

**GENESEE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTION**

**Resolution 20-14** *Accepting the Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 7702*

**WHEREAS,**

1. The *FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program* includes Task 7702, *Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan*, for the purpose of developing the multi-modal transportation component for the Comprehensive Plan Update consisting of bicycle, pedestrian, transit, traffic safety, and goods movement interest areas in the City of Rochester;
2. Said Task examined existing pedestrian, bicyclist, transit and vehicular circulation and access conditions; produced five Focus Area Reports for Walkability, Bikeability, Transit Readiness, Urban Goods and Emergency Response, and Travel Demand Management; identified five recommended near-term Priority Projects; and developed the City's first Street Design Guide;
3. Said Task has been completed and has resulted in the *Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan*, with a vision to improve the quality of life for all Rochester residents by enabling safe, convenient, and comfortable access to work, life, and play, and enabling connectivity between neighborhoods; and
4. Said Report has been reviewed by GTC staff and member agencies through the GTC committee process and has been found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Long Range Transportation Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**

1. That the Genesee Transportation Council hereby accepts the *Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan*, as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 7702; and
2. That this resolution takes effect immediately.

**CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned duly qualified Secretary of the Genesee Transportation Council certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Genesee Transportation Council held on June 11, 2020.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
KEVIN C. BUSH, Secretary  
Genesee Transportation Council



CITY OF ROCHESTER  
**COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS  
AND MOBILITY PLAN**  
Executive Summary

# VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION

Rochester's transportation system improves quality of life for all Rochesterians by enabling safe, convenient, and comfortable access to work, life, and play, and enabling connectivity between neighborhoods. The system works for users of all ages and abilities whether they walk, bike, drive, or take public transportation, and supports Rochester businesses by enabling the movement of goods and people. The system activates transit- and pedestrian-oriented design to create a city of short distances, and is clear and user-friendly, with the highest standards of sustainability, design, and maintenance.

*This vision was developed in consultation with stakeholders and the general public.*



# PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Many individuals and stakeholder groups contributed to the development of this plan. Public engagement efforts sought input from a diverse range of stakeholders representing a wide cross section of the Rochester community **with a special focus on the most vulnerable travellers - the youth, the elderly, and the disabled.** These individuals and organizations were able to provide their input through a variety of channels.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The Project Team identified key representative stakeholders in cooperation with the City, and conducted phone interviews with them to understand their perceptions of the transportation system.

## POP-UP EVENTS

Pop-up events were held at community events and served to share information from the Factbook and gather public input on transportation in Rochester. Participants were also invited to share their ideas for the future of Rochester's transportation system.

## ONLINE SURVEYS

Multiple online surveys were conducted in partnership with the City. They allowed members of the public to express their preferences and experiences regarding transportation in Rochester, and to indicate their priorities for future improvements.

## FOCUS GROUPS

Stakeholder focus groups were consulted at multiple meetings to gather feedback on the selection of priority projects and the development of components of the overall plan.

## STREET DESIGN WORKSHOP

The Project Team conducted a half-day workshop at which attendees reviewed existing design standards and made recommendations on adapting them to Rochester's transportation goals and context.



# RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

Previous and ongoing land use, transportation, and corridor planning efforts in Rochester inform and frame the Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan. The plan builds on past and concurrent work to enable safe, convenient, and comfortable access for users of all transportation modes. The following select plans and policies address concepts found within the plan.

- **Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan (2000)** outlines City goals, principles, and actions related to economic development, environmental management, infrastructure, land use, and mobility planning.
- **Complete Streets Policy (2011)** ensures that street design efforts will consider the safety and comfort needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and persons with disabilities.
- **Center City Pedestrian Circulation and Wayfinding Study (2012)** improves the visitor wayfinding experience within Rochester's Center City by providing clear and direct orientation and connections.
- **Center City Master Plan (2014)** identifies a fundamental vision of lively streets and highlights the importance of the Genesee River, Main Street, and a connected downtown.
- **New York State Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (2016)** recommends engineering, education, and enforcement measures to improve pedestrian safety over five years.
- **Roc the Riverway (2018)** plans seamless pedestrian and bicycle connections along both sides of the river via the Genesee Riverway Trail.
- **Bicycle Master Plan (2011)** serves as a framework for the City's future investment in bicycle infrastructure.
- **Bicycle Boulevard Master Plan (2015)** outlines plans for a 50-mile-long network of low-stress bicycle priority streets.
- **Reimagine RTS (2018)** refocuses the transit system to provide more frequent, direct, and connected service.
- **Transit Supportive Corridors Study (2018)** identifies corridors for transit supportive development and recommends associated land use strategies.
- **Bus Stop Optimization Study (2015)** makes recommendations to improve the placement of bus stops.
- **Signal Prioritization Study (2010)** recommends transit signal prioritization on Lake and Dewey Avenues.
- **Satellite Transit Centers Study (2009)** evaluates potential sites for satellite transit centers.
- **Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan Update (forthcoming 2019-2020)** outlines the vision and goals for growth, placemaking, and equity leading to the City's 200th birthday.

