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# Transit 2020

## Master Plan



*Part 1*  
*Executive*  
*Summary*

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pt. 1

► **Mission**

The mission of the Metropolitan Council is to improve regional competitiveness in the global economy so that this is one of the best places to live, work, raise a family and grow a business.

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# Metropolitan Council

*Improve regional competitiveness in a global economy*

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February 1, 2000

Publication no. 35-00-003A

Printed on recycled paper with at least 20% post-consumer waste

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## Regional Transit Goal

A regional transit system for the Twin Cities metropolitan area by 2020 that:

- Doubles the capacity of the bus system, the backbone of the transit system.
- Includes a network of dedicated transit corridors.
- Fosters more efficient use of land and public infrastructure – otherwise known as "Smart Growth."
- The 2020 transit system will be capable of carrying twice the current number of rides, providing high-quality, easy-to-use service.
- This is the equivalent of capturing 10% of the travel-demand growth in the region over the next 20 years.

Growing congestion has the potential of curbing the Twin Cities' economic vitality. New transit initiatives can keep the metro area moving and competitive.

- New technologies, special transitways, faster express service, more routes, new buses and customer incentives will combine to provide superior transit service to more people.

## Elements of Transit



## Benefits

Savings in local roads and utilities are estimated at \$2 billion.

- \$1.48 billion would be saved because of reduced needs for water lines, sewer lines and storm water facilities for concentrated development along transit corridors.
- \$538 million in savings would result from reduced needs for local roads because of more compact development patterns.

The savings in congestion costs would total \$2 billion.

- More compact development patterns along transit corridors with enhanced transit services would slow the growth in vehicle-miles traveled and congestion on roadways by at least 10%.
- It would cost an estimated \$1 billion to build highway improvements to relieve congestion in the 6 proposed major transit corridors.

Travel, fuel consumption and pollution would be reduced.

- 245,000 daily auto trips would be eliminated through expanded transit service and changes in development densities along transit corridors.
- 550 million miles in travel per year would be cut, saving 27 million gallons of fuel, and eliminating 6,600 tons of carbon monoxide.
- Higher development densities along transit corridors would reduce auto trips per person by an estimated 30% and produce 100% more transit trips.
- If just 10% of the households the region gains between 2000 and 2020 develop at higher densities, it would result in an estimated 45,000 fewer daily auto trips and 17,000 more transit trips.

Affordable housing would increase and land consumption would slow.

- 7,500 additional affordable housing units would be built in transit corridors by 2020.
- 110,500 acres (173 square miles) of rural land would be saved through more compact development patterns along transit corridors.

# The Need For Transit

## ▶ Highway congestion is now a top Twin Cities concern.

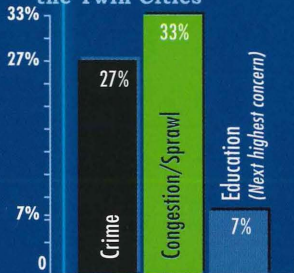
- Congestion and urban sprawl are now the top metro concern (33% combined), edging out crime (27%).

*Metro State University  
1999 Civic Confidence Survey*

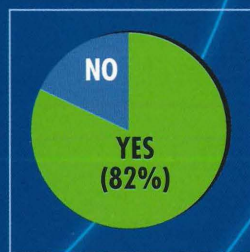
- 82% of Twin Cities area residents think traffic congestion has increased in the last year.

*1998 Twin Cities Area Survey*

Q: Chief Problem Facing the Twin Cities



Q: Has Congestion Increased This Year ?



## ▶ Twin Citizens believe the region needs a strong transit system.

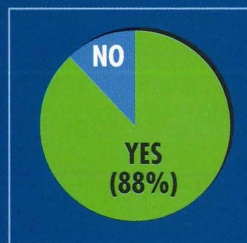
- 88% of residents believe a more balanced investment approach that boosts transit use is somewhat or very important to the region's quality of life.

*1998 Twin Cities Area Survey*

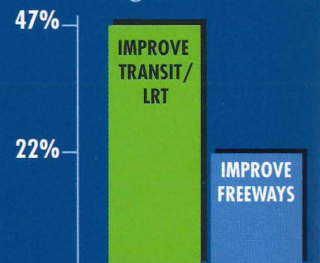
- More than 47% of Twin Citizens prefer adding light rail and improving the bus system compared with 22% who would add and improve freeways to deal with congestion.

*1998 Twin Cities Area Survey*

Q: Balanced Investment Approach?



Q: How to Deal with Congestion?



## ▶ Reactions



"I'm all in favor of anything besides widening roads or making new roads. We've been doing that for 30 years. You can widen a road and soon it fills to capacity."

*– Michael Steiner, engineer at LSI Logic*



"I did a detailed analysis of whether I should commute by car or by bus, and it came out strongly for the bus – from a time-management and financial point of view. You get the bus, the service, and you eliminate the traffic problem and pollution. A good transit system is a strong selling point for a community."

