

THINGS TO KNOW

About the Integrated Transit Studies

1. There is a need for a new transportation solution for Downtown Rochester.

Daily vehicle trips into and out of DMC District are projected to grow significantly by 2040. The entry points from regional highways into downtown, particularly Highway 52, are already at or near capacity and streets cannot continue to handle unrestrained growth of traffic. Additionally, it is preferred to use downtown property for economic development rather than all day parking for downtown employees.

2. The best transportation solution is an integrated one.

The projected number of daily commuters to downtown in 2040 is nearly double what it is today. To reduce the percentage of future commuters who are driving and parking all day long within the downtown area, the solution should be multi-faceted and address pedestrians, bikes, transit, vehicles, programs and policies.

3. A combination of infrastructure and policies, programs, and incentives are required to shift commuter behaviors away from single occupancy vehicles.

All types of infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, bike facilities, and transit, should be enhanced. Changing commuter habits away from traveling by single occupancy vehicles will not happen by building infrastructure alone. Policies are necessary to support this change. “Arrive Rochester” will launch in spring 2018 as a part of this initiative to encourage and facilitate the use of alternate modes of transportation for downtown employees.

4. Downtown property should be used for economic development rather than all day car parking.

Downtown parking should be available and convenient for visitors and short-term downtown guests, not for cars belonging to downtown employees that are parked for the day. Downtown employees living outside of walk/bike range should use a robust park-and-ride system with multimodal, mixed-use parking centers that are vibrant places with services to make life more convenient.

5. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is the best transit solution for Rochester.

BRT is reliable, comfortable, flexible, and more affordable than other transit options. BRT incorporates features that are similar to that of light rail, including: level boarding, off-bus fare payment, multiple entry/exit doors, and enhanced information services. BRT is incredibly adaptive and can be tailored to best meet the needs and constraints of a community. It is also flexible which allows for phasing and integration with autonomous technology, which is important in this era of rapid technological advances.

6. Vehicle travel lanes are not being eliminated in favor of bicycle lanes.

Vehicle trips will continue to grow, so reducing vehicle travel lanes is not a part of this recommendation. This recommendation calls for designated bicycle lanes on certain streets as part of increasing safe access for bicyclists to and within the DMC district. In some cases the recommendation calls for replacing parking lanes with dedicate bike lanes. In other cases the right-of-way is being expanded or re-apportioned to add bike lanes or the city loop. Stakeholder input will be considered and any final street design approved by the City Council may vary from these recommendations on a case by case basis.



7. Development of the preferred solution should be phased based on measurable demand triggers.

The implementation of transportation improvements will be multi-phased with many factors determining the timing of any given project. Some projects are happening now and others within the next few years. There are also projects that will be happening in the longer-term future that require further study and design work as well as securing the necessary funding. It is also worth noting, that projects projected to happen in the long-term vision may likely change as the city grows and technology changes.

8. There will be more opportunities for public comment on projects.

In June, the Rochester City Council and DMCC Board will be asked for their acceptance of the recommendations. Both entities may give direction for further study or direction for changes. The public will continue to be engaged in the transportation conversation and will be able to provide input as individual projects enter planning and development phases.

9. Diverse funding is required to realize these solutions.

Funding sources are likely to include Federal, State, County, City, Private, DMC and others. However, no one funding source will be sufficient. Each funding source brings with it different requirements which can impact project timelines.

10. The preferred solutions aim to give people options for accessing downtown Rochester.

By 2040 the number of people in downtown Rochester will grow significantly and the methods by which you travel to and around downtown will change. How might this impact you? Some potential examples are below:

Downtown residents: Improved pedestrian and bike facilities will allow you to easily access downtown destinations without needing a car. The transit circulator will be a convenient option to transport you across town on a rainy day. Your apartment has onsite parking for your car and car share services will be available downtown for individuals that don't own a car.

Downtown employees: In 2040 you will find it much more convenient and affordable to walk, bike, or drive to a mobility hub. This mobility hub could include amenities such as a coffee shop, dry cleaners, restaurants, or a day care facility. You'll board a Bus Rapid Transit vehicle that takes you quickly (via dedicated transit lanes with traffic signal priority) and comfortably (climate controlled and wi-fi enabled) to a downtown station that is within a short walk from your work destination. At lunch you may utilize a bike-share to take a recreational spin about the City Loop or use the transit circulator to quickly cross town for some shopping or lunch.

Regional bus commuters: Like today, you will park your car in a neighboring community and ride to Rochester via a commuter bus. These commuter vehicles will transport you downtown and drop you off with in a short walk from your work destination. At the end of the day, you may be using the transit circulator to travel to a mobility hub to board your commuter bus home. Due to the demand for space within the downtown, commuter buses will no longer be boarding passengers for their return commutes in the same locations where they drop them off. It is also worth noting that it is likely that neighboring communities will capitalize on the economic opportunities presented by mobility hubs, further enhancing this commuting option.

Downtown visitors: Short-term parking will be convenient, available and affordable in downtown, allowing people to shop for a few hours and dine. Individuals with appointments at downtown businesses will be able to park for their appointments. Pedestrian friendly streets will allow visitors to park once and walk between destinations.

Learn more about the studies and recommendations.

Summaries and technical study reports for the four Integrated Transportation Studies are available on the Public Works website at www.rochestermn.gov/integratedtransit

