

General Glossary of Terms

Access Management – Control of movement onto highways. Strategies include restricting the intersections and interchanges of other streets and highways, restricting or limiting the number of driveways or controlling these entrance points in some manner, as with traffic signs or signals.

Americans with Disabilities Act – 1990 federal act provides a framework and approach for ending discrimination in employment and access to services against persons with disabilities. The goals of the ADA are to assure that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, are able to live independently, and can be economically self-sufficient.

Automatic Vehicle Location – Technology that signals to a control center the location of particular vehicles.

Auto Occupancy – The number of persons per automobile, including the driver.

Busways – A two-lane facility (one lane per direction) on exclusive right-of-way dedicated for buses only. Grade separation at high volume cross streets and gate crossing arms at low volume crossings are assumed.

Carbon Monoxide Nonattainment Area – The Twin Cities area is part of a nonattainment area for carbon monoxide emissions from transportation sources. The designation and area affected is based on national carbon monoxide standards. A portion of this area extends into eastern Wright County.

Car Pool – A paratransit service by auto, on a scheduled or unscheduled basis, with at least two occupants.

Circulator Service – A means of movement provided within a major activity center (such as a regional business concentration or community) for going from place to place within the center; such a system may be entirely pedestrian or may use transit.

Collector Streets – The streets that connect neighborhoods and connect neighborhoods to regional business concentrations (see Appendix G for functional classification criteria and characteristics).

Congestion Management – A systematic process for evaluating and developing transportation strategies and plans for addressing existing and future traffic congestion.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program – CMAQ is a categorical funding program created under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. It directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards.

Congestion Pricing – A broad term used to identify user fees that are charged to manage traffic and avoid congestion.

Construction – Roadway improvements directed toward increasing the capacity of the facility either by the addition of new through lanes or new construction.

Corridor Studies – Typically, highway corridor studies focus on a segment of a particular travel corridor or travel shed. Land use, access issues, capacity, level of service, geometrics and safety concerns are studied; alternatives analyzed and recommendations made. Corridor studies are usually prepared with the participation and cooperation of the affected communities and governmental agencies. Recommendations for improvements are often incorporated into the local comprehensive plans of the participating cities and continue to be used by implementing agencies as improvements in the corridor are made.

Cost-Sharing – A contractual arrangement whereby a local unit of government or other governmental body enters into an agreement to pay for part of a physical facility or a service; includes subscription transit service.

Demand-Responsive Service – A paratransit service in which the passenger either phones or hails the vehicle and shares the vehicle with other passengers (for example, taxi, jitney, dial-a-ride).

Design Capacity – The number of vehicles per lane that pass any given point in an hour on an average day during good operating conditions. The Transportation Policy Plan specifies lane capacity based on the type of facility as follows:

- Freeway – 1,750 vehicles per hour
- Metered freeway – 1,950 vehicles per hour
- HOV lane (concurrent) – 1,400 vehicles per hour
- Expressway – 1,200 vehicles per hour of green time (signal spacing assumed to be greater than one-half mile)
- Arterial – 1,050 vehicles per hour of green time (signal spacing less than one-half mile)

Developing Area – The developing area is that portion of the region that is in the path of urban growth. It includes the communities beyond the fully developed area up to the metropolitan urban service area boundary.

Dial-A-Ride – A demand-responsive service in which the vehicle is requested by telephone and vehicle routing is determined as requests are received. Origin-to-destination service with some intermediate stops is offered. Dial-A-Ride is a version of the taxicab using larger vehicles for short-to-medium-distance trips in lower-density subregions.

Environmental Justice – 1994 executive order that requires analysis of the effects of federally funded programs, plans and actions on racial minority populations and low-income populations.

Fixed-Route Transit – A service that follows a specified route of travel with identified stops for passengers and an established schedule; regular-route transit.

Functional Classification – Classification of roadways according to their primary function-mobility for through trips or access to adjacent lands. A four-class system is used to designate roads (principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors and local streets).

Grade Separation – Intersection of traffic by provision of crossing structures, underpasses or overpasses; interchanges.