*– Hilke Riechardt-Martinez  
senior financial analyst at Ecolab*

# The Need for Transit

▶ **Transit will help keep the region mobile and economically competitive as growth continues.**

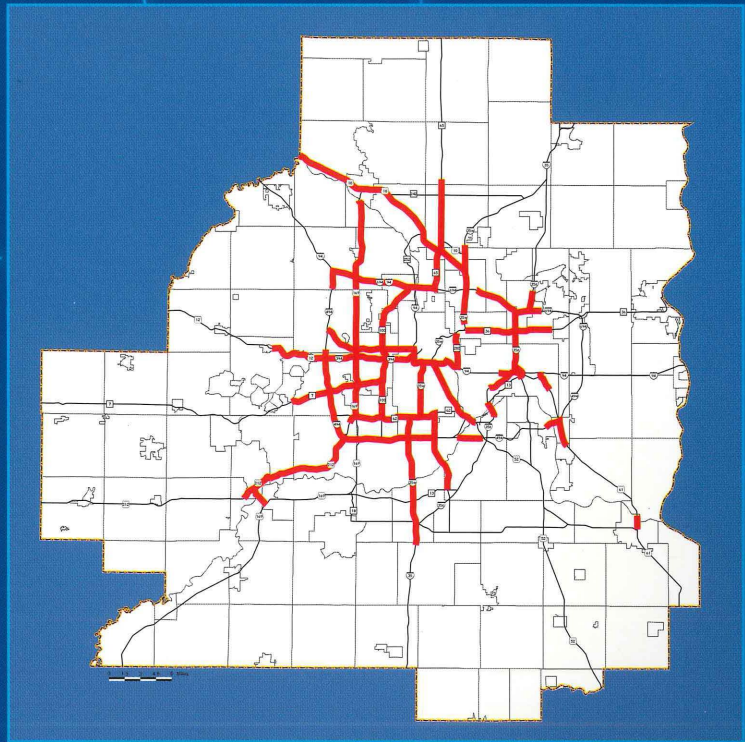
- 500,000 more people will live here between 2000 and 2020, but only 25 additional miles of new freeways will be built. The result: The number of miles of severely congested highways will more than double by 2020.

*Metro Council*

- It would cost \$15 billion in highway facilities through 2020 to meet unrestrained mobility needs. That translates into an additional \$630 a year per household for 20 years.

*Mn/DOT dollar total, Council Budget Office calculation*

## 1995 Peak Congested Corridors



## ▶ Congested Highway Mileage Will Double

### 1970 - 1995

575,000 metro area residents  
+ 200 miles of freeway built =

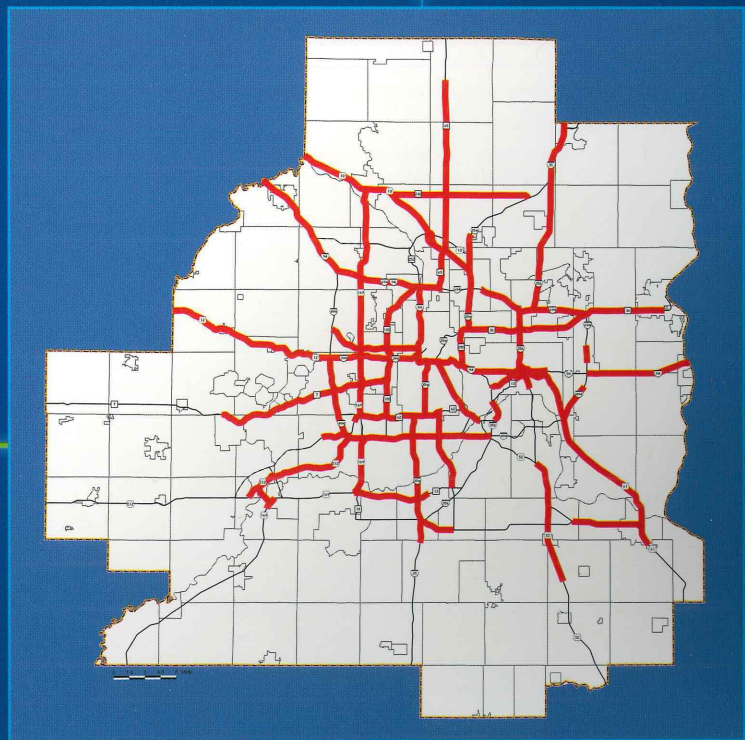
100 miles of congested freeway

### 1995 - 2020

650,000 metro area residents  
+ 25 miles of freeway built =

210 miles of congested freeway

## 2020 Peak Congested Corridors



# Transit Solutions

► **Metro Transit and other transit providers are positioned to meet the challenge.**

- Metro Transit successfully produced the biggest ridership turnaround in 20 years with a combination of expanding service, forging transit-promotion partnerships with business, liberalizing its transfer policy and launching a media campaign.
- Metro Transit's productivity is top-rated, as independent studies show –

"Metro Transit's service effectiveness improved 7.0% between 1996 and 1998 from 36.6 to 39.1 passengers per revenue hour. This increase in service effectiveness was better than the 1.1% increase in the average passengers per revenue hour for the peer group."

