

The City was in the process of developing a comprehensive set of policies and procedures related to street lighting, including handling requests, establishing standards, and funding and maintenance. Residents of the City of Minneapolis became more interested in the installation of pedestrian level lighting around their neighborhoods as concern over security and aesthetics became more focused on conditions on neighborhood streets after nightfall. Installation of the pedestrian level light standard occurred last year on Bank St (28 lights), Logan Park (60), Nicollet Avenue (50).

Parking In Downtown

The municipal parking system grew to 25,864 spaces in 22 ramps and eight surface lots last year. Despite this growth, use of the system declined. The aggregate public investment in the downtown parking system was about \$443,930,000. The most recent State audit of the parking system indicated that in 2002, Total Operating Revenues for the Municipal Parking Enterprise Fund were \$54,116,340 while Total Operating Expenses were \$40,713,197

A survey last year indicated that the total off-street parking supply, including privately owned ramps and lots, was 58,698 spaces. This total did not include the 4,500 plus on-street parking meters. Last year, rules for use of these spaces by handicapped persons were made more restrictive. Drivers could now only park free at one, two, and four-hour meters for a maximum of four hours. To replace the loss of all-day free parking at meetings, the City now offers a 50% reduction in the regular monthly rate for persons with disability permits.

Newly opened City ramps and planned facilities include:

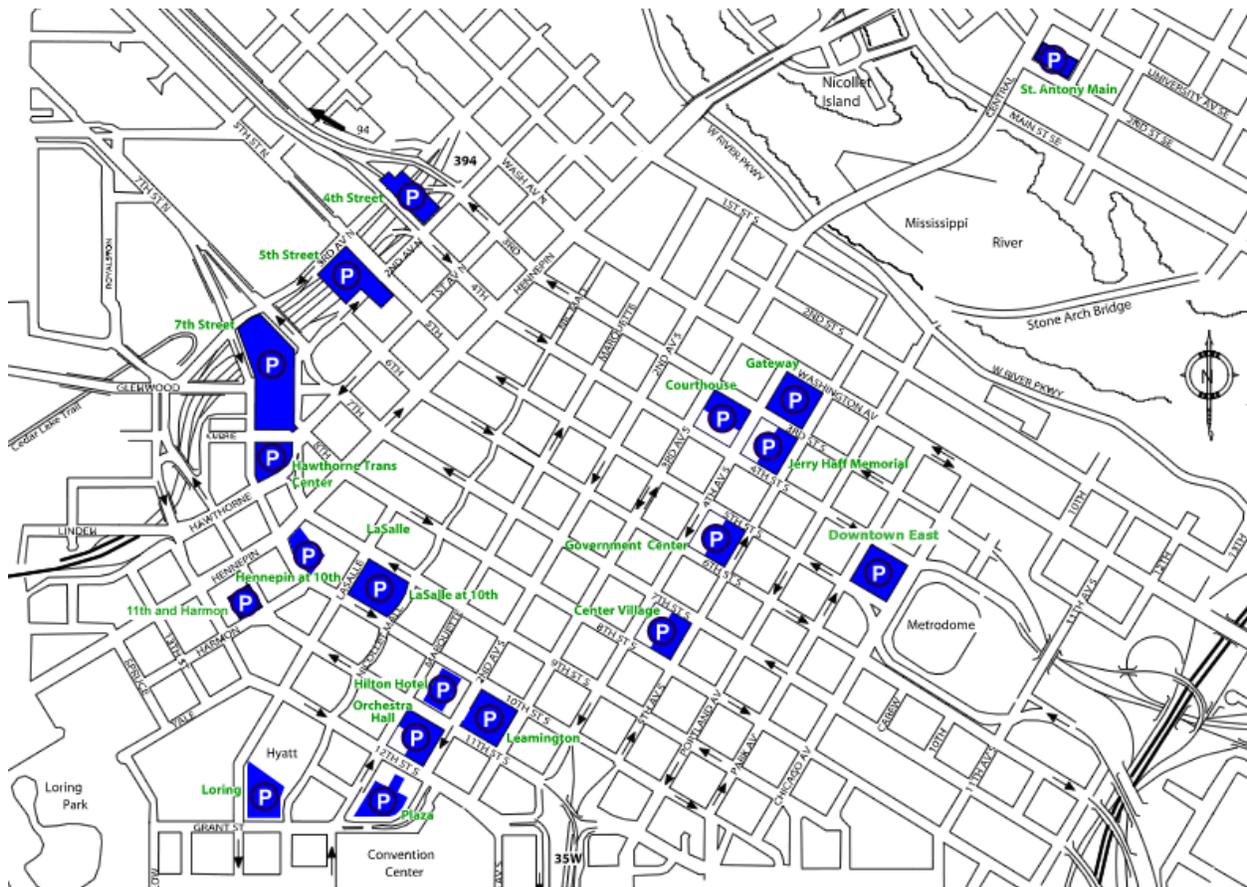
- Downtown East Municipal Ramp: 450 spaces.
- 11th & Harmon Municipal Ramp: 600 spaces.
- Vineland Place Municipal Ramp: 675 spaces.
- Guthrie Theatre Municipal Ramp (opening 2006): 1000 spaces.