Growth Management Strategy – The Metropolitan Council’s selection of an urban growth and development pattern for the region and the measures to implement it.

High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes – Highway lanes reserved for vehicle carrying more than one person. (The specific number of people in the vehicle or class of vehicles who can use this facility is established locally.) These lanes are officially denoted with a diamond marking and are sometimes called “diamond lanes.”

Impact Fees – Charges to individuals or groups intended to supplement existing funding and to account for the increased use of public facilities or services.

Infrastructure – Fixed facilities, such as roadway or railroad tracks; permanent structures.

Integrated Traffic Management System – The development and application of network-wide data collection and sharing of traffic information system. The system can integrate data and control systems from freeways, arterials and city streets to provide real-time proactive traffic information and control. Implementation of the system would facilitate congestion management over the entire network across multijurisdictional boundaries. The system could provide incident detection, transit and emergency vehicle priority, and advance traveler information.

Interregional Corridors – A road system designated by MnDOT that connects the most important regional centers in the state and adjacent states to each other and to the metropolitan area.

Intelligent Transportation System – The development or application of technology (electronics, communications, or information processing) to improve the efficiency and safety of surface transportation systems. ITS is divided into five categories that reflect the major emphasis of application:

- Advanced Traffic Management Systems
- Advance Traveler Information Systems
- Advanced Public Transportation Systems
- Automatic Vehicle Control Systems
- Commercial Vehicle Operations

Intermodal – A concept generally defined as a “seamless” delivery of freight by more than one mode from point of origin to point of destination. The delivery is accomplished under one bill of lading, but may include truck/rail/truck, truck/air/truck, or truck/rail/vessel.

Jitney – Auto, small van or bus operating along highly traveled thoroughfares without a fixed schedule of stops. Passengers hail the vehicle at any point along the route.

Level of Service – As related to highways, the different operating conditions that occur on a lane or roadway when accommodating various traffic volumes. It is a qualitative measure of the effect of traffic flow factors, such as speed and travel time, interruption, freedom to maneuver, driver comfort and convenience, and indirectly, safety and operating costs. It is expressed as levels of service “A” through “F.” Level “A” is a condition of free traffic flow where there is little or no restriction in speed or maneuverability caused by presence of other vehicles. Level “F” is forced-flow operation at low speed with many stoppages, with the highway acting as a storage area.

Life-Cycle Maintenance – Concept of keeping a facility useable at least through its design life by conducting scheduled maintenance.

Light Rail Transit – An electrically propelled vehicle operated singly or in trains on predominantly reserved, but not necessarily grade-separated, rights-of-way.

Line-Haul – Regular-route transit operations (generally express) along a corridor or corridors.

Linear Right-of-Way – A narrow, well-defined corridor of contiguous land dedicated to or preserved for transportation purposes.

Livable Communities Grant Program – Program administered by the Metropolitan Council that was created under the Metropolitan Livable Communities Act (Minn. Stat. 473.25). The Council makes grants or loans to metropolitan area communities to provide incentives for development that links affordable housing, employment and transit; creates more mixed-use, compact development; and broadens the income mix of residents within areas.

Local Streets – The streets that provide land access (see Appendix G for functional classification criteria and characteristics).

Major Construction – Roadway improvements that increase the operational characteristics of a highway facility, including decreasing congestion, increasing operating speed and reducing accidents.

Major Investment Study – A highway or transit improvement study requiring a substantial capital investment that is expected to have a significant effect on capacity, traffic, level or service or mode share at the transportation corridor or subarea level.

Meters – Signals on freeway ramps that smooth traffic flow to increase road capacity. Many metered ramps have bypasses for buses and carpools.

Metro Commuter Services – A service of the Metropolitan Council that provides and administers travel demand management services and programs such as carpool matching, a guaranteed ride home program. Metropass and TransitWorks! And Commuter Check.

Metro Mobility – A service of the Metropolitan Council that provides door-to-door transit service for people who cannot use the fixed route system.