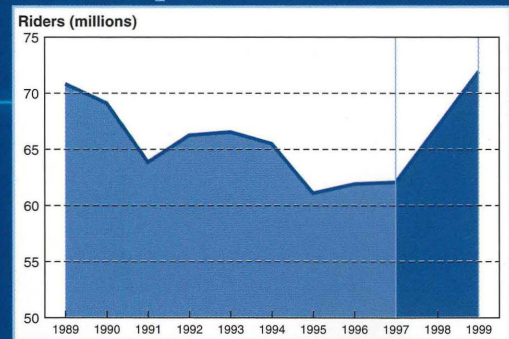
– 1999 Metropolitan Council Transit Performance Audit, conducted by SRF Consulting Group, Inc., and McCollom Management Consulting, Inc.

"Transit ridership in the Twin Cities ranks fairly high considering the area's relatively low population density, as well as several other factors that make the area automobile-friendly." (Metro Transit ranked 3rd highest in riders per capita for non-rail metro areas.)

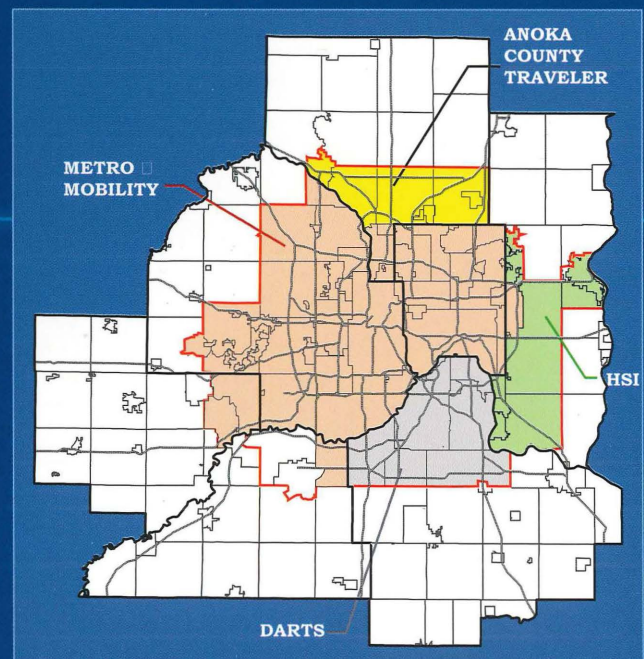
– Transit Services: A Program Evaluation Report, February 1998 conducted by Legislative Auditor

- The suburban transit providers (opt-outs) offer express and local transit service in a number of suburban cities. From modest beginnings, they have evolved into major transit providers.
- Small urban systems operate in smaller cities and areas. These include Hastings, Hopkins, Northeast Suburban Transportation, St. Louis Park and Lake Area Bus.

## Ridership Trends



## Transit Services for People with Disabilities

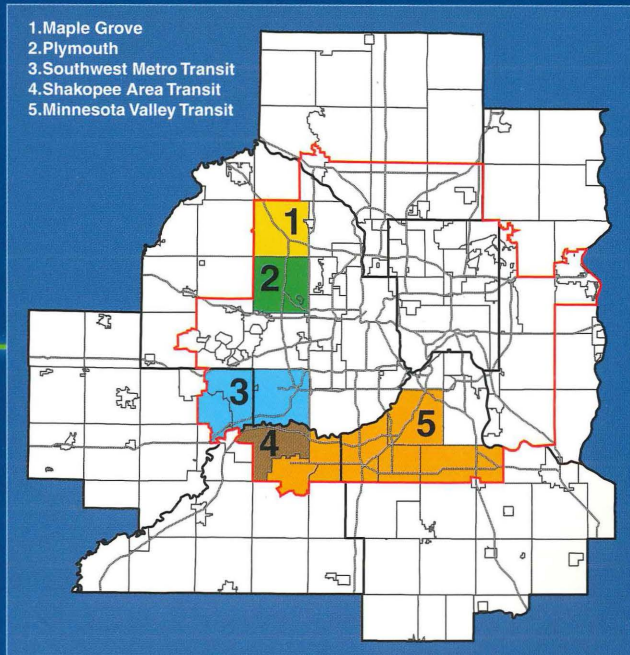


# Transit Solutions

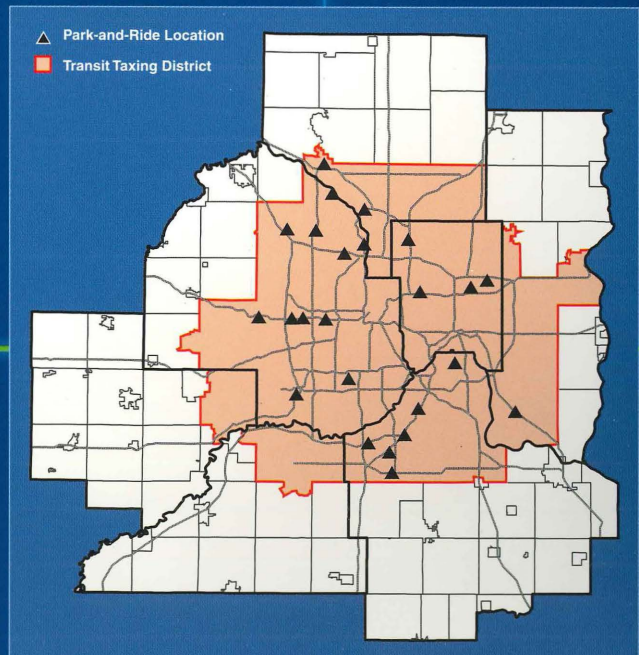
► **Transit is already a key player in the region's transportation system. Transit services of the future will draw on what's proven to work and innovations to improve service.**

