



FOREWORD

RESILIENCY, RACIAL JUSTICE AND REAL-TIME PLANNING

Resiliency

In mid-March 2020, just after the draft TAP was released for public comment, COVID-19 drastically changed the way and the frequency of which people in Minneapolis move. Throughout March and into June, Governor Walz issued Stay Home and Stay Safe orders, limiting what businesses were open and how people worked to prevent the spread of the pandemic. Many people lost their jobs as restaurants, shops, and other sectors of the economy were required to shutter operations by order or due to economic conditions to address the public health emergency. Others began telecommuting, and their commutes to work became non-existent. Transit was reserved for essential trips only, and fares were eliminated. From March to May 2020, car commuters in the region shrank by over half, bike commuters shrank by two-thirds and transit commuters shrank by 85%, while telecommuters increased eight-fold.¹ The way people used our streets dramatically changed.

We received many comments during the draft review period on the impacts of COVID-19 – praising the City for acting quickly to implement Stay Healthy Streets and eliminate the need to push a button to cross the street as a pedestrian. Commenters implored the City to continue to act as quickly as we did for COVID-19 for climate change and equity goals, and to institutionalize the reduction in vehicular traffic on our streets. Nationally, reductions in greenhouse gases, increased air quality, and increased physical activity have been documented and the same trends were felt in Minneapolis.

The Transportation Action Plan was developed with climate, equity and prosperity as three of its goals. Because of this, many of the strategies and actions in this plan reflect a unified way forward in light of public health crises or other situations which demand the City react quickly to protect street users and serve changing mobility needs.



¹ Metropolitan Council COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Outbreak Transportation Survey, May 2020.

Several actions have been highlighted due to COVID-19, including ways of looking at our streets as places for people to have more space to walk and bike, and manage the curb in a way that helps manage turnover and increased demand for curbside pickup. Specifically, parts of the actions listed below were experimented with or acted upon since the beginning of COVID-19:

- Walking Action 2.1
- Bicycling Action 2.4, Action 2.5, Action 3.1, Action 10.2
- Freight Action 5.2, Action 5.5
- Street Operations Action 6.1, Action 6.3, Action 6.4, Action 7.1, Action 7.4
- Design Action 2.5

Quick work during the pandemic was enabled, in part, due to the citywide conversations that occurred at all levels of the City enterprise in the development of the Transportation Action Plan. Having a set of actions in this plan helps the City to be resilient in changing conditions, and keep focused on actions that will advance citywide policy around how our streets contribute to climate, safety, equity, mobility and prosperity goals outlined in this plan.

Racial Justice

On May 25, George Floyd died while in Minneapolis police custody at the corner of 38th and Chicago Avenue South. His death sparked weeks of protest, riots and civil unrest throughout the city, and a public debate over the role of policing and public safety ensued. There are direct ties to the work of the Transportation Action Plan, as we saw streets turn into sacred places overnight, memorializing the site where George Floyd lost his life; we saw streets with planned investments on them lose the built environment that supports and frames the street; we saw streets emerge as the place for community protest and expression; we saw artwork frame up corridors in beautiful murals, heartbreaking messaging, and calls for change.

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Our streets were the backdrop of much that occurred in the summer following the death of George Floyd. Beneath the surface, the impacts and citywide discourse on racial justice have also had impacts on the longerterm planning related to our public streets. Given the citywide conversation around public safety and public feedback on the topic, we re-evaluated how enforcement shows up in the plan and are confident that the actions that speak to enforcement are either administrative in nature (see Walking Action 4.3 on snow clearing), involve parked vehicles (see Transit Action 2.8 on bus only lanes) or have the goal of eliminating traffic stops that involve officer interaction (see Street Operations Action 6.6 on automated enforcement). The Progress section identifies three new strategies – on framing racial equity for transportation, engagement, and evaluation – that address improvements to how we can better connect with and serve the people of

Minneapolis.

This plan is built around seven topic areas that largely follow modal planning – walking, bicycling, taking transit, using streets with a vehicle, delivering goods. We know that the way our streets work are not modal-specific, so we also have topics on how technology allows us to leverage outcomes for citywide goals, and how everything comes together through operations and design of our streets. At the core, we are working to create more mobility options for more people so there is less reliance on private vehicles in order to access opportunities in our city. Our data shows that by focusing on creating more options for people, we are opening up opportunities for low-income and people of color in our community. Key data that make the explicit link between our work and advancing options for people who face economic disadvantages in Minneapolis include:

20% of residents live below 100% of the federal poverty thresholds (household income dependent on family size and composition); this number is 41% for black people, 34% for people of color and 12% for white people²

26% of residents live in high poverty neighborhoods; this number is 48% for black people, 38% for people of color and 17% for white people³

31% people of color households do not have access to a car; this number is 12% for white households⁴

Average commute times for white workers is 22 minutes versus 24 minutes for people of color workers and 27 minutes for black workers⁵

Minneapolis faces some of the gravest racial inequities in the nation. The data in Figure 1 points to how that plays out in transportation options for people. Given this data, it is clear that by focusing on creating more

and safer options for people to walk, bike, take transit, and access shared mobility services, we are advancing outcomes that can be directly felt by people experiencing hardship.

² [National Equity Atlas, 2017](#)

³ [National Equity Atlas, 2017](#)

⁴ [National Equity Atlas, 2017](#)

⁵ [National Equity Atlas, 2017](#)

Figure 1: Average travel time to work (all modes) by race, 2017

Source: National Equity Atlas, 2017

Real-Time Planning

Like many professional disciplines locally and nationally, the events of the spring and summer of 2020 have given rise to reflection and intentionality within transportation planning professionals at the City of Minneapolis. The team involved with creating this plan have taken pause to listen, understand, and reflect upon the role this document and how the strategies and actions it contains impacts the lives of all people who use our streets and how it reflects, upholds, or stands against institutional racism.

Several concrete changes have been made to the process and content of this plan, reflecting a deeper commitment to racial justice and providing for all people in Minneapolis, with a specific focus on equity and our city's Black, Indigenous, and people of color. These changes reflect a deep commitment from the City of Minneapolis to ensure our actions create more

just outcomes for all people in the city, and outcomes are not predictable by race.

Planning is not a static process, as the spring and summer of 2020 have highlighted. The TAP includes several key elements that address changes in our city, and the world, post-COVID and post-George Floyd.

- Additional narrative on how the TAP connects with the City's Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan;
- Updates to narrative and actions to better highlight commitments around racial equity and justice; and
- An expanded Progress section, including strategies and actions on a framework for racial justice, engagement, and evaluation.