# FOCUS AREAS

In order to develop a comprehensive and long-term approach to planning Rochester's transportation network, the city's transportation system must be understood as a sum of its component parts. This plan is structured around five focus areas, allowing for more granular level of analysis of key components of the transportation system in order to understand system-wide challenges and opportunities. These focus areas, outlined below, reflect transportation planning priorities and guide the development of the proposed actions and outcomes of this plan.

## WALKABLE CITY

Rochester has a relatively extensive sidewalk network, but is focused on enhancing the comfort, safety, and accessibility of the pedestrian realm at key locations. This area seeks to quantify pedestrian demand and the quality of the pedestrian realm to work towards safer walking conditions that prevent fatalities and injuries.

## BIKEABLE CITY

Most Rochester residents live within a moderate distance of commercial or employment centers. The development of quality bike facilities could make short bike trips to these destinations more attractive. Rochester has made progress towards improving bikeability in the city, but does not yet have a fully connected, safe, and comfortable bike network.

## TRANSIT READY CITY

Regional Transit Service (RTS), Rochester's transit operator, is currently redesigning Rochester's bus system to provide high-frequency, high-capacity service on

key corridors. The City wishes to support the improvement of transit by planning for transit-supportive development, and working to address last-mile issues.

## GOODS MOVEMENT/EMERGENCY SERVICES

As online retail has grown, so too has the number of trucks on Rochester's streets. The City seeks to plan for truck traffic in a way that balances land-use, safety, and transportation goals with businesses' needs, likely involving designated loading zones and delivery regulations. Street designs must also ensure emergency access

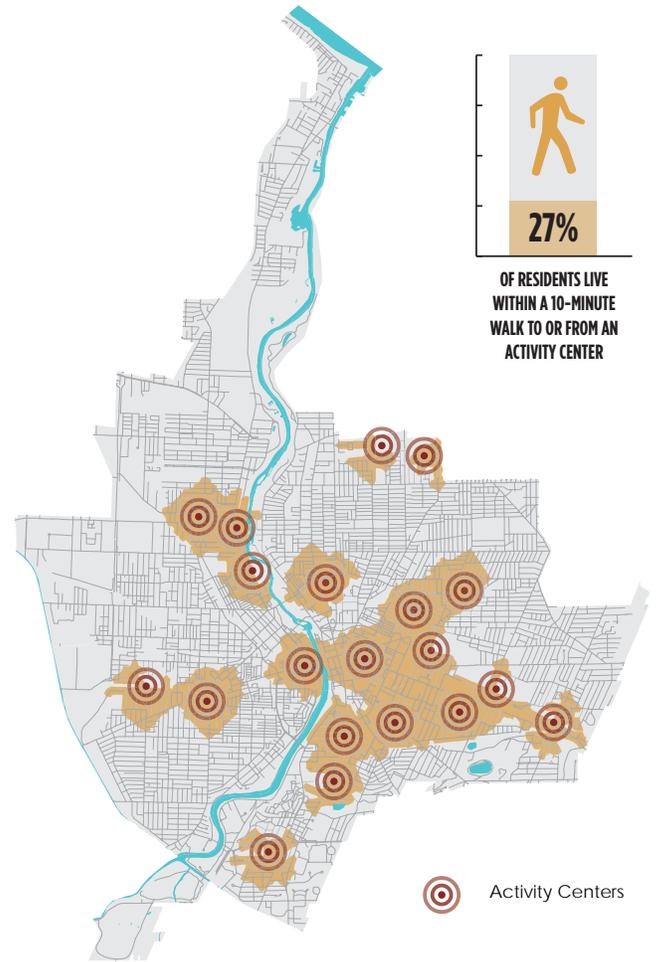
## TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Development is increasing in Rochester, amplifying parking and congestion concerns. The City intends to maximize the utility of its existing parking and roadway capacity rather than build new infrastructure by incentivizing alternatives to driving alone.