- Metro Transit service reaches a wide service area, providing 245,000 rides daily and 72 million annually.
- Opt-out services – provided by Maple Grove Transit, Minnesota Valley Transit, Plymouth Transit, Shakopee and Southwest Metro – are attracting a growing number of customers.
- Metro Mobility and transit providers in Anoka, Washington and Dakota Counties provide door-through-door service for people with disabilities under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Small urban and rural paratransit services provide conventional, dial-a-ride and door-to-door service in 16 small communities.
- The number of registered carpools has risen to nearly 6,000, reducing vehicle miles traveled by 4.5 million since 1996.

Opt-Out Transit Systems



Key Park-and-Ride Locations



# Transit Solutions

▶ **Transit is good for business and employees.**

- Employers see transit as an asset to their companies and employees. They're finding that transit can help them recruit and retain employees in this economy's tight labor market.
- At the end of July 1999, more than 500 companies were enrolled in a key incentive program – TransitWorks – almost double the number one year before.
- More than 15,000 employees use Metropass – another key incentive program – to get to work. Businesses participating in Metropass realize on average a 40% increase in employee transit ridership, high program satisfaction and an improved reputation as an employer.
- Downtown Minneapolis employers rank transportation and transit as the second most important issue impacting their business's success.

*Minneapolis Downtown Council*

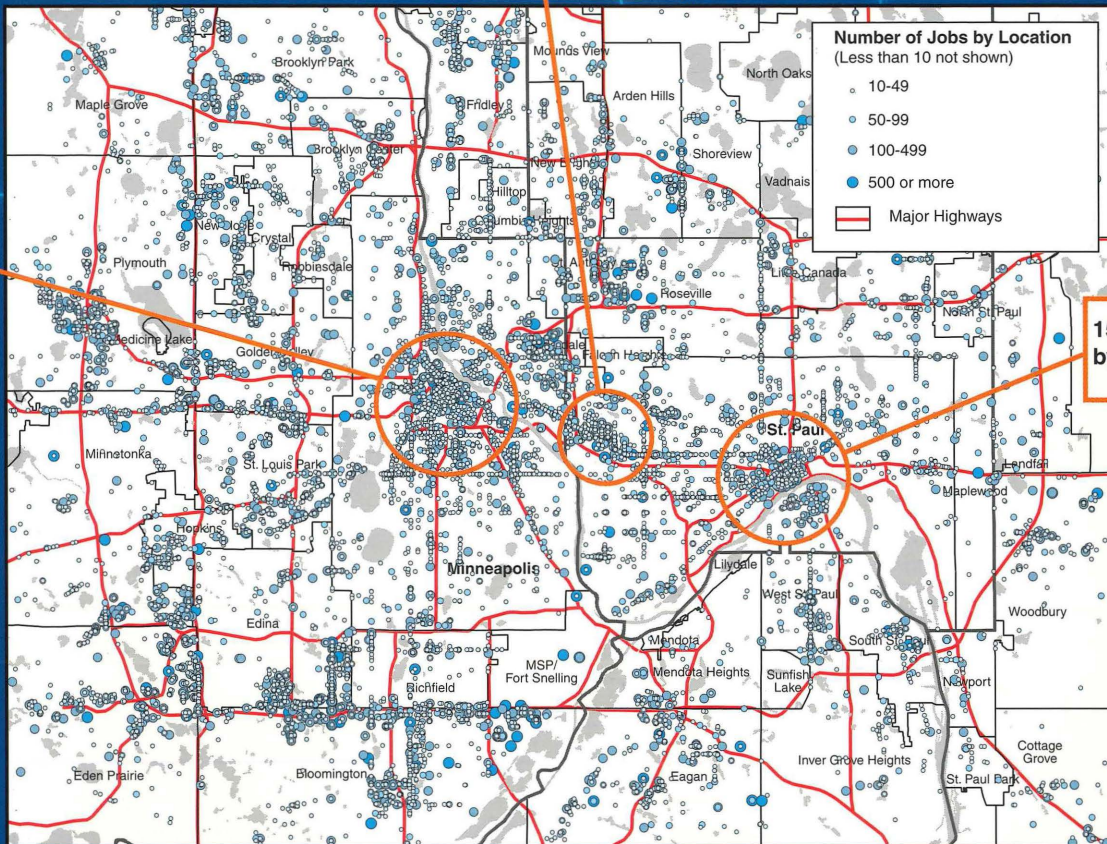
- Transit provides 34% and 15% of all commuting trips to downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul, respectively, the largest single job centers in the region.



