



*Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Minneapolis
Downtown Council on February 9, 2016*

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Resolution in support of additional funding for transit
and transportation investment

WHEREAS, Downtown Minneapolis is a key economic engine for the City, the Greater MSP Region, and the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the City, MSP Region, and State will thrive if more people in more places enjoy quality access to more jobs, educational institutions, opportunities, and events; and

WHEREAS, the Minneapolis Downtown Council's (MDC) ***Intersections 2025 Plan*** identifies ten goals which, if achieved, will ensure a thriving, livable, connected, and vibrant Downtown Minneapolis; will ensure that Downtown Minneapolis continues to compare favorably to its peer cities; and will ensure that Downtown Minneapolis is able to retain and attract a talented workforce and growing businesses; and

WHEREAS, one of the essential goals of the 2025 Plan is to "*lead the nation in transportation options in order to encourage new jobs, housing and business vitality*"; and

WHEREAS, to achieve the 2025 Plan's transportation goals, the plan identifies these objectives:

- maintain and improve high capacity for auto and transit commuters;
- increase the daily transit share from 40 percent to 60 percent;

- increase circulation to, from and within Downtown;
- leverage Target Field Station as the metro area’s primary transit hub; and
- secure stable, reliable transit funding; and

WHEREAS, no goal in the 2025 Plan is more critical to the success of Downtown Minneapolis as a place to attract and retain residents, workers, and visitors in an increasingly competitive national and global environment; investments in transit and transportation are investments in the future success of the City, MSP Region, and State;

WHEREAS, an economically strong Downtown Minneapolis depends equally upon a responsibly funded and maintained state-wide road and bridge network;

WHEREAS, unpredictable, piecemeal transportation investment is inefficient, expensive, and undermines our ability to achieve the 2025 Plan’s long-term goals, to the detriment of the City, Greater MSP Region, and State; and

WHEREAS, it is especially important that two significant transit projects receive financial commitments in 2016:

- Green Line LRT Extension – federal funding for the extension of the Green Line LRT from Target Field Station to the communities southwest of Minneapolis is all but assured, and the project is nearly ready to go, but the final portion of the required state/local funding commitment is lagging; if that final funding piece fails to materialize this year, the Green Line LRT extension could face a serious delay in (or loss of) federal funding; and
- Orange Line BRT – the Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) now in development will bring fast, frequent, and reliable all-day transit service along the I-35W Corridor between Downtown Minneapolis and communities to the south, will include a two-level transit station at Lake Street, and will be coordinated with construction to rework the connections between I-35W and Lake Street; separately, in 2018, MnDOT is scheduled to begin the re-configuration of connections between I-35W and I-94 and other improvements to I-35W, causing a significant, multi-year disruption to I-35W access into Downtown Minneapolis; if the Orange Line BRT funding piece is not in place this year to permit the BRT improvements to be constructed on a coordinated basis with the larger I-35W/I-94 and I-35W/Lake Street projects, the cost of Orange Line BRT improvements will significantly increase, and the multi-year agony of disruption to I-35W will be needlessly, and unpopularity, prolonged; and

WHEREAS, the planned Blue Line LRT extension (connecting Target Field Station to communities to the north) is currently in the process of receiving municipal consent, and must soon demonstrate matching fund availability to receive a competitive federal funding commitment; legislative inaction on a long-term transportation and transit funding plan will jeopardize our region's ability to demonstrate that financial commitment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that to accomplish the goals and objectives of the 2025 Plan, Board leadership of the MDC believes a comprehensive, long-term transportation funding plan should be approved during the 2016 legislative session; specifically, we support the adoption of a new, stable, reliable funding source in order to complete the development of our regional transit plan (including the Green Line and Blue Line LRT extensions, Orange Line BRT, and other BRT lines in high-volume corridors), and to provide sufficient funding for superior operation of the expanding transit system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all necessary steps be taken in the 2016 legislative session to ensure that sufficient funding is available on a timely basis:

- to provide the financing commitment required to take full advantage of the federal funding available for the extension of the Green Line LRT from Target Field Station to the communities southwest of Minneapolis; and
- to provide sufficient funding to permit the construction of the Orange Line BRT improvements in coordination with the planned reconstruction of the I-35W/I-94 and the I-35W/Lake Street connections; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any transportation package include a plan for both transit investment and the responsible funding of our state-wide road and bridge network, so that transit and transportation quality in Minneapolis and throughout Minnesota become competitive assets, not a looming liability.