

Increase Use of Downtown Alternative Transportation

Getting around using transportation other than driving is good for our hearts, lungs and pocketbooks. Today in Minneapolis, alternative transportation can mean anything from light-rail and bus transit to bicycling and walking. The City plays an important role in making transit affordable and convenient, promoting its use and creating dynamic urban corridors that are safe and convenient for pedestrians and bicyclists.

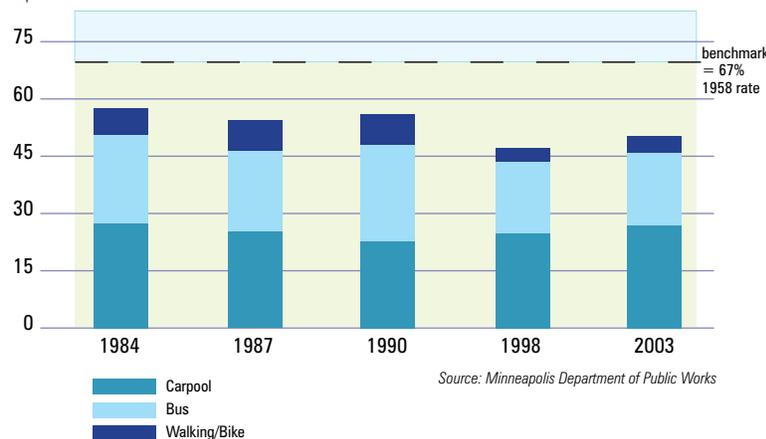
Target

Increase the percentage of people who enter downtown via alternative transportation (bus, light-rail, bicycle, walking, car pool) to 67 percent by 2013.

Trend Analysis

The Hiawatha light-rail line began service in 2004 and has higher-than-projected ridership. In 2006, light-rail ridership grew 19 percent and system-wide bus ridership grew 4 percent, resulting in Metro Transit's highest annual ridership since 1984. Because the last comprehensive count of downtown transportation use was conducted in 2003 (see chart), the total number of people carpooling, biking or walking is unknown, but public transit use downtown has increased.

People traveling downtown by car pool, bus, bike or walking in percent



In 2006, ridership on the Hiawatha light-rail line grew 19 percent over 2005, providing 9.4 million rides.¹

Recent City and Community Activities

- Began developing a new downtown Transportation Action Plan in partnership with Metro Transit, Hennepin County, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the downtown business community and downtown neighborhoods. www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan

Elements of the proposed plan include:

- o Consolidating bus service onto priority streets.
 - o Reducing bus congestion and converting to all-hybrid buses on Nicollet Mall.
 - o Expanding and completing bike routes and bike racks.
 - o Improving sidewalks.
 - o Converting selected one-way streets to two-way streets.
- Rezoned a large portion of downtown to support higher density housing and mixed uses along the Hiawatha light-rail corridor. www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/Irtrezoning/tod-haiwatha.asp
 - Advocated at the state Legislature. Priorities included the North Star Commuter Rail Corridor connecting northern suburbs with downtown, the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit connecting Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Interstate 35W and Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit facilities, and dedicated funding for transit.
 - Offered Metro Pass, the pre-tax bus and light-rail farecard, to City employees. Since the end of 2004, the number of participating employees has increased 42 percent to 344.
 - Provided transit passes instead of parking vouchers for Planning Commission members.
 - See related activities in Bike Lanes, Global Warming and Air Quality.

¹ Metro Transit ridership numbers for the Hiawatha light-rail line.

Web Links & Resources

Metro Transit www.metrotransit.org