Metropolitan Transit – The major public transit provider in the Twin Cities area. The Metropolitan Council operates Metro Transit.

Metropolitan Highway System – The system of highway intended to serve the region. Only principal arterials, which include interstate freeways, are on the metropolitan highway system. In some place, the plan identifies the metropolitan highway system as the interstate freeways and other principal arterials.

Metropolitan Transit System – The system of all public and private transit services available to the general public.

Metropolitan Urban Service Area – The portion of the metropolitan area identified in the Regional Blueprint where development and redevelopment is to occur and in which urban facilities and services are to be provided.

“A” Minor Arterials – Roadways within the metropolitan area that are more regionally significant than others.

Minnesota Intermodal Railroad Terminal Study – A partnership formed by the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT, and the BNSF and CP Rail Systems railroads to address rail/truck intermodal terminal capacity issues.

Mixed Use – Refers to a variety of land uses and activities with a mixture of different types of development, all clustered within about one-quarter mile or within 40-to-160 acre areas, in contrast to separating uses, such as job sites, retail and housing.

Mobility – The ability of a person or people to travel from one place to another.

Multimodal Link – The connection between two or more passenger transportation methods (such as bicycle, walking, automobile and transit).

New or Restructured Transit Service – Significant change in service, including establishment of a new mass transportation service, addition of new route or routes to mass transportation system, a significant increase or decrease in service on or realignment of an existing route, or a change in the type or mode of service provided on specific, regularly scheduled route.

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Off-Peak Period – Time of day outside the peak period (see peak period).

Operational Improvement – A capital improvement consisting of installation of traffic surveillance and control equipment, computerized signal systems, motorist information systems, integrated traffic control systems, incident management programs, and transportation demand and system management facilities, strategies and program.

Oxygenated Fuels Program – A program mandated by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Minnesota Legislature to blend oxygenated gasoline to reduce automobile emissions.

Opt-Out System – Five transit systems that provide service to suburban residents in the Metropolitan Transit Service Area.

Paratransit Services – Transit service that provides generally more flexible and personalized service regular-route transit, using a variety of vehicles, such as large and small buses, vans, cars and taxis. Paratransit can serve a particular population, such as people with disabilities, or can be assigned to serve the general population. Paratransit is frequently provided in less densely populated areas, and used at times and in areas where trip demands are less concentrated, such as during weekends and evenings in urban settings. Paratransit services are of several types:

- **Ridesharing** – Car and van pooling intended primarily to serve the work trip.
- **Demand-Response** – This is any type of public transportation involving flexibly scheduled service that is deployed upon a person’s request for a trip. There are three types of demand response:
 - *Dial-A-Ride Services* – The best known and most common type of paratransit, involving advance request pickup and drop-off at desired or designated destinations. Dial-a-ride may deploy vans, small buses or shared-ride taxis.
 - *Cycled Services* – A zonal demand-response service in which the vehicles are scheduled to arrive and leave a major activity center on a regular basis; and in between scheduled stops, passengers are picked up and dropped off at their doors.
 - *Flexible Fixed-Route or Deviation Services* – Either point deviation or route deviation where vehicles stop at specific locations on a regular schedule but do not have to follow a set route between the stops. They can deviate from the route to pick up or drop off passengers upon request.

Park and Ride – An arrangement whereby people can drive an automobile to a transit hub, transfer station or terminal, park in the designated lot, and use a transit vehicle for their ultimate destinations.

Parking Surcharges – A fee over and above the cost of parking.

Peak Period – The time between 6:30 and 9:00 a.m. and between 3:30 and 6:00 p.m. on a weekday, when traffic is usually heavy.

Person Trip – A one-way journey between two points by one person in a vehicle.

Preferential Access – An advantage offered to a group of users allowing rideshare vehicles and buses to access roadways faster than other vehicles by bypassing metered ramps.

Preservation – Preservation activities are directed toward the elimination of deficiencies and major cost replacement of existing facilities. Preservation is not meant to include work that will increase the level of service by the addition of traffic lanes.

Principal Arterials – The high-capacity highways that make up the metropolitan highway system.

