials and low volume cross streets. It represents the highest technological level of TSM in the county. Ramsey County will continue to implement signal timing optimization projects to alleviate the need to expand roadways. Additional interconnected, traffic responsive, coordinated signal systems will be implemented within the county where possible. The county will also continue to explore the use of new technologies that will minimize travel times and provide driver information regarding trip choices and roadway conditions.

Existing Conditions

There are three levels at which TSM strategies can be applied to help existing roadways operate more efficiently. A low level of TSM is a two lane rural road that does not require travel and system management because the roadway is operating at full potential. A high level of TSM, like that found on an interstate highway, uses video cameras, loop detectors, and devices to measure speed and accidents. A high level of TSM has a full traffic management center - a complete system. A medium level of travel and system management is found on the county's system.

County Role

- ✓ Ramsey County Public Works will continue to utilize TSM preservation strategies to maintain its system of roadways in order to make good use of county funds.
- ✓ Ramsey County will continue to educate its employees on the transportation choices available to them other than the single occupant vehicle, and will work with communities to educate the public on the impact trips have on the roadway system.



TRANSIT

Public transit service is critical to increasing access to prosperity and opportunity in our region. Transit provides an affordable alternative to driving for Ramsey County residents and creates mobility options for households who lack consistent access to a vehicle. Greater access to workforce and employment opportunities is one of the greatest benefits of public transportation. Transit investment can have the secondary benefit of revitalizing business districts and stimulating redevelopment and reinvestment in commercial and residential properties. Redevelopment along transit corridor should be pedestrian-oriented and create opportunities for a sustainable mix of land uses and destinations.

Ramsey County's vision for transit comes from its All Abilities Transportation Network Policy, where the county is committed to creating and maintaining an integrated and fully connected transportation system that utilizes a variety of modes, and provides equitable access for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual preference, health, education, abilities and economics. Ramsey County's vision for transit is further refined through transitway planning efforts and the development of the purpose and need for transitway investments. Ramsey County is leading two significant transitway development projects; the Riverview Corridor and the Rush Line Corridor, and participating in the METRO Gold Line project which is led by the Metropolitan Council and Washington County.

Ramsey County's vision for public transit is one that:

- Provides improved mobility and connectivity for its residents, businesses and visitors for a variety of trip purposes as travel demand increases.
- Supports re-development and re-investment at a level that is consistent with regional forecasts and local and small area plans.
- Is sustainable, resilient and expandable at incremental costs with minimal environmental impacts.
- Cultivates economic prosperity by providing transit dependent persons with greater access to opportunities.

Mobility and Access to Opportunity

The Twin Cities' regional population is forecasted to grow through 2040. Without greater investment in alternatives to driving alone, growth in population and employment naturally means travel demand will increase, commute time will lengthen and traffic congestion will increase. There will be higher demand for parking and greater competition for right-of-way among different transportation users in Ramsey County. Accommodating increased travel demand will require a multi-modal approach.

Public transit is an important alternative and complement to driving alone that links people to jobs, schools, health care, family and friends, places of worship, entertainment and recreation. It is valuable to view public transit system as a regional network. The more linkages and destinations in the network, the more access and opportunity Ramsey County residents will have. Downtown Saint Paul is the hub of Ramsey County's public transportation network with multiple high frequency routes converging to provide connections for thousands of daily transit riders. Public transit also plays a role in transporting large volumes of visitors to major special events like the Minnesota State Fair, sporting events, festivals, civic gatherings and concerts. Improved public transit also increases access to destinations for Ramsey County's most vulnerable residents including young people, older people, people with disabilities and low-income populations. Accessible neighborhoods with quality pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure extend the usefulness of public transportation for all.



Support redevelopment and reinvestment

Thrive MSP 2040 calls for communities to leverage regional transit system investments to support sustainable, coordinated, and transit-supportive development patterns and economic development opportunities. In February 2018, the Metropolitan Council reported that investment along the Green Line LRT reached \$8.4 billion; an increase of \$1.6 billion in the last year. Location near frequent, reliable transit service is a key element in development decisions because businesses and developers know that residents and workers of all ages desire access to public transit. The development of the Riverview and Rush Line transitways will create opportunities to redevelop vacant and underutilized land, and incentivizes reinvestment in existing commercial and residential properties. Investing in transit and supporting transit oriented development (TOD) are priorities for the region. Ramsey County will continue to support local communities in station area planning efforts to ensure that growth supports a reliable and cost-effective transit system, help cities leverage private investment, and advance regional equity.

Sustainable, resilient and expandable transportation option

Sustainability balances the economic, social and environmental needs of a community. Public transit supports the principles of sustainability by reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled and associated inefficiencies of traffic congestion. Secondly, some transit service uses hybrid electric buses and alternative fueled vehicles to reduce emissions and the use of solar or renewable energy sources in support facilities. Ramsey County supports regional efforts to reduce fossil fuel consumption through energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in the transportation network.

Resiliency, in the context of this comprehensive plan, refers to the ability of a system to maintain or recover functionality in the event of disruption or disturbance, so that the people who rely on that system can continue to thrive. The region's public transit network is subject to disruption by weather, traffic congestion and road closures. The public transit system is usually flexible and on-time performance issues

can be resolved quickly through detours or bus bridges. A bigger threat to the resiliency of the region's public transit system is the availability of funding for maintenance, operation and improvement. Lags in revenue from the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax affects funding for transit operations. Lack of funding in the Capital Investment Grant Program affects the ability to expand transitways because large transit projects rely on federal funds for up to half of the cost to design and build them. Maintaining resiliency of the public transit system is the responsibility of all stakeholders and Ramsey County has committed its sales tax revenue toward the operation and development of transitways.

Public transit is also an expandable transportation option. Where demand for transit service is growing, service frequency or span of service can be increased if resources are available. Larger transit vehicles could be put into service to accommodate higher demand. New or enhanced service could be implemented where long-term travel demand warrants the investment. In comparison to the high cost and adverse impacts of expanding roadway capacity to meet travel demand, public transit is a sustainable and expandable transportation option.

Definitions

The regional public transit system includes several different types of service operating at a variety of frequencies on both rubber tires and rail. Six different types of public transit service currently provided in the region and Ramsey County include:

