For more information, visit: rethinkingstreets.com
Transit Street

Transit streets emphasize buses and trains and employ designs that make it easy for people to use them. Similar to the bike streets, dedicated lanes make for excellent transit streets. The dedicated lanes remove some of the delays associated with car traffic and increase reliability for passengers. Dedicated transit lanes also signal to businesses and real estate developers that this amenity will be around for a long time. In this way, transit streets can catalyze economic development, known as transit-oriented development.

SW 5th and 6th Avenues
Euclid Avenue
Marquette and 2nd Avenues
A groundbreaking transit mall gets even better when it adds new transportation options.

- A light rail system was incorporated into the existing transit mall along with new transit shelters.
- A bike lane was added and previous efforts to divert automobile traffic were removed.
**KEY OUTCOMES**

**Transit Collisions Dropped**
Between 2001 and 2006, the mall saw 68 bus-related collisions each year on average. After the redesign, the mall averaged 27 bus collisions and 13 light-rail collisions yearly.\(^62\)

**Downtown Redevelopment**
The Transit Mall project led to two hotel renovations and other improvements that generated $1.5 billion in private sector investment.\(^63\)

**Block-by-Block Improvements**
The Block-by-Block Program provided assistance and low-interest loans to nearby businesses. The program helped implement 40 storefront renovations and other small improvements. The program cost $1.4 million and leveraged $9.4 million in private investment.\(^68\)
SW 5TH AND 6TH AVENUES CONTEXT

- Portland’s Transit Mall was originally built in 1978 and received numerous accolades for its attempts to improve transportation and revitalize downtown.

- Thirty years later, the Transit Mall was showing its age, and plans called for adding light rail in addition to the many buses that traversed the corridor. The project, the largest public works project in city history, rebuilt 58 blocks, added 18 new blocks, replaced or added 45 new transit shelters and reconfigured the roadway for light rail, bus and through traffic for cars.

- The entire project cost $160 million.\(^7\)

- The transit mall crosses six neighborhoods, including the central core of the city.

IMPROVED CAR ACCESS

The old transit mall diverted cars every few blocks, but the new mall allows cars to drive all the way down.
The original transit shelters featured an original design, but blocked views to shops and provided shelter for illicit activities.

Prior to the original transit mall, buses had to merge into traffic after boarding, slowing the process considerably.

New transit stops almost disappear in the daytime, allowing a better view of the storefronts behind while providing substantial protection from the rain.

The original transit mall had a lane for boarding and a lane for traveling. This configuration also exists in the latest redesign, with the addition of light rail.
Cleveland’s signature bus rapid transit corridor spurred billions in redevelopment.

- Two travel lanes were converted into bus only lanes and transit stations were installed in the new median, creating a bus rapid transit system.
- New landscaping, public art, sidewalks, street trees and street lighting were implemented.
Transit Investment Spurred Private Investment
The HealthLine, Cleveland’s new bus rapid transit system, cost $200 million and attracted more than $5.5 billion in private investment along the corridor. Numerous vacant properties were redeveloped along the seven-mile route.\textsuperscript{71}

Property Values Rose Even Before the Line Opened
Between 2003 and 2008, before the HealthLine began service, the price of an acre of land in the Midtown neighborhood went from $200,000 to $400,000.\textsuperscript{73}

Transit Ridership Jumped
After the HealthLine opened, ridership increased 46% from the previous standard bus service. In the first year, the line moved 3.8 million passengers.\textsuperscript{72}

Ridership Continues to Increase Year after Year
Ridership increased 62% over its first year. As of November 2013, the HealthLine’s annual ridership reached 4.8 million.
EUCLID AVENUE CONTEXT

- Between the 1860’s and 1920’s, Euclid Avenue was nicknamed “Millionaire’s Row” for its many opulent mansions. By the 1930’s, the corridor was better known as a thriving commercial avenue. As industrial disinvestment hit Cleveland hard in the 1960’s, Euclid Avenue declined in stature and vitality.

- Even with Euclid Avenue's decline, in 2003, 60% of Cleveland's transit rides occurred on the corridor.⁷²

- The Euclid Avenue redesign and HealthLine bus rapid transit line were funded by Federal New Starts funds, the City of Cleveland, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.⁷¹

- Nearly 1,400 trees of 26 varieties were planted along the corridor.⁷⁵

RTA’S HEALTHLINE

A new bus rapid transit line is the centerpiece of the project. The Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals of Cleveland jointly bought the naming rights.
STATIONS FOR SAFETY AND SHELTER

The HealthLine’s stations are transparent to prevent illicit activities, but almost fully enclosed to shelter riders from the harsh Cleveland winters.

NEW BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Bicycle lanes were installed from East 21st Street to Chester Avenue. Counts made in 2006 and 2010 showed an increase in cyclists of more than 300%.76

CONNECTIONS ACROSS NEIGHBORHOODS

Euclid Avenue connects downtown with the Midtown neighborhood, Cleveland State University and the Cleveland Clinic (shown above).

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

This view of a downtown segment of Euclid Avenue shows how the pedestrian realm received an upgrade along with the bus facilities.
Minneapolis consolidated downtown express buses along the “Marq2” couplet and saw big benefits in reliability and speed.

- Two travel lanes were removed, making space for an additional bus lane and a flexible lane used for cycling, parking and driving during peak hours.
- The landscaping was enhanced with street trees.
KEY OUTCOMES

Ridership Increased
Bus boardings increased 4% between October 2009 and October 2010. The corridor now serves over 24,000 one-way boardings each day.\(^{77}\)

Bus Travel Times Decreased
The operating speeds of buses in the transit lanes increased up to 83% during the morning peak hour and 74% during the evening peak hour. The left bus lane is for traveling, while the right bus lane is only for picking up passengers, allowing for better flow of traffic.\(^{78}\)

Bus Capacity Increased
Metro transit now runs 40% more buses throughout the day. During evening rush hour, the number of buses traveling along each street increased nearly 90%, from 80 to 151 per hour. Because the new configuration is designed to accommodate 180 buses per street per hour, there is still room to expand transit service during the busiest times of the day. There are two bus stops per block, and buses stop every block and a half.\(^{78}\)
Marquette and 2nd Avenues

MARQ2 CONTEXT

- Prior to the project, the bus network in downtown Minneapolis was bursting at the seams. As the primary transit street, Marquette and Second Avenue were designed to accommodate 60 buses per hour and managed to operate at 80 buses per hour at peak times. During those peak times, buses moved through downtown at 2.9 miles per hour, slower than walking.  

- In 2000, Minneapolis adopted a “Transit First” policy and 40% of downtown commute trips were already made by transit. Downtown was growing, so a new facility was needed to meet the projected demand. The downtown transit spines could not handle that volume and Marquette and 2nd Avenues were chosen to accommodate the growth.

- Inspiration for the Marq2 plan came from Portland’s transit mall and their two bus lane configuration. Portland’s system triples capacity and does not increase operating costs (see page 115).

- The region received $144 million of Urban Partnership funds for various improvements to relieve congestion, of that amount approximately $40 million went to rebuild Marquette and 2nd Avenue.

CONTRAFLOW LANES

Marquette and Second Avenues allow for buses to run opposite of car traffic. This configuration reduces the chance that cars will take the bus lane.
Waiting passengers and street furnishings can make passing through difficult.

Some bus stops that existed before the Marq2 project were built into the sides of buildings, like this one built into the Target Center above.

Passengers can shelter themselves from Minnesota winters in this bus stop located inside the lobby of the Wells Fargo Center.

Waiting passengers and street furnishings can make passing through difficult.

Clear sidewalks provide plenty of space for those waiting and walking by.