## Most Rochester residents live too far from destinations to walk to them conveniently.

Only one-quarter of Rochester residents are able to walk to essential services or activity centers in ten minutes or less. Demand analysis shows expected areas of high pedestrian activity exist further from activity centers while public outreach indicates that perceived distance is one of the biggest factors discouraging more people from walking.

Despite this challenge, Rochester has the opportunity to substantially increase the rate of walking to major destinations. Fully two-thirds of residents live within a 20-minute walk of those same activity centers. Rochester can encourage walkers to go the literal 'extra mile' by improving the pedestrian environment, making walking a more rewarding and comfortable experience. Rochester can also plan for future infill development that will increase the percentage of residents who can reach destinations via shorter walks. It has already done so successfully in its redevelopment of the Inner Loop.



Inner Loop before 2014



Source: Stantec

Inner Loop after transformation (2018)



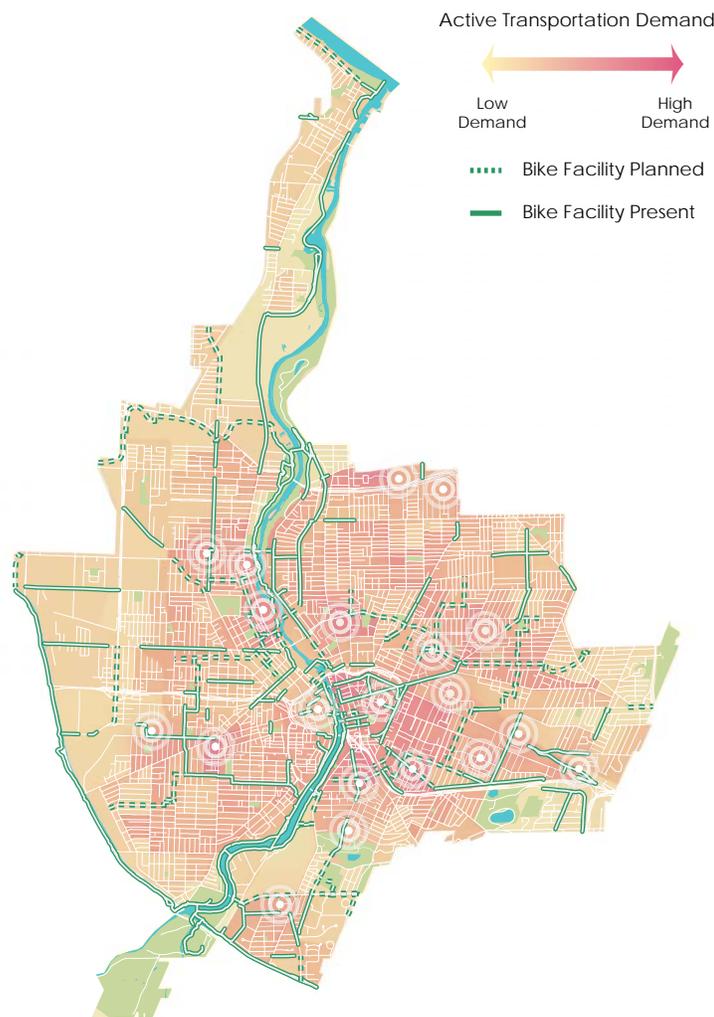
Source: Stantec

## Rochester's bicycle network is not yet fully connected or safe enough to encourage many people to bike.

Three-quarters of Rochester residents live within a ten-minute bike ride of an activity center but relatively few routinely bike to major destinations. Only around one percent of residents commute by bike.

Public outreach indicates that residents view the bicycling environment as hostile due to dangerous driving behaviors and high traffic volumes. While the City has built portions of a bicycle network, there are many gaps that limit the utility of the network.

Rochester can improve its bicycle network by filling in gaps in connectivity along existing bicycle corridors, prioritizing the development of bicycle infrastructure in areas where people need it most, and by adding traffic calming and safety features along the bike network as it is expanded. As much as possible, bike facilities should be upgraded to protected bike lanes and infrastructure should extend through intersections.