Project – A group of tasks or methods designed to accomplish a specific purpose.

Ramp Metering – The electronically regulated flow of vehicles to increase capacity of through lanes and improve safety.

Regional Blueprint – The Metropolitan Council plan that sets a general direction for future development patterns in the metropolitan area and establishes guidelines for making decisions about major regional facilities that are needed to support the commercial, industrial and residential development of the area.

Regular-Route Transit Service – A transit service that operates on a predetermined, fixed route and schedule. The types of vehicle used in regular-route service are generally large buses or small buses. Regular-route service is usually classified as four types:

- **Local Service** – Buses make frequent pickups and drop-offs, stopping at almost every street corner.
- **Urban Local** – Buses operate primarily in central cities and include regular-route radial service (routes start or end in one or both of the two major downtowns); crosstown (often providing connecting links between radial routes); and limited stop (buses make limited stops along a route or “skip stops,” achieving faster service to selected destinations).
- **Suburban Locals** – Buses operate in suburban environments, many times as suburban circulators, and include regular-route crosstowns (often as feeder routes to radial services) and paratransit services.
- **Express** – Buses operate nonstop on highways or dedicated transitways for at least four miles and include peak only and all-day express. Express routes provide travel times competitive with driving in an automobile. Most express routes operate longer distances (8-25 miles) and during peak times, and are destined to and from one of the two major downtowns.

Rehabilitation – Roadway improvements intended to correct conditions identified as deficient without major changes to the cross section. These projects should consist of removal and replacement of base and pavement, shouldering and widening and drainage correction as needed.

Reverse-Commute Transit – Transit from residence to an employment location in a direction opposite to the heaviest flow of traffic. In this region, primarily from central city to a suburb.

Ridesharing – A paratransit service with two or more persons in the vehicle consisting usually a prearranged car pool, van pool or subscription bus.

Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund – This program grants interest-free loans to communities within officially mapped highway corridors to purchase property threatened by development. The loan is repaid when

the property is purchased by the highway construction authority. The Minnesota Legislature established the RALF program in 1982. It is funded by a property tax levied by the Metropolitan Council.

Route Deviation – A service operating on a fixed route from which vehicles may deviate to pick up or drop off passengers. Requests for route deviation may come by phone via radio contract with the driver or may be requested by a passenger upon Boarding. Deviation from the route may include a premium charge for the extra service. Generally, this strategy utilizes a small vehicle.

Routine Maintenance – Roadway maintenance consisting of snow and ice control, mowing, sweeping, periodic applications of bituminous overlays, seal treatments, milling, crack routing and filling and base repair. These treatments are intended to help ensure the roadway can be used to the end of its design life. These projects are ineligible for federal funding.

Seamless – A term referring to transportation systems where one subsystem is indistinguishable from the beginning of another without any noticeable transition.

Signal Preemption – As most often used in this plan, a technology that triggers the green go-ahead on meters or traffic lights to allow transit vehicles to more quickly move through freeway ramp entrances or intersections.

Smart Growth – A pro-growth approach to guiding development into more convenient patterns and into areas where infrastructure allows growth to be sustained over the long term. It envisions developments of complementary land uses, including affordable and lifecycle housing, retail and offices, on interconnected streets amenable to walking, bicycling or using transit or car to reach destinations.

Special Transportation Services – Transit services provided on a regular basis to elderly and disabled persons who are unable to use regular means of transportation. Rides are provided through a variety of public and private entities, including social services and transit agencies, using lift-equipped vans, taxis, buses and volunteer drivers.

State Implementation Plan – The SIP is a federally required planning document prepared and maintained by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. It identifies state actions and programs to implement designated responsibilities under the Clean Air Act.

Subscription Service – A transit service operating on a daily basis, under contract, to serve a specific entity or a special need, such as work trips to an employment location. Such service may employ a van, fixed-route transit or school bus type of vehicle.

“Super 2” Concept – Highway design concept for a safe high-capacity two-lane highway that would be built instead of a four-lane expressway or freeway.