## Job Concentrations

13% of Commutes by Transit

34% of Commutes by Transit



15% of Commutes by Transit

## Reactions



“Transit is crucial to our ability to operate business downtown, and Metropass is a truly fabulous program. TCF knew it would be well received, but we’re extremely pleased at the overwhelming positive response from our employees. We saw our employee transit use rise between 25% and 30%. We use Metropass as a recruiting and retention tool.”

– Barbara Shaw, senior vice president and director of Human Resources at TCF National Bank, downtown Minneapolis



“Downtown Saint Paul is experiencing dramatic growth. We need an effective transit system. Otherwise, we’ll be putting limits on our growth and vitality.”

– John Labosky, president, Capital City Partnership

► **Transit will support Smart Growth development strategies.**

- The Twin Cities area is growing rapidly, and transit can help local communities shape new development and redevelopment using Smart Growth principles.
- The goals of Smart Growth are to:
  - Maximize economic opportunity for all while protecting and enhancing the region's assets – healthy communities, clean air and water, and unique natural, cultural and historical areas.
  - Manage natural resources and agricultural land to ensure they are sustained for future generations.
  - Be fiscally prudent by keeping public costs down.
- Transit's support of Smart Growth initiatives will foster more efficient use of land, lower public facility costs, improve air quality and protect open space and agricultural land.



- ▶ **Transit in 2020 will be an easy-to-use, linked system that meets diverse customer needs in a fiscally responsible way and supports Smart Growth development.**

**Transit service will be tailored for different needs and integrated into a smooth-working system.**

- Super Commute service – congestion-free, high-speed, high-quality express service on exclusive right-of-way to downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis, U of M, the airport, Mall of America and other major activity centers. Freeway express buses will not operate in mixed traffic.
- Continually improved local service – clean buses, more frequent service, more routes, and longer service hours for daily commuting, shopping, recreation and personal business. The local bus system will still be the foundation of the transit system.
- Suburb-to-suburb service with hub-and-spoke operations – quick, direct trips without going downtown. Transit centers will be a focus for suburban circulators and suburb-to-suburb services.
- A system serving people with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Expanded transit advantages, such as high-occupancy vehicle bypasses at all freeway ramps to promote bus use and car pooling.



▶ **The bus system will remain the foundation of future transit services.**

- Service will be greatly expanded and reorganized to better meet customer needs and promote more efficient use of land public facilities along Smart Growth principles. The Metro Transit vehicle fleet and related public and support facilities – including garages, transit stations and park-and-rides – will be doubled.
- Local routes will benefit from increased frequency, greater coverage and restructuring using a grid-style network, rather than the current radial pattern oriented to the downtowns.
- "Arterial corridors" – selected high-traffic urban and suburban streets – would receive the highest level of local bus service – very frequent, 7-day, up-to-24-hour service, with highly visible facilities at major stops. (See map on page 12.)

▶ **A network of dedicated transit corridors will be developed.**

- These transitways – consisting of bus-only shoulders, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, exclusive busways, LRT and commuter rail – will provide a transit-time advantage over single-occupant autos, improve transit service reliability and boost the potential for transit-oriented development. (See maps on pages 13, 14, and 15.)
- By 2010, these transitways would include 2 exclusive busways to Minneapolis and Saint Paul, 2 LRT lines (Hiawatha and a second line to downtown Saint Paul), and at least one commuter rail line coming from outside the region.
- In addition, the current network of bus-only shoulders would be significantly expanded in congested highway corridors and upgraded to improved standards, including wider lanes. Supporting these corridors would be extensive park-and-ride facilities, ramp meter bypasses and transfer points.

- ▶ **Smart Growth development will be fostered along dedicated transit corridors.**
  - Linked to high-quality transit service, Smart Growth development will include a mix of housing, retail, offices and open space in a pedestrian-friendly environment.
  - Transit and Smart Growth will strengthen the region's economic competitiveness by maintaining mobility within the area, which is crucial for commuter travel and goods movement. It will give people more choices in the way they travel around the region and the types of communities and neighborhoods in which to live.
- ▶ **Other bus services will be expanded.**
  - These services include the suburban opt-out systems, Metro Mobility and the small urban-rural systems, along with related support facilities.