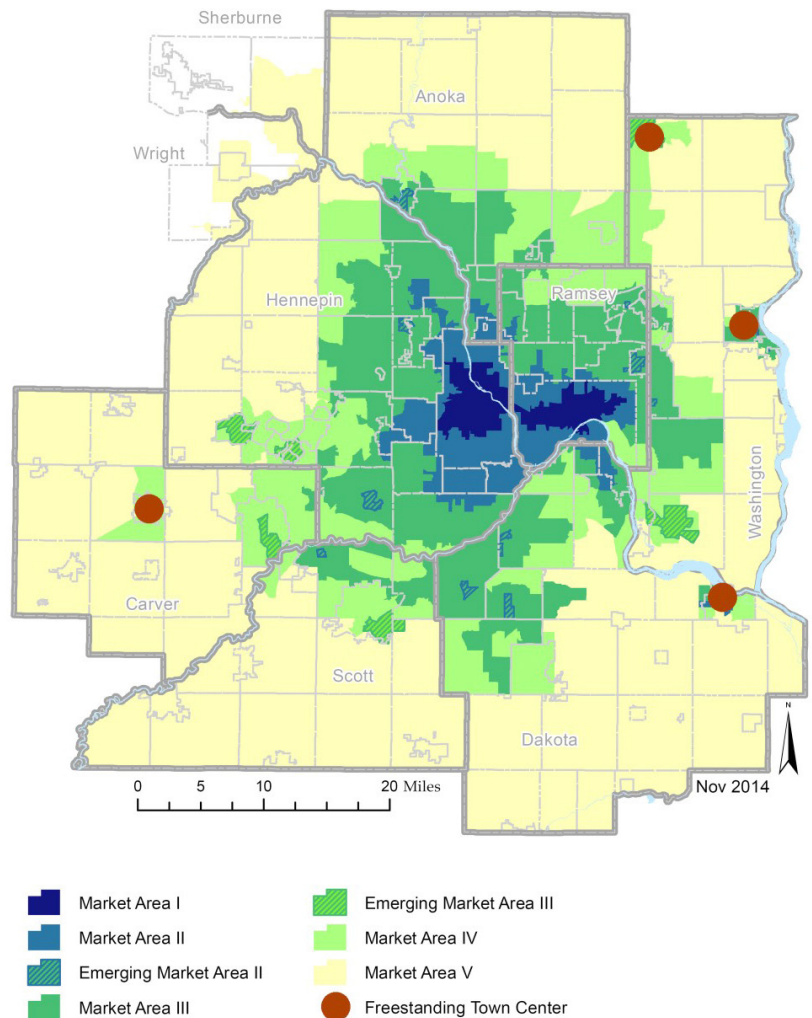
- **Regular-route bus service** is provided on a fixed schedule along specific routes, with riders getting on and off at designated bus stops. Regular-route service is provided using a variety of bus types that operate local service and express service. Currently, there are 217 regular route bus routes in the region, most of them operated by Metro Transit. Some of the busiest routes in Ramsey County connect downtown Saint Paul to dense, walkable neighborhoods and regional destinations.
- **Light rail transit (LRT) service** is provided by electrically powered trains operating at high frequencies in exclusive right-of-way. Light rail uses specially designed transit stations that offer level boarding, off-board fare collection and other amenities. Two LRT lines operate in the region; the Blue Line extends from downtown Minneapolis to MSP Airport and the Mall of America along TH 55 and the Green Line extends from downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul along University Avenue. Extensions of both the Blue Line and Green Line are in development.
- **Bus rapid transit (BRT) service** is provided at high frequencies with unique buses and specially designed facilities and amenities. Arterial BRT (aBRT) operates in mixed traffic, but offers low-floor boarding and off-board fare collection. The A Line opened in 2016 and is the only current aBRT service in the region. It connects Rosedale Mall to the METRO Green and Blue Lines via Snelling Avenue and Ford Parkway. The vision for the aBRT system was planned in Metro Transit's 2012, Arterial Transitway Corridors Study. The study highlighted 13 corridors including 4 corridors in Ramsey County. The next aBRT to open in Ramsey County will be the B Line, which will connect Uptown Minneapolis to Saint Paul's Midway via Lake Street, Marshall Avenue and Snelling Avenue.



- **Highway BRT** serves a more regional purpose and utilizes bus shoulders and MnPASS lanes on the state and interstate highway system. The METRO Red Line is currently the only highway BRT in operation and connects the Mall of America and Dakota County. By 2040 Ramsey County will have additional dedicated BRT with the METRO Gold Line and Rush Line. Dedicated BRT operates in its own right-of-way with unique vehicles and stations that have level boarding and off-board fare collection. The METRO Gold Line will be the first example of dedicated BRT in the Twin Cities, serving Saint Paul, Maplewood and Washington County. The line is currently in project development and planning is managed by the Metropolitan Council.
- **Commuter rail** operates on traditional railroad track powered by diesel trains with limited stops. Commuter rail typically serves morning and evening commuters. Northstar commuter rail serves Anoka County and connects to downtown Minneapolis. There is currently no commuter rail in Ramsey County.
- **Dial-a-ride** is a shared-ride service that allows customers to schedule pickup times. There are two types of dial-a-ride service in the region: general public dial-a-ride and mandated Metro Mobility service mandated by state and federal ADA laws.
- **Public vanpools** are made up of five to fifteen people, including a volunteer driver, commuting to and from work destinations throughout the region on a regular basis in a subsidized van. Vanpools typically serve origins and destinations not served by regular-route bus service.


Development patterns and densities, demographics and geographic features influence the design of the regional transit system. Certain factors are used to establish transit market areas, a regional transit planning tool designed to match transit demand to the types and levels of service provided. Local governments and transit providers need to work together to best align these factors to maximize the success of the transit system and its potential integration with communities.

Transit Market Areas



2040 TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN | METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
Figure 6-3



 Zoom in for details

Transit Market Area Characteristics

► Transit Market Area I

Transit Market Area I has the highest density of population, employment, and lowest automobile availability. Market Area I has the potential transit ridership necessary to support the most intensive fixed-route transit service, typically providing higher frequencies, longer hours, and more options available outside of peak periods. In Ramsey County this includes Downtown Saint Paul, the neighborhoods along the Green Line, and parts of St. Paul's Eastside, North End and Westside.

► Transit Market Area II

Transit Market Area II has high to moderately high population and employment densities and typically has a traditional street grid comparable to Market Area I. Much of Market Area II is also categorized as an Urban Center and it can support many of the same types of fixed-route transit as Market Area I, although usually at lower frequencies or shorter service spans. Examples of Transit Market Area II include Saint Paul's Highland Park, Como, and Saint Anthony Park neighborhoods, as well as portions of Roseville, Falcon Heights, and New Brighton. It is expected that by 2040 North Saint Paul is also considered Transit Market Area II.

► Transit Market Area III

Transit Market Area III has moderate density but tends to have a less traditional street grid that can limit the effectiveness of transit. Transit service in this area is primarily commuter express bus service with some fixed-route local service providing basic coverage. General public dial-a-ride services are available where fixed-route service is not viable. In Ramsey County this includes many of the suburban communities including Maplewood, White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights and Mounds View.

► Transit Market Area IV

Transit Market Area IV has lower concentrations of population and employment and a higher rate of auto ownership. This market can support peak-period express bus services if a sufficient concentration of commuters likely to use transit service is located along a corridor. The low-density development and suburban form of development presents challenges to fixed-route transit. General public dial-a-ride services are appropriate in Market Area IV. Examples of Transit Market Area IV include North Oaks, White Bear Township and Arden Hills.

► Transit Market Area V

Transit Market Area V has very low population and employment densities and tends to be primarily rural communities and agricultural uses. General public dial-a-ride service may be appropriate here, but due to the very low-intensity land uses these areas are not well-suited for fixed-route transit service. Transit Market Area V is not present in Ramsey County.

► Freestanding Town Centers

Freestanding Town Centers are areas that historically grew independently of Minneapolis and St. Paul and are still separated from the urban and suburban areas of the metro by rural land. Because of their concentrated downtowns laid out in a traditional urban form, these areas have a Transit Market Index value that would indicate Market Area III or higher. However, their relatively small population and land area, as well as their distance from other transit-supportive land uses, limits the potential for local fixed-route transit. Freestanding Town Centers are not present in Ramsey County.

► Existing Public Transit System

Metro Transit is the largest transit provider in the region and operates most of the region's regular-route bus service, and all light rail and commuter rail lines. Suburban transit providers operate regular route and, in some cases, dial-a-ride service for 12 suburban communities. The University of Minnesota provides regular-route bus service around and between the Minneapolis and Saint Paul campuses. Regular-route transit service is provided within the Transit Capital Levy Communities, or the cities in the metro area where a property tax is levied to pay for transit capital needs.

Transit centers are located where multiple transit routes connect and passengers can transfer to other routes. The region has 26 transit centers with facilities that improve waiting conditions and the transfer experience between routes. In Ramsey County transit centers are located at Rosedale Mall, Maplewood Mall, the Union Depot, Sunray Shopping Center, and Highway 36 & Rice Street. With the opening of the Green Line in 2014 and the A Line in 2016, the region now has 86 transit stations serving existing light rail, BRT and commuter rail lines. By 2040 dozens of new stations will be added to the network including along the Gold Line, Rush Line and Riverview Corridor.