Surface Transportation Program – One of the five core federal highway funding program. STP provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for projects on any federal-aid highway, including the

national highway system, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

Transitways – Corridors or lanes dedicated exclusively for transit use such as bus-only shoulders, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, exclusive busways, LRT or commuter rail.

Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century – Enacted in 1998, TEA-21 authorizes the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 6-year period 1998-2003. TEA-21 responds to the need to reduce project delays and increase the safety of the nation’s surface transportation system and continues most provisions of ISTEA. TEA-21 has necessitated some changes to the Metropolitan Planning Organization requirements. Funding levels have been increased with a higher level of funds available to transit and to Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality programs. TEA-21 continues the flexibility of using Title I traditional highway funds for transit projects and Title III traditional transit funds for highways.

Telecommuting – The elimination or reduction in commuter trips by routinely working part of full-time at home or at a satellite work station closer to home.

Throughput – The amount of vehicles/persons that can pass a point on a roadway or pass through an intersection over a specified period of time. Can be equated to capacity if considering vehicles alone.

Timed-Transfer Station – Point where several transit lines converge in a synchronized manner, facilitating passenger transfers.

Tolls – A fee collected for the use of a road.

Traffic Calming – Techniques such as speed bumps, narrow lanes and traffic circles used to slow traffic in primarily residential neighborhoods.

Transit Advantages – Facility improvements that offer travel-time benefits and connections to multi-occupant vehicle services such as bus lanes, ramp meter bypasses, HOV lanes, transit stations and major park-and-ride lots.

Transit Dependence – The need to rely on transit to meet travel needs because of age-related or economic limitations and/or physical or mental disability.

Transit Hubs – Locations where timed-transfer connections between transit modes is facilitated. Transit hubs are usually at shopping centers or other high-pedestrian locations.

Transit Taxing District – The portion of the twin cities metropolitan area where property is taxed to support transit services.

Transit Trip – A person trip as a passenger of a transit vehicle.

Transportation Demand Management – Programs and methods to reduce effective demand. In the broadest sense, any activity or facility that reduces vehicle trips would fall within this classification. The highest priority in the region is given to reducing single-occupant vehicle trips in the peak periods. Techniques that might be utilized are carpooling, van pooling, transit, alternative work hours, transportation management associations, and land development or ordinances that discourage vehicle trips and encourage walking biking, ridesharing and transit trips.

Transportation Improvement Program – A three-year multimodal program of highway, transit, biking, walking and transportation enhancement projects and programs proposed for federal funding in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Transportation System Management Strategies – Programs and methods to improve the efficiency and effective capacity of the transportation system. Techniques can include signalization, metering, HOV ramps and lanes, one-way streets and improvements to transit.

Transportation Management Organization or Association – Nonprofit employer associations, sometimes involving public entities, usually formed in highly congested areas to deal with common transportation concerns, particularly alleviating congestion.

Transportation System Plan – MnDOT’s 20 year district plans which identify regional investment priority categories for the highway system (preservation, management, improvement, replacement and bottleneck removal and expansion.).

Travel Behavior Inventory – A set of surveys identifying travel patterns and characteristics of people and vehicles within the metropolitan area.

Travel-Demand Management – Strategies to manage demand on roadways designed to redirect trips to higher-occupancy modes or away from peak-traffic periods so that the total number of vehicles trips are reduced. Can include both capital and service improvements to highways and transit, and may involve community action.

User Cost – The total dollar cost of a trip to a user for a particular mode of transportation. Includes out-of-pocket costs such as transit fares, gas, oil, insurance, and parking for autos plus a valuation of implicit cost, such as waiting and travel times.

Vanpool – A paratransit service by van on a scheduled or unscheduled basis with at least five persons as occupants.

Vehicle Trip – A one-way journey made by an auto, truck or bus to convey people or goods.

VMT – Vehicle miles traveled.

Volume-to-Capacity Ratio – The hourly number of vehicles expected to use a roadway in the busiest hour, divided by the number of moving vehicles the roadway can safely accommodate in an hour.