## Tool Kit for Future Mobility

Exclusive Busways



Commuter Rail



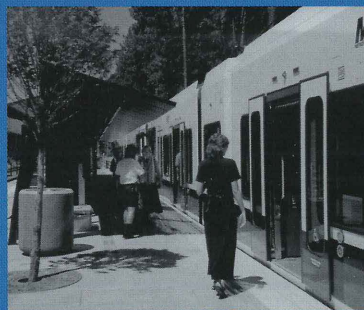
Transit Stations



Local and Express Bus Service



Light Rail Transit



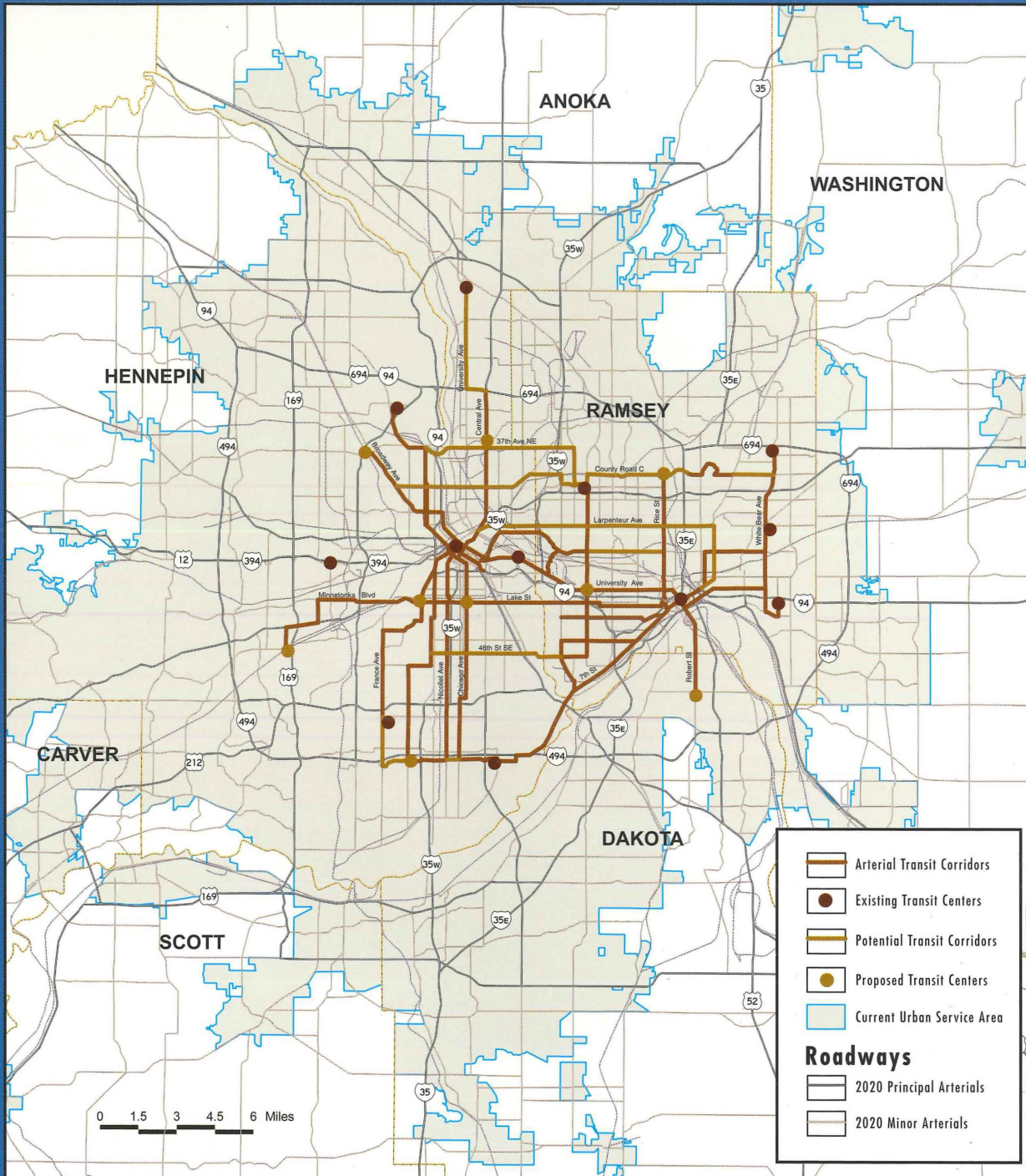
Park-and-Rides



# Transit Corridors

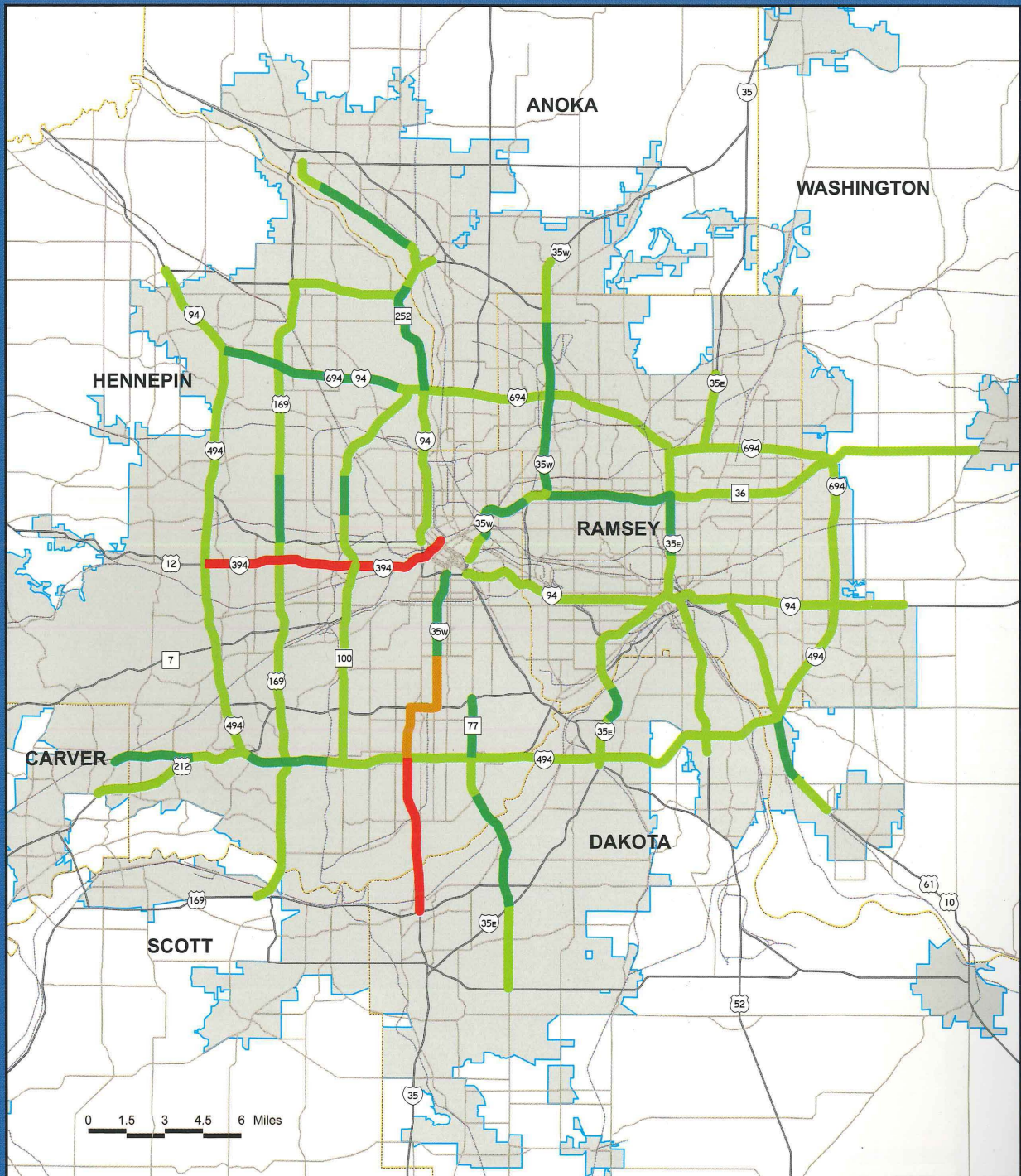
## Arterial Transit Corridors

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area





## Existing and Proposed Freeway Transit Corridors

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area





### Existing

-  Bus-Only Shoulders
-  HOV Lanes

### Proposed

-  Bus-Only Shoulders
-  HOV Lanes

### Roadways

-  2020 Principal Arterials
-  2020 Minor Arterials

-  Current Urban Service Area

# Transit Corridors

## Transitways on Dedicated Rights-of-Way 2010 Plan

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area



### 2010 Plan



LRT



LRT Alternatives\*



Commuter Rail



Busway Alternatives\*\*

### Roadways



2020 Principal Arterials



2020 Minor Arterials



Current Urban Services Area

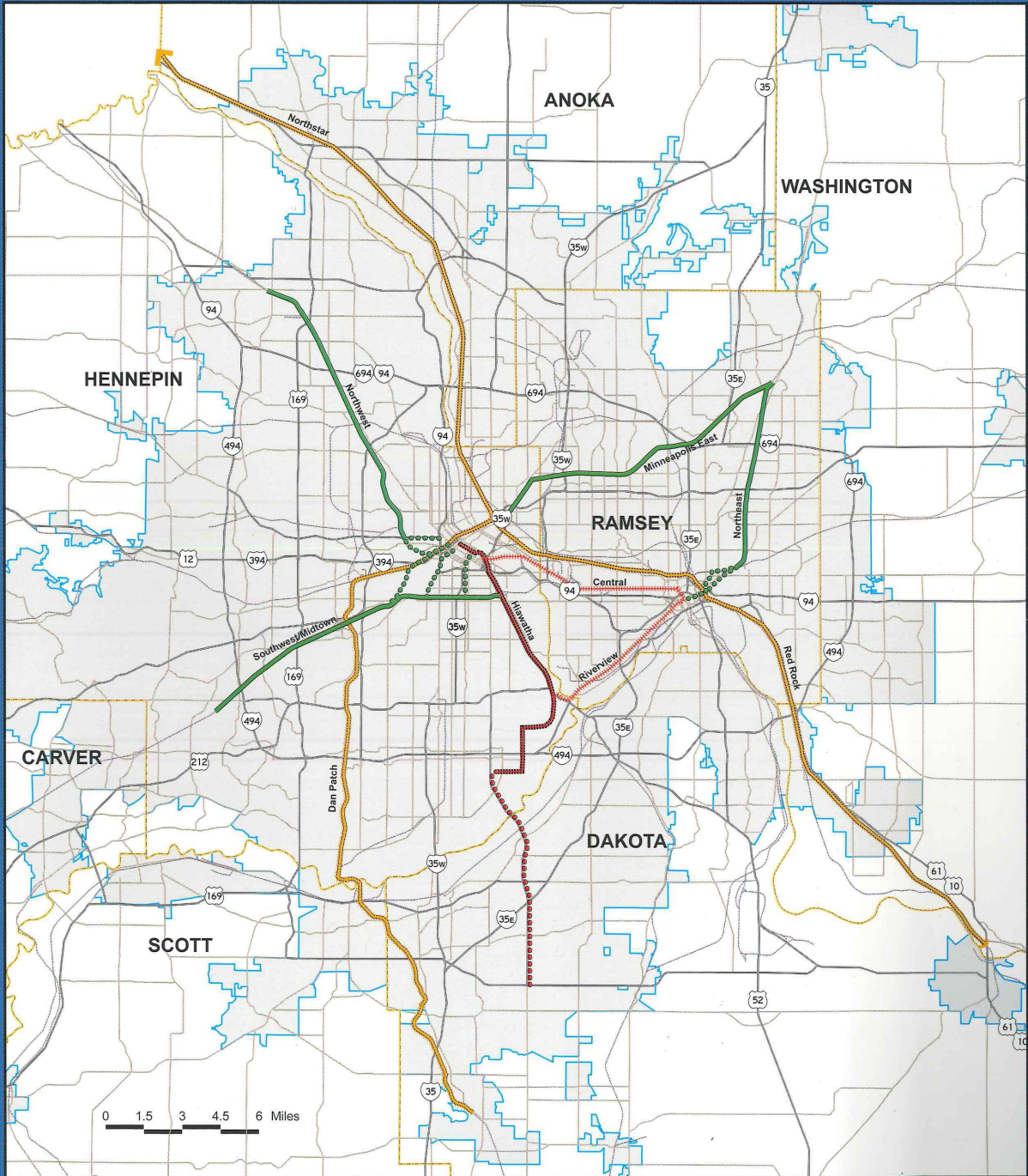
\*One of these two alternatives will be built by 2010.

\*\*Two of these three alternatives will be built by 2010.



## Transitways on Dedicated Rights-of-Way 2020 Plan

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area



### 2020 Plan

- |        |  |                         |
|--------|--|-------------------------|
| LRT    | LRT Alternatives*                      | Commuter Rail           |