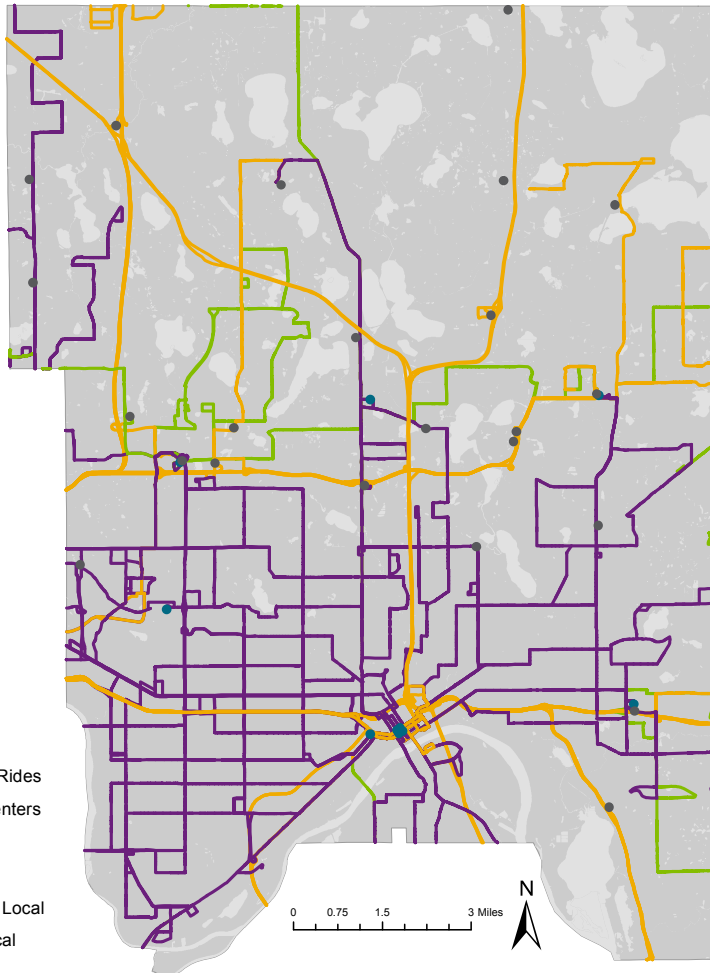
Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul serves as a regional multimodal hub that connects local bus service, intercity and charter bus services, Amtrak passenger rail, and the Green Line LRT. A few transit centers are in Ramsey County, along with several small and medium-sized park and ride lots, and one large lot at the Maplewood Mall.

The region also has a substantial system of transit support facilities, both public and private, that includes bus garages, maintenance buildings, rail support facilities, and operations centers. The Green Line operations and maintenance facility is in the Lowertown neighborhood in downtown Saint Paul.

On state highways, transit advantages can include bus-only shoulders, dedicated bus lanes, MnPASS lanes, ramp meter bypasses, and transit stations adjacent to or between roadways. MnPASS lanes are highway lanes that are shared by transit, high-occupant vehicles, and single-occupant vehicles (SOVs) that opt to pay a toll to use the lane during peak periods. On city streets and signalized highways,

improvements include dedicated bus lanes, dynamic parking lanes, traffic signals that are coordinated with transit service and/or provide transit priority, and queue jump lanes, among others. Bus shoulders are available on all freeways in Ramsey County and three MnPASS facilities are open in the region, including one on I-35E from downtown Saint Paul to County Road J in Vadnais Heights.

Routes and Facilities Map



 *Zoom in for details*

Metro Transit operates fixed-route transit within Ramsey County including local bus, express bus, suburban local bus, rapid bus and light rail transit. The map below depicts all fixed-route transit service in Ramsey County as of March 9, 2019.

Park-and-ride facilities are surface lots and structured ramps predominantly located outside of the urban center and are primarily served by express bus, bus rapid transit, or rail. In 2017, the region had 106 park-and-ride lots with nearly 34,008 spaces served by bus and rail transit. Ramsey County had 13 park-and-rides with capacity for 2,946 vehicles. According to Metro Transit's 2017 Annual Regional Park and Ride Report, Ramsey County's overall park-and-ride system has plenty of capacity for future usage with about 53% utilization of the system. Targeted capacity expansion may be needed at certain sites in the county. Additional park-and-rides may be added to the county in the future to complement Rush Line and Gold Line.

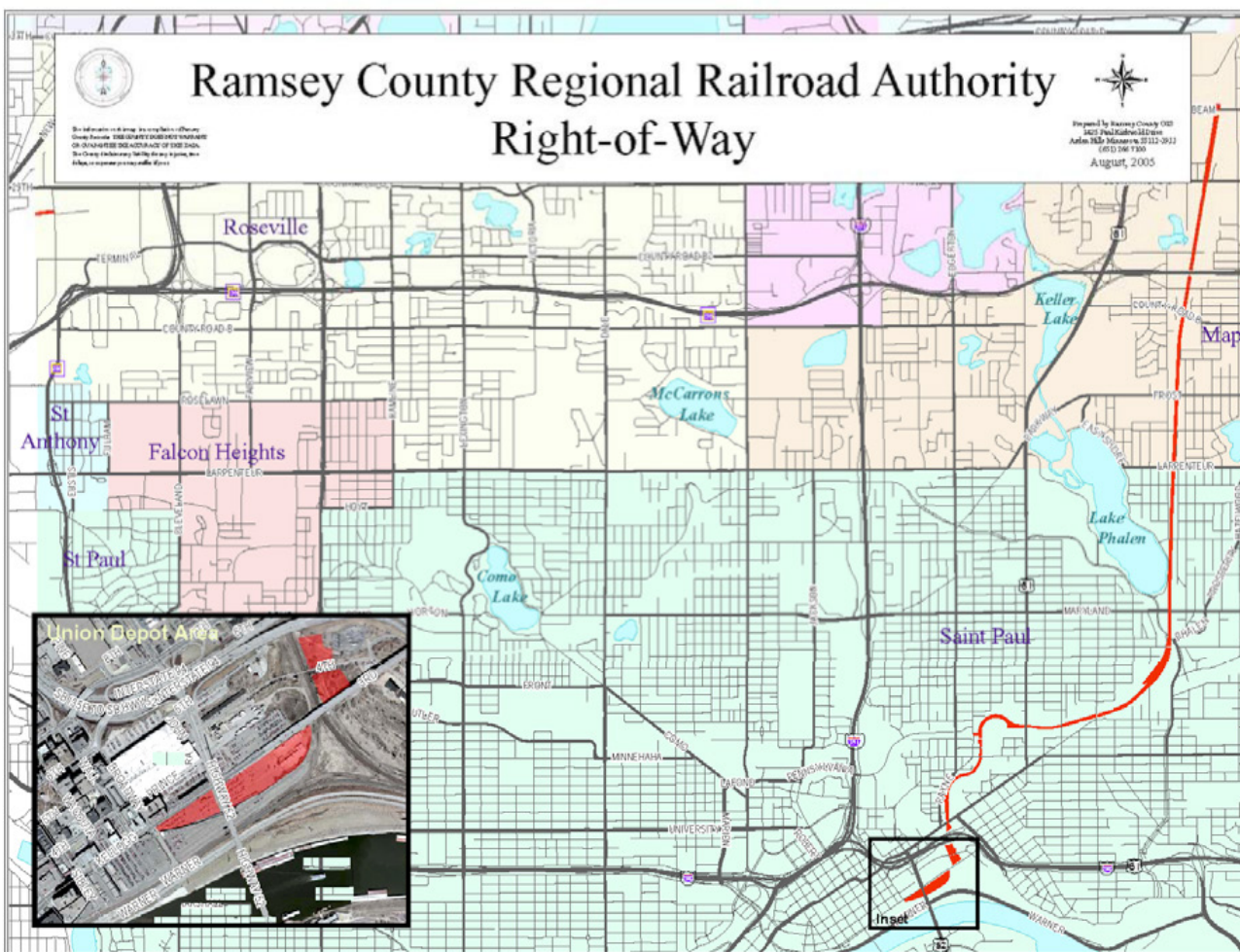
Park-And-Ride Name	City	Provider	2017 Capacity	2017 Usage	2017 % Utilized	2016 Capacity	2016 Usage	2016 % Utilized	2016-2017 % Usage
Skating Center	Roseville	Metro Transit	50	51	102%	50.00	51	102%	0%
Shoreview Community Center	Shoreview	Metro Transit	10	10	100%	10	5	50%	50%
Salem Covenant Church	New Brighton	Metro Transit	70	34	49%	70	42	60%	-11%
Mermaid Supper Club	Mounds View	Metro Transit	80	82	103%	80	82	103%	0%
Maplewood Mall Transit Center	Maplewood	Metro Transit	1007	485	48%	1007	592	59%	-11%
Little Canada Municipal Lot	Little Canada	Metro Transit	20	19	95%	10	11	110%	-15%
1-35W & CO Rd H	Mounds View	Metro Transit	211	122	58%	211	112	53%	5%
I-35W & Co Rd C	Roseville	Metro Transit	460	206	45%	460	191	42%	3%
I-35E & County Road E	Vadnais Heights	Metro Transit	300	43	14%	300	36	12%	2%
Hwy 61 & Lower Afton Road	Saint Paul	Metro Transit	114	140	123%	114	151	132%	-10%
Hwy 61 & Co Road C	Maplewood	Metro Transit	229	99	43%	229	122	53%	-10%
Hwy 36 & Rice St	Little Canada	Metro Transit	280	178	64%	280	177	63%	0%
Grace Church	Roseville	Metro Transit	115	105	91%	115	81	70%	21%
Total			2946	1574	53%	2936	1653	56%	-3%