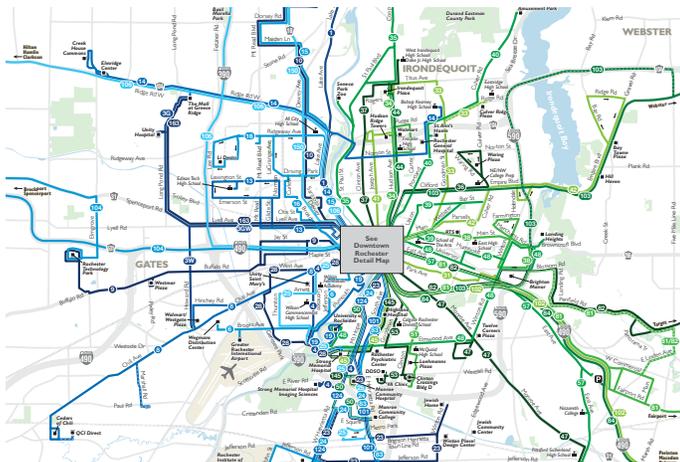


Sources: Genesee Transportation Council, City of Rochester

## The frequency and span of transit service is inconsistent, making transit uncompetitive.

Rochester’s RTS transit system does well in terms of ridership and cost performance relative to peer cities in the US. However, long wait times and inconvenient service spans make riding transit less appealing than it could be for many potential customers. Furthermore, the current configuration of routes concentrates on service to and from downtown Rochester, making it difficult for customers to transfer between services in outlying areas. The difficulty of transferring limits the utility of the overall network to customers wishing to make trips to destinations other than those along their immediate route.

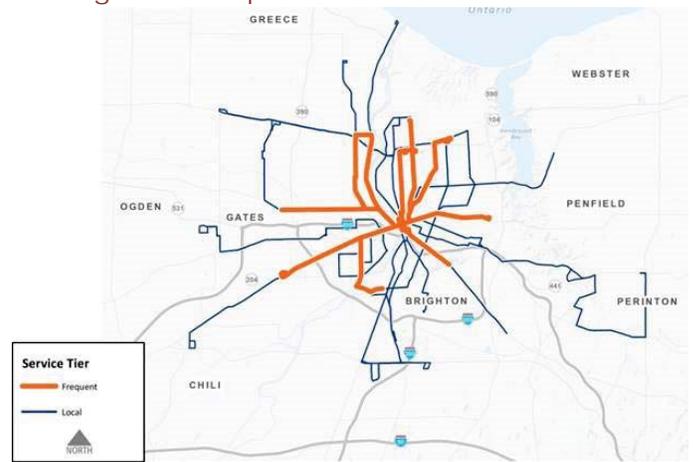
Current RTS Service



Source: RTS

Rochester has, and is seizing, the opportunity to reallocate service from under performing routes to high priority corridors. By increasing service frequencies and making service along such corridors more direct, RTS will enable riders to use the transit system independent of any schedule, and will increase the ease of transferring between routes by reducing wait times. The efficacy of this future network can be further improved by developing planned transfer stations in outer areas of the city. The condition of bus stops and access to them varies widely across the city. As RTS creates more attractive service, the City should strive to ensure travellers have safe access and convenient amenities at key locations.