| Busway | Downtown Busway Connector Alternatives | Potential LRT Extension |

### Roadways

- |                            |
|----------------------------|
| 2020 Principal Arterials   |
| 2020 Minor Arterials       |
| Current Urban Service Area |

\* One of these two LRT Alternatives will be built by 2010. Bus transit improvements will be implemented in corridor not selected for LRT.

# Next Steps

## ▶ Transit improvements will be concentrated in the next 10 years.

- The lower-investment corridors will be constructed early on (2000–2005) to produce the greatest possible benefits as quickly as possible. This will involve enhancing service along major urban/suburban arterial streets, providing bus lanes along major highways, expanding park-and-ride capacity, developing transfer points, and expanding and enhancing high-occupancy vehicle lanes.
- The bus fleet, garages and support facilities will be doubled, and bus service improved year by year so that, by 2020, the system can carry twice the ridership it does today.
- Investments for transitways will be concentrated in the next 10 years (LRT and busways) to create a critical mass of transit facilities necessary to relieve and bypass highly congested highway segments. This strategy calls for constructing two dedicated busways, an LRT connection to downtown Saint Paul, and at least one commuter rail line.
- The non-transitway corridors could be upgraded to busways or busways to LRT after 2010, as appropriate, based on updated ridership forecasts and current travel demand.