Right of Way

Minnesota state statute 398A.02 states, "The purpose of the Regional Railroad Authorities Act is to provide a means whereby one or more municipalities, with state and federal aids as may be available, may provide for the preservation and improvement of local rail service for agriculture, industry, or passenger traffic and provide for the preservation of abandoned rail right-of-way for future transportation uses, when determined to be practicable and necessary for the public welfare, particularly in the case of abandonment of local rail lines."

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority acquired part of an abandoned railroad corridor from downtown Saint Paul to Beam Avenue in Maplewood from Burlington Northern Railroad in the 1990s. A paved trail was constructed in the right-of-way and named in 2001 for Congressman Bruce Vento, a well-loved politician from the East Side of St. Paul. Today it exists as a multi-use trail but the trail corridor is reserved for possible future bus or rail transit. The Rush Line Corridor Bus Rapid Transit project will share the corridor with the Bruce Vento Trail from about Payne Avenue in Saint Paul to Gervais Avenue in Maplewood.

The figure below shows the right-of-way owned by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, including Union Depot.



Transit Funding and Finance

The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) was created on April 1, 2008, as required by Minn. Statute Section 297A.992, by a joint powers agreement between the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties. Scott and Carver counties opted not to join. Its purpose is to receive and distribute the quarter-cent transit sales tax allowed by the state legislature and the \$20 motor vehicle sales tax, permitted by the Legislature. CTIB distributes the collected taxes by awarding annual grants for the development, construction, and operation of transitways serving the five-county area. Since being formed in 2008, CTIB distributed \$1 billion in grants to 10 different transit corridors.

In June 2017, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners voted 6-1 to leave CTIB by 2019, noting that the county has received less funding from the coalition than it has paid in. In its place will be five metro counties — Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington — going it alone, or at least crafting county-by-county deals to further the construction of future transitways. State lawmakers limited the amount of sales tax that could be imposed by the CTIB member counties to one-quarter cent. With the dissolution of CTIB, counties can impose a sales tax of up to a half cent for transit and roadway projects. Hennepin and Ramsey counties have agreed to increase their sales tax to the one-half cent ceiling; Ramsey County has dedicated the half-cent sales tax to transit.

Local funding accounts for only half of the resources to develop and construct transitways. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) administers the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program, a discretionary grant program for funding major transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars and bus rapid transit. Federal law requires projects seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years to be eligible for funding. For New Starts and Core Capacity projects within the CIG Program, the law requires completion of two phases in advance of receipt of a construction grant agreement – Project Development and Engineering. For Small Starts projects, the law requires completion of one phase in advance of receipt of a construction grant agreement – Project Development. The law also requires projects to be rated by FTA at various points in the process according to statutory criteria evaluating project justification and local financial commitment.

The region's commuter rail project (Northstar), the Blue and Green LRT lines and the Orange and Red BRT lines were partially funded through the CIG Program.


Intercity Passenger Rail

Intercity passenger rail service is available in the Twin Cities aboard the Empire Builder, Amtrak's long distance passenger train connecting Seattle, WA and Portland, OR to Chicago, IL. Amtrak's Empire Builder is the only intercity passenger train service in the region and serves Saint Paul's Union Depot. Amtrak completed feasibility study of second round trip train between Chicago and Saint Cloud in 2015 that found a second round-trip between the Twin Cities and Chicago could provide approximately 155,000 rides per year. The State of Wisconsin and Ramsey County jointly funded the TCMC Second Train Phase 1 study with additional funding from the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission and the La Crosse Area Planning Committee. Phase 1 is expected to be completed in 2018, finishing the alternatives analysis and conceptual engineering of needed capital improvements to accommodate a second passenger train together with increasing freight rail traffic on the route, which is owned by Canadian Pacific Railway. Phase 2 work includes environmental analysis and final design of the recommended capital improvements, and is currently unfunded. With funding in hand for Phase 2 work, capital improvements and train sets, the TCMC Second Train could be operational in 2022. Ramsey County is a leader among its regional peers in planning and advocating for the TCMC Second Train. Ramsey County will continue to advocate for state funding to complete the planning and design for the second train, construction of track improvements, purchase of train sets and implementation of the service independently and as a member of the MN High Speed Rail Commission.

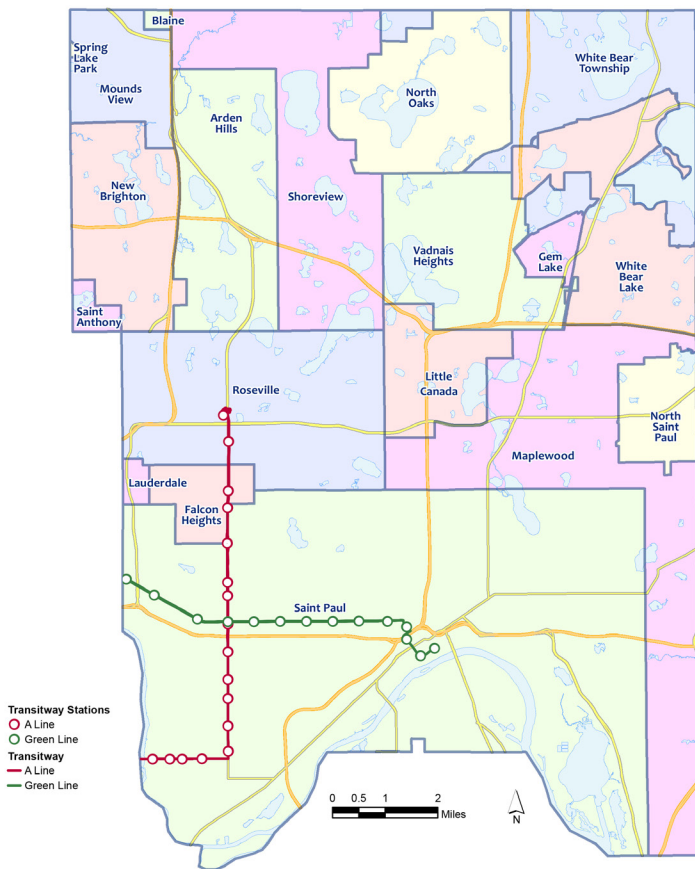
Transitway Corridors

Ramsey County will be a leader and model in developing, promoting and providing public transit that benefits area businesses and neighborhoods. The county, in cooperation with the state, the Metropolitan Council and area municipalities, will engage in station area planning for the Gold Line, Rush Line and Riverview Corridor transitways that fosters increased use of public transit to the benefit of neighborhoods. A market assessment will be prepared for each station area to identify a likely future development scenario. Station area planning will strive to meet development density expectations and activity levels described in the Metropolitan Council’s Thrive 2040 plan. Station area plans also include design of accessible platforms for pedestrians and bicyclists and public realm improvements that make the station areas feel safe and inviting.