Reimagine RTS Proposed Service

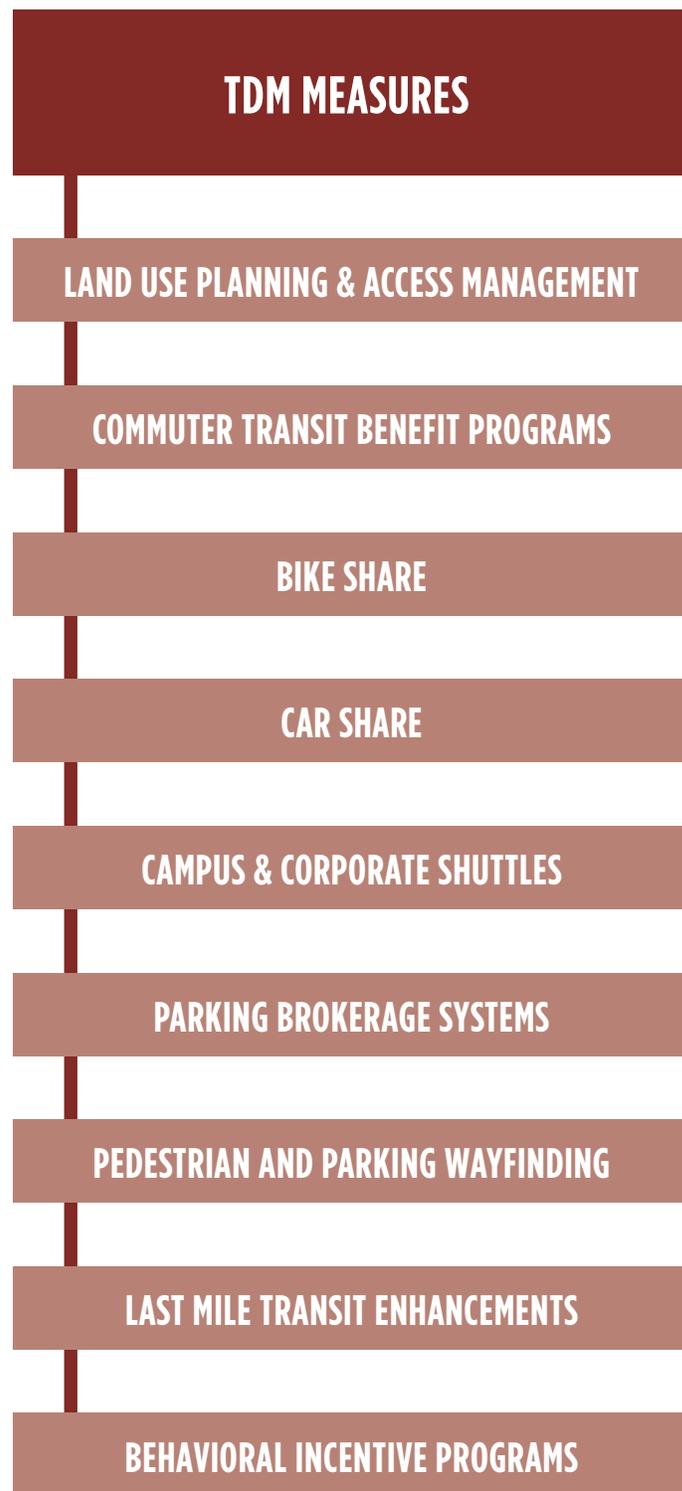


Source: RTS

**The City of Rochester does not have any transportation demand management programs in place to reduce the amount of driving.**

The City of Rochester does not currently have any implemented TDM policies, nor any TDM requirements in the City's municipal code. The City Code does include some TDM-supportive policies, namely, exemptions for parking minimums in certain districts and bike parking requirements for certain land uses. This lack of substantial TDM programs means that Rochester falls behind peer cities in taking steps to reduce the rate of driving, and is not managing its transportation and parking infrastructure as efficiently as it could.

A citywide TDM policy, and area-specific plans, would help lay the groundwork for more meaningful efforts to reduce driving and shift trips to other modes of transportation. The City, and other local governments, could create a transportation management association (TMA) to oversee TDM programs on a municipal or regional scale. A TMA could help facilitate commuter benefit programs, parking management programs, wayfinding improvements, and even direct provision of alternative transportation services. Ultimately, municipal TDM leadership would help Rochester make more efficient use of its existing transportation infrastructure, and help shift transportation demand to more efficient, sustainable, and safe modes.



## Freight and emergency services transportation are not well considered in Rochester's transportation planning process.

The movement of goods and emergency vehicles is not prioritized in transportation planning processes in Rochester, and receives little attention in the City's capital improvement program. This lack of attention limits the allocation of funding towards projects and measures that enhance the transportation network for freight and emergency service vehicles.

In order to improve upon this situation, and improve the transportation system for all users including freight and emergency service vehicles, the City should develop planning frameworks that incorporate these two additional categories of transportation. Planning efforts should assess transportation infrastructure projects against criteria that evaluate their benefits to freight and emergency service vehicle movement, as well as how those projects mitigate the negative environmental and safety impacts of large vehicles often used for freight or emergency services. As part of this improvement, Rochester could consider classifying streets for freight or emergency service vehicle movement and could begin monitoring the impacts of large freight and emergency service vehicles.



Source: T.Y. Lin International



Source: Jeffrey Arnold via Flickr

# PERFORMANCE METRICS

The Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan seeks to provide the framework for a system that serves the values of the community and achieves the desired outcomes of the plan. Attainment of the overall vision will be measured against four key targets to be achieved by 2034.

- **Create a city of 10-minute neighborhoods** – at least double the percentage of residents who can access a local activity center via a safe 10-minute walk from home (currently 27%).
- **Strive for 100% of residents to be connected to green space**, trails, or open space via a safe 10-minute walk of home (currently 74%).
- **Nearly all (95%) of residents have access to transit** by providing a transit stop within a safe 10-minute walk of each residence (currently 87%).
- **Increase choice, reliability, and efficiency** in travel by achieving at least a 40% non-drive alone mode share for commute to work trips (currently 30%)\*.

\* American Community Survey Dataset B08301, 2016