## ▶ Costs of the 2010 Plan

Costs have been calculated only for the 2000-2010 portion of the plan because longer-range cost estimates of transit investments are highly uncertain.

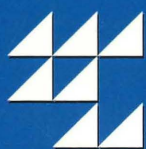
**Bus System.** A total of \$440 million by 2010 is estimated to be the capital cost of expanding the bus system capacity sufficiently to double its size by 2020, with additional operating costs by 2010 of \$70 million per year. The total includes the cost of new buses, new garages and new public facilities (such as park-and-rides and transit stations), services provided by opt-out transit authorities and private contractors, and operations provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Busways.** Two dedicated busways would cost a total of \$220 million for capital facilities; 2010 operating costs for two busways would be \$12 million.

**Light Rail Transit.** Two LRT lines would be operating by 2010, with the Hiawatha Line assumed to be fully funded. The cost of a second line would be about \$500 million. By 2010, operating costs for two lines would be about \$24 million per year.

**Commuter Rail.** Two commuter rail lines are expected to cost a total of \$439 million, with annual operating costs of \$14.4 million by 2010.

**Bus-Only Shoulders.** These will cost \$104 million to construct but do not require any operating costs beyond those already identified for the expansion of the bus system.



**Metropolitan Council**

*Improve regional competitiveness in a global economy*