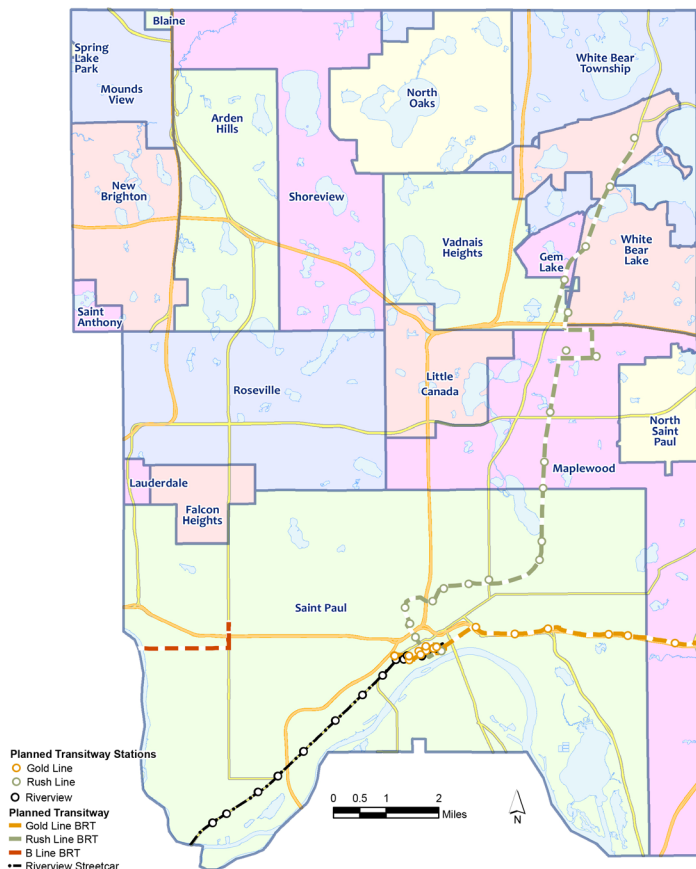
Ramsey County board and staff encourage citizens to participate in planning to deliver new and enhanced transit service because public engagement is essential to making informed decisions and earning local support for transitway projects. Ramsey County will continue to seek public input on the Gold Line, Rush Line and Riverview Corridor projects through a variety of outreach opportunities that include formal public meetings, informal pop-up meetings, community events, presentations to district councils, business organizations and civic groups and social media access. Policy advisory committees are open to the public and time is allotted for public comment. Business owners and area residents can participate on a community advisory committee and provide guidance on a variety of issues and concerns related to the transitway project.

 Zoom in for details and see next page for detailed descriptions of planned and existing transitways

Existing Transitways



Planned Transitways



TRANSPORTATION

EXISTING CORRIDORS:

- ▶ **METRO Green Line:** The [METRO Green Line](#) opened in June 2014. The METRO Green Line is an 11-mile route with 23 stations, connecting downtown Saint Paul with the University of Minnesota campus and downtown Minneapolis generally along University Avenue. The METRO Green Line is providing more rides than expected, averaging nearly 40,000 trips per day in 2016, meeting its 2030 projections less than three years after opening.
- ▶ **A Line:** The [A Line](#) is an arterial bus rapid transit that opened in June 2016. The A Line connects with the METRO Blue Line at 46th Street Station and the METRO Green Line at Snelling & University Station and several popular destinations, including Hamline University, Macalester College, Highland Village, Rosedale Mall, HarMar Mall, Minnehaha Park and the Midway area.

PLANNED CORRIDORS:

- ▶ **METRO Gold Line:** The [METRO Gold Line](#) is a planned nine-mile dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that will connect St. Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury generally along Interstate 94. The METRO Gold Line will be Minnesota's first BRT line that operates primarily within exclusive bus-only lanes. The METRO Gold Line will provide frequent, all-day service with 11 new stations, seven days a week. METRO Gold Line began Project Development in 2018 and service is expected to begin in 2024.
- ▶ **Rush Line:** The [Rush Line](#) is a planned 13-mile BRT project within a dedicated guideway serving 21 stations from Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul to downtown White Bear Lake generally along Robert Street, Phalen Boulevard, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way and Trunk Highway 61. The guideway will be co-located with the Bruce Vento Trail through the portion of the route that utilizes the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way. The Rush Line corridor began work on the draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2018.
- ▶ **Riverview Corridor:** The [Riverview Corridor](#) is a planned 11.7-mile modern streetcar route that will connect downtown Saint Paul with the MSP Airport, Mall of America and serve the Saint Paul neighborhoods in between, running generally along W. 7th Street. Riverview Corridor will be the region's first modern streetcar line, with 20 stations running partially in dedicated right of way and partially in shared lanes. Modern streetcar is compatible with the region's light rail system, so streetcars can operate on the same tracks as the METRO Green and Blue Lines. Work will begin on the draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2019 and is expected to take three years to complete.
- ▶ **B Line:** Metro Transit is planning improvements to the Route 21 corridor with the [B Line rapid bus project](#). The B Line will substantially replace the western portion of Route 21, serving Lake Street and Marshall Avenue, a Ramsey County road, between uptown Minneapolis and the Midway area in St. Paul. B Line planning will begin in 2019. Metro Transit plans to start detailed engineering on the B Line in 2020. Pending full project funding, B Line construction could begin as soon as 2021.

OTHER CORRIDORS:

- ▶ **Red Rock:** The Red Rock Corridor has evolved into a potential BRT corridor connecting the city of Hastings and the region's southeastern suburbs to St. Paul primarily along US Highway 61. An Implementation Plan was prepared in 2016 that found that forecasted ridership did not justify implementation of a BRT project in the near-term, and instead focused on implementing all-day regular route service in the corridor to build ridership.
- ▶ **Robert Street:** The Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Study focused on providing more frequent and faster transit service between downtown Saint Paul and northern Dakota County within the Robert Street corridor. The analysis of alternatives identified two alternatives, BRT and modern streetcar in St. Paul and West St. Paul, as the projects with the best potential to address the needs for improved transit service in the study area. The study concluded in 2015 without action to select a Locally Preferred Alternative, allowing staff more time to conduct additional land use planning.

TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ **Highway 36:** Trunk Highway 36 is an east/west freeway through the northern half of Ramsey County. The Metropolitan Council conducted the Highway Transitway Corridor Study in 2014 and concluded that there is a strong potential for Highway BRT in the TH 36 corridor. More detailed study has not been initiated in the TH 36 corridor.
- ▶ **I-35W North:** This freeway corridor links downtown Minneapolis to Forest Lake and runs through western Ramsey County. MnDOT led a feasibility study in 2013 that focused on MnPASS implementation, but also included analysis of highway BRT. Ultimately, MnDOT elected to implement a 12-mile MnPASS project on I-35W north, between County Road C in Roseville and County Road 53 in Lino Lakes. The project is scheduled for letting in September 2018.

BICYCLING AND WALKING

Developing and maintaining a regional system of bicycle and pedestrian pathways throughout Ramsey County provides both active transportation and recreational opportunities for residents. Bikeways provide efficient and affordable transportation along with environmental and traffic congestion improvements. They also provide opportunities for people to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines, making active living a way of life.

Ramsey County will provide a coordinated multimodal transportation system, which meets all state and/or federal specifications, to ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles. Off-street paved trails in Ramsey County are multi-use trails that serve pedestrians and bicyclists. Pedestrians and bicycle facilities connect residents to destinations such as businesses, transit, employment, community centers, and parks. Studies suggest that people in pedestrian-friendly communities, with well-connected streets and sidewalks and nearby commercial destinations, walk nearly four times as much as those in more auto-oriented neighborhoods.