**Average Daily Use of Downtown
Municipally-Owned Parking Spaces
2003**

User Type	%	# Cars Parked/Day
Hourly/Daily	46.0	12,068
Monthly	35.5	9,315
Carpool/Vanpool	6.1	1,601
Validation	2.1	551
Event	10.3	2,703
Total	100.0	26,238
Total Cars Parked in 2003		6,821,883

Source: Public Works Transportation and Parking Services Division

Minneapolis Parking Facilities



Critical Parking Areas

The City was allowed to officially designate certain areas as Critical Parking Areas, with on-street parking limited to a number of hours during certain periods of the day. In exchange for a small fee and a parking permit sticker, residents were allowed to use on-street parking without restriction. These Critical Parking Areas were established by the Transportation and Parking Services Division, and enforced by the Traffic Control Section of Licenses and Consumer Services. The [Critical Parking Areas Map](#) indicates the locations of the 24 Critical Parking Areas throughout the City. No additional areas were designated in 2003.

Transit Facility Improvements

A number of improvements related to bus transit were implemented or began implementation in 2003. Park-and-ride lots, as well as bus-only freeway shoulder lanes which served downtown Minneapolis, were also opened. In 2003 Metro Transit added 92 new buses to its fleet. Metro Transit capital improvements related to Minneapolis service are identified below:

- Exclusive bus-only entrance from the Foley Park-and-Ride in Coon Rapids into southbound Hwy. 610, saving express buses about three minutes on trip to downtown Minneapolis;
- 400-car park and ride lot along Highway 61 in Cottage Grove, with express service to downtown Minneapolis;
- Land was purchased for a new 400-car park and ride lot next to Maplewood Mall to be constructed in 2004, with express service to downtown Minneapolis; and
- Construction began in 2003 on a new 85-car park and ride at 99th & Aldrich in Bloomington. When opened in 2004, it will have non-stop express service to downtown Minneapolis.

Exclusive Bus Shoulder Lanes

In 2003, 11 miles of exclusive bus shoulder lanes were implemented for express bus routes serving downtown Minneapolis. The locations are:

- Westbound I-94 from Dowling Avenue in Minneapolis to I-694 in Brooklyn Center
- Northbound Hwy. 77 from 138th Street in Apple Valley to I-35E in Eagan
- Northbound Hwy. 77 from Old Shakopee Road in Bloomington to 74th Street in Richfield
- Southbound Hwy. 77 from I-494 to Old Shakopee Road in Bloomington.
- Southbound Hwy. 77 from Hwy. 13 to I-35E in Eagan

Transit Service and Ridership

Ridership on Metro Transit decreased in 2003 due to a combination of service reductions, a fare increase, and the lasting effects of the economic slowdown.

Metro Transit Average Daily Ridership 1999 to 2002.

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
1999	237731	127562	80306
2000	242582	130035	80875
2001	243392	126472	81144
2002	230341	120293	77050
2003	217588	110222	67137

Source: Metro Transit

Route and Service Changes

Due to a tight financial situation, Metro Transit reduced service on a large number of routes system wide, including many serving Minneapolis. Metro Transit continued its Sector 5 planning to restructure and improve bus service in south Minneapolis, Richfield and Bloomington. Service changes will be spread over 2004, including major route realignments to feed the Hiawatha LRT line.