Ramsey County's commitment to create safe, efficient and accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities help residents to:

- Walk and bike in their daily routines
- Make active living a way of life
- Improve health and reduce chronic disease
- Choose sustainable, low-energy use modes of transportation

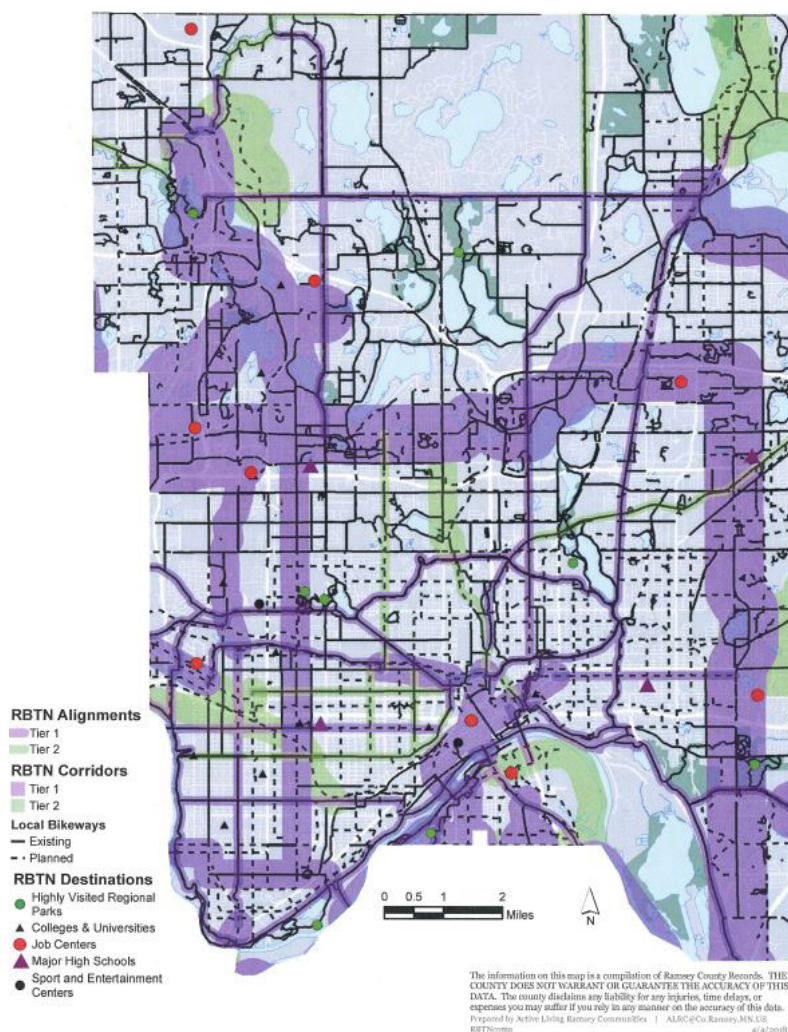
Walking and bicycling can provide community building and recreational benefits. It can reduce isolation and encourage connection. For some older people who are no longer able to engage in high intensity or high impact exercise, walking can be an accessible form of regular physical activity. It is often less expensive than other exercise options. For people who live on fixed incomes, that can be important. Regular activity can affect older peoples' ability to remain mobile, independent and able to care for themselves. It can help prevent chronic disease and other health conditions. In addition to the physical benefits, exercise improves mental health. Older people who are consistently physically active have performed better on tests of reaction, reasoning and memory.⁸

Ramsey County prioritizes safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the transportation network. This work is guided by the Ramsey County Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and the Connected Ramsey Communities Network. The county's Public Works department evaluates pedestrian and cyclist needs on a project-by-project basis, as part of every improvement made to the transportation system. In addition, Ramsey County will continue collaboration with local governments to coordinate bicycle and pedestrian connections, both to neighboring counties and between local communities.

Ramsey County maintains mapping data for county, state, regional, and local pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The county will continue maintaining and updating these maps through the Active Living Ramsey Communities initiative, and will continue coordinating with municipalities and adjacent counties to maintain a comprehensive regional mapping system through MetroGIS.

Ramsey County-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan

Ramsey County municipalities came together to develop a countywide approach to increase biking and walking. The plan empowers the county and local communities with the tools and framework to create local pedestrian and bicycle networks with regional benefits. It includes a set of tools, analyses, and actions to engage communities in creating a place where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can safely and comfortably walk and bike in their daily lives. It provides resources and a guiding framework to develop a network where walking and biking are regular parts of people's lives. The plan incorporates equity principles, tools and performance measures.



⁸ Walking as a way of life. Emily Smith. AmericanTrails.org. Undated.
<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/health/wayoflife.html>

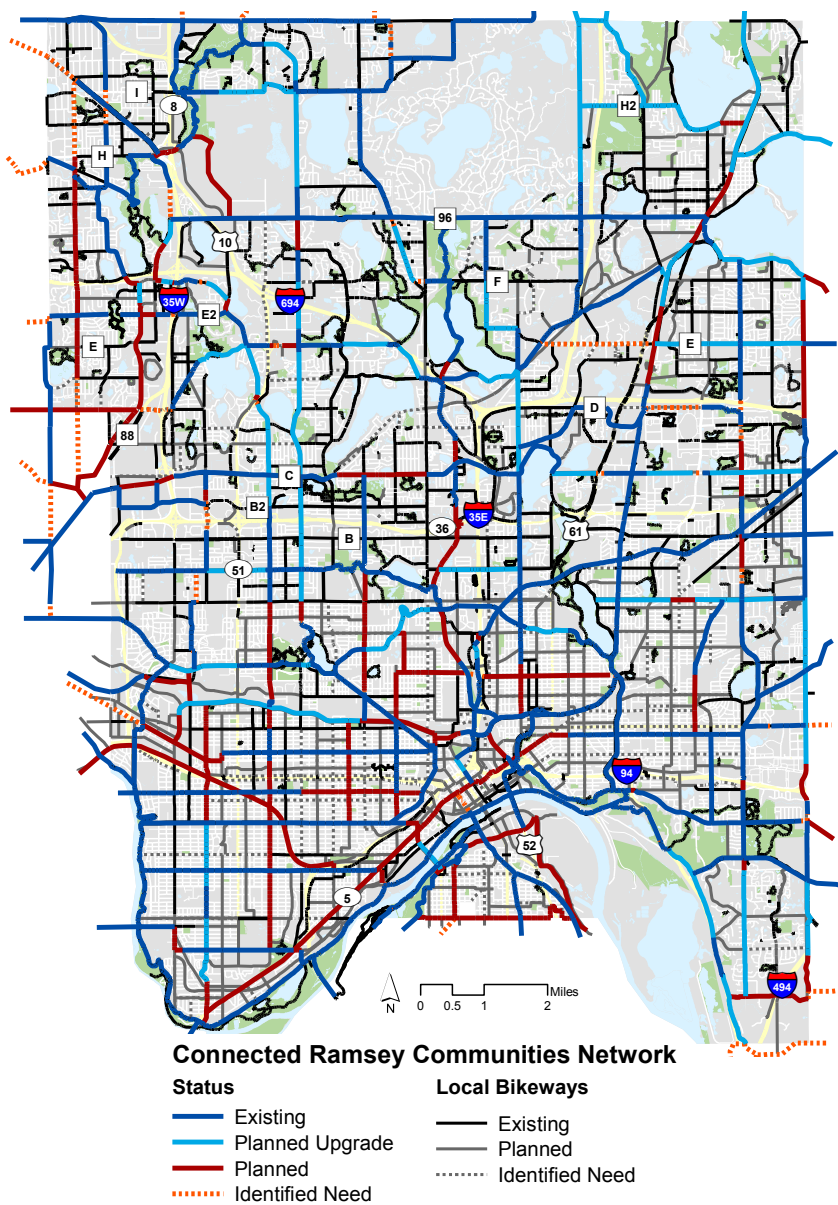
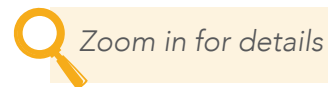
Existing Conditions

Ramsey County has jurisdiction of pedestrian traffic crossing county roads. The inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian features in county projects is guided by the countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, adopted on February 2, 2016. Municipalities also have direct control over bicycle and pedestrian systems, including their maintenance. Each municipality determines its own criteria for the location of sidewalks and trails. The county maintains sidewalks on County bridges. Ramsey County pays for 25% of all bicycle/pedestrian paths and sidewalks adjacent to County roadways when that roadway is either under reconstruction is a component of a Ramsey County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project, or is part of a municipally-led project. The county monitors traffic volumes and accidents providing valuable safety feedback.

Future Expectations

Bicycle/pedestrian facilities will continue to be provided by municipalities, MnDOT, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Mn/DNR), Ramsey County, guided by the countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The following needs to be done to influence the future and change expectations:

- Standards of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the State of Minnesota regarding bicycle/pedestrian criteria should be followed whenever work is performed on the adjacent roadway.
- Ramsey County will assist municipalities in the development of facilities that allow the bicycle to become a viable transportation option, and municipalities should work with the county in the development process to assist with right of way needs for bicycle/pedestrian routes.
- Bicycle/pedestrian trails should be connected at municipal, county, park and state levels in order to form a comprehensive system of safe and convenient trails.



The information on this map is a compilation of Ramsey County Records. THE COUNTY DOES NOT WARRANT OR GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS DATA. The county disclaims any liability for any injuries, time delays, or expenses you may suffer if you rely in any manner on the accuracy of this data.

Connected Ramsey Communities Network 8.0311 12/21/18
Prepared by Active Living Ramsey Communities 12/13/2018
ALRC@Co.Ramsey.MN.US

AVIATION

Airports

The county is home to two airports: Benson’s Airport owned and operated by White Bear Twp., and St. Paul Downtown Airport. The county is also potentially affected by airspace protection related to operations at MSP International Airport.

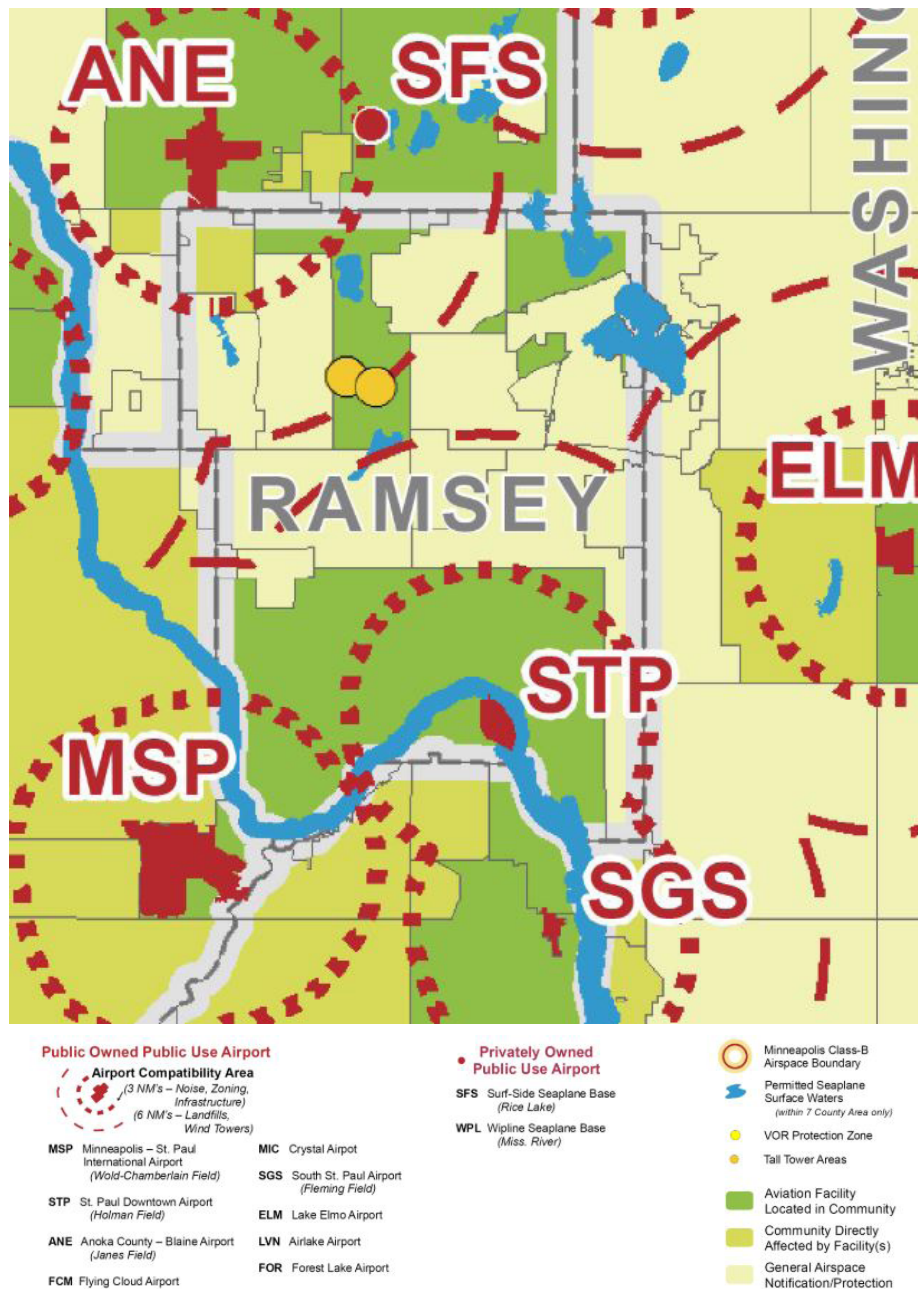
The St. Paul Downtown Airport is classified as an intermediate, primary reliever airport providing service by commuter, air-taxi and corporate aircraft primarily for business flying. Its main service area is within thirty minutes ground travel time of the airport and includes downtown Minneapolis.

The Benson Airport is publicly owned by White Bear Township and operated by the Benson Airport Association. Benson Airport is limited to the public use of small, single-engine propeller aircraft. At this time, the Benson Airport is not included in the regional airport system, due to its license waiver concerning runway length, nor is it in the national plan of integrated airports (NPIAS). The airport is operated as a restricted facility under current state licensing criteria.

The Anoka County-Blaine airport borders Ramsey County along County Road J. This airport is classified as a minor, secondary reliever, and provides service by medium-size, twin-engine aircraft that are used primarily for training, pleasure and business flying. There are plans to expand the services of this airport. The airport’s service area includes most of northern Ramsey County and part of Saint Paul.

Both the St. Paul Downtown and the Anoka County-Blaine airports are designated by the FAA as relievers for the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) and are owned and operated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC).

Located near the southwest corner of Ramsey County, MSP is the major airport for the region. According to the Metropolitan Council, the passenger, aircraft, and air cargo handling capacity at MSP will need to be expanded to meet forecasted needs.



Noise Impacted Community

Part of the County is within the Influence Area of both the St. Paul Downtown Airport and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP), both owned and operated by the MAC. As such, county-owned, regulated or permitted land uses could be affected by planning considerations potentially involving airport zoning, environmental mitigation, airport development and economic impacts, ground access needs, infrastructure requirements and general land use compatibility. At present, a portion of the County is designated a “Noise Impacted Community” by the Metropolitan Council in regards to the St. Paul Downtown Airport.

The noise policy area for St. Paul Downtown Airport reflects the noise exposure map generated in updating of the airport’s long-term comprehensive plan in 2001. The map depicts the noise exposure projected for year 2020 aircraft operations. The MAC has not submitted the plan for council review pending resolution of environmental and funding issues associated with flood protection of the airport. MnDOT Aeronautics Regulations (#14 MCAR 1.3013) designate specific lakes upon which seaplane activity is allowed and what operating conditions may apply. In Ramsey County, these lakes are: Bald Eagle Lake, Long Lake, Turtle Lake, White Bear Lake and Lake Owasso.

County Role

The county has a limited role in airport-related matters. Land use compatibility and associated noise and height restrictions are the responsibility of the MAC, the Metropolitan Council, and affected municipalities.