The Hiawatha Corridor

In 2003, Light Rail Transit in the Hiawatha Corridor neared completion for the portion of the line between the Fort Snelling and Downtown Minneapolis. Stations were completed, the first vehicles were delivered, and on-track testing of vehicles began. Service will begin in Spring 2004.

Northstar Commuter Rail

The Northstar Corridor is an 82-mile stretch along Highways 10 and 47 from St. Cloud to Minneapolis. Preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for a commuter rail project was completed in 2002. In 2003, a new cost-benefit analysis indicated that a shorter line, from Big Lake to Downtown Minneapolis, and the removal of two planned stations (Northeast Minneapolis and Foley Boulevard in Coon Rapids) would result in a more cost-effective project. As a result of this analysis and revised project scope, Governor Pawlenty indicated support by allocating funds in his proposed bonding bill.

Northwest Corridor

Hennepin County and Metro Transit developed plans for the reconstruction of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 81 from Lowry Avenue in Robbinsdale to Trunk Highway 169 in Brooklyn Park. The project will include Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) which will operate either in separate lanes or in mixed traffic. Where operated in mixed-traffic, special "queue jumps" will give buses an advantage at station stops. Service will operate along twenty-two miles of CSAH 81, and include both the use of 394 bus lanes as well as Lowry and Broadway Avenues in North Minneapolis.

In 2002, the State legislature authorized \$20 million in bonding for this BRT project, with additional funds coming from Metro Transit (\$15 million) and the Federal government (\$5.75 million). Funds have yet to be allocated and Metro Transit and Hennepin County have stated that if \$20 million in State bonding is made available in 2004, they will be able to complete the project's first phase in 2008.

Central Corridor

The 11-mile Central Corridor, along University Avenue and connecting the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul as well as the University of Minnesota, was the only LRT-specified corridor other than Hiawatha in the Transit 2025 Plan. In 2003, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was completed for the prospective project and was released for public review. It is currently being reviewed by the FTA, and public hearing dates have yet to be determined.

Downtown Transportation Management

The Downtown Minneapolis Transportation Management Organization (TMO), a non-profit, was a partnership between the City of Minneapolis and the downtown business community. The TMO worked with employers to promote alternative commuting options, as well as advising the Minneapolis City Council, the Downtown Council of Minneapolis, and the private sector on key transportation concerns.

The TMO operated Commuter Connection, a one-stop transportation resource center for downtown employees and visitors located in the Pillsbury Center. Services included personalized assistance on bus riding, carpooling, bicycling, and walking to work. Last year, Commuter Connection served over 60,000 customers and had sales of over \$682,000. TMO staff also assisted employers with implementing transportation demand management (TDM) plans required by the City, transit benefits such as discounted bus passes (e.g. regional Metropass program), and accessing State and Federal tax advantages for transportation alternatives.

The direction of much of Commuter Connection's focus has shifted to building managers and/or small employers, as well as maintaining established relationships with large employers. Commuter Connection also promoted the development of a carsharing program, which had the potential of further reducing the number of vehicle trips taken. Accomplishments for the year 2003 included the following:

- Launched and presented the City of Minneapolis with the website www.laneuse.ci.minneapolis.mn.us which provided updated information on closures of traffic lanes, sidewalks, and curbs. During 2003, the site had 534,000 hits averaging 49,000 per month;
- Assisted five Minneapolis employers to participate in the Metropass program, a regional discounted transit pass program;
- Over 30 downtown employers and 5,500 downtown commuters participated in the B-BOP (Bike, Bus or Pool) / Commuter Challenge event; and
- Partnered with the City of Minneapolis, Clean Air Minnesota (a program of the Minnesota Environmental Initiative) and others to increase awareness about ground level ozone and Air Pollution Alerts.

Bicycle Infrastructure

The 2000 Census indicated that the City of Minneapolis had a relatively high percentage of bicycle commuters. The results of two Census survey instruments indicated different, but similar results. The long-form survey, which is completed by one in seven households, indicated that among large cities, Minneapolis ranks third in bicycle commuting (behind Tucson and San Francisco). The Census Supplemental Survey, which has a smaller sample size, indicated that Minneapolis ranked first. Although the latter survey has a smaller sample size (and is, therefore, less reliable), the