- ✓ The county will continue to coordinate with municipalities and other government entities regarding any county-planned development or modifications that could impact aviation services, and to monitor increased passenger traffic to MSP to ensure reasonable travel times to the airport for all county residents. The county acknowledges that both Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and MnDOT Aeronautics safety standards, such as protection against potential hazards to air navigation as defined under MN Administrative Rules Chapter 8800.1200 including electronic interference, are to be considered in any planning and/or development within designated areas adjacent to the St. Paul Downtown, Anoka County-Blaine, and MSP International airports. The county also acknowledges federal regulations CFR – Part 77 requiring notification to the FAA regarding proposed construction or alteration of any county-owned, regulated or permitted land uses that could impact aviation services (FAA Form 7460-1).
- ✓ The county should ensure that roads to airport freight terminals address the operational needs of trucks to assure efficient truck access as well as the safety of the traveling public.

FREIGHT

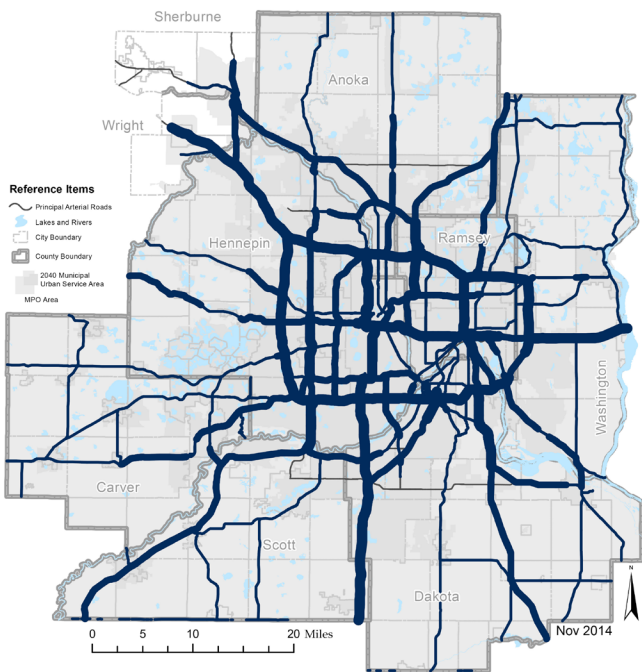
The county road system is important for heavy commercial traffic. Heavy commercial traffic includes trucks used for the transportation of goods and materials to and from commercial and industrial areas in the county. It also includes vehicles such as school buses, fire trucks, and refuse hauling trucks, essential to the well-being of residential areas. Rail and barge capacity also play an important role in the county's freight system. This includes intermodal transfer centers where goods can be moved between air, barge, rail and trucks- like the BNSF St. Paul Midway intermodal hub. The Saint Paul Port Authority manages barge traffic on the Mississippi River.

Establishing truck routes and providing efficient freight commodity movement to state, national and international markets is crucial to the region's economic prosperity. According to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), the principal means of freight movement in the metropolitan area is trucking by common carriers and private truck fleets. Trucking productivity depends on an adequate roadway system and its connections with ports, railroads, and airports. The county vision supports a system that will provide for the efficient movement of goods, protecting the economic vitality of the community.

This issue corresponds with the economic development vision that businesses will be accessible through a comprehensive and integrated transportation system that serves both people and products.

Existing Conditions

Heavy Commercial Vehicle Traffic



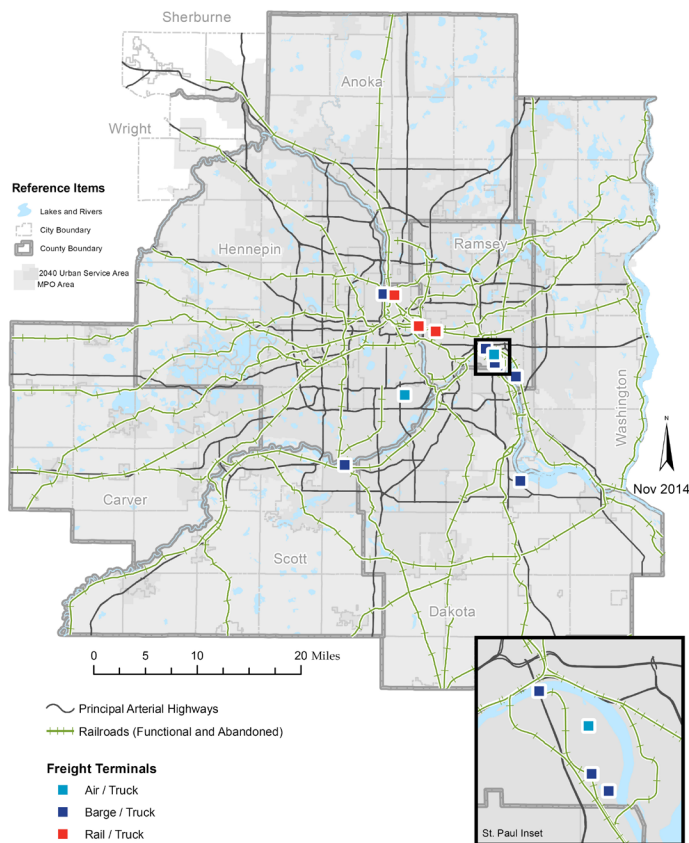
Heavy Commercial Vehicle Average Daily Traffic Volume (2011)

- 5 - 1450
- 1451 - 4650
- 4651 - 12300

2040 TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN | METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
Figure 1-8



Metropolitan Freight System



2040 TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN | METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
Figure 1-6



Zoom in for details

According to the Ramsey County Public Works Pavement Management System Report, nine or ten-ton spring axle load limits apply to approximately 280 miles of County roads and seven tons to 6 miles. Seven-ton road limits are posted by Ramsey County. A goal for the Ramsey County Public Works department is to have nine- or ten-ton capacity on all county roads, thereby removing any spring weight restrictions for trucks. This will also alleviate the need to post roads for seven-ton load limits, thus saving both time and money.

The jobs most beneficial to the region are those resulting in exported products and services. Intermodal transportation is a critical support service for businesses importing/exporting products. In addition, there is pressure to move production facilities as close as possible to the market (i.e. East or West Coast or Chicago). Because of its geographic location, the Twin Cities must provide competitive shipping capability at competitive costs to local businesses.

According to the Metropolitan Council, trucking firms will continue to establish strategic alliances with railroads to move freight intermodally by containers and trailers. Small package handlers will continue to rapidly expand through extension of overseas service. These handlers will extend their service as logistic providers to small businesses. A primary purpose of the interstate highway system is for goods movement. A primary purpose of minor arterials is to move trucks from the principal arterial system. As a system of minor arterials designed to serve short-to-mid range trips at moderate speeds, the county roadway system should accommodate truck traffic, providing a link between trunk highways and local routes.

Future Expectations

Ramsey County will continue to work with municipalities to designate truck routes on minor arterials that provide adequate truck access to intermodal freight terminals, truck terminals, transportation hubs, distribution centers, businesses, and industrial concentrations within Ramsey County. The county and municipalities would remove any existing weight and street restrictions from these truck routes. This coincides with municipal interest in reducing through traffic on local streets.

The county will continue to work with businesses and industries to change delivery times as necessary to restrict truck movement and on-street loading and unloading during peak traffic hours.

County Role

The Ramsey County Public Works Department uses general road inventory information, observed pavement conditions, and field measurements to develop a pavement management system that determines the type of maintenance required, establishes maintenance priorities, and projects the cost of maintenance work. The pavement management system is used to maintain and improve pavements in an organized and cost-effective manner.

- ✓ The county will use the findings of the Metropolitan Council's Regional Truck Highway Corridor Study, approved on May 17, 2017, to guide programming decisions affecting freight travel on county routes.
- ✓ The county will continue to notify common carriers and private truck fleets of impending construction, and work with those companies and the municipalities in developing temporary alternative truck routes.
- ✓ The county will continue to review the county roadway system for sufficient pavement strength and adequate vertical clearance on all county roads.
- ✓ The county will continue to work with municipalities in reviewing pavement strength and vertical clearance for those local streets which provide a link between county roadways and truck destinations.