Cover art by Dyett & Bhatia.
MOBILITY

The Downtown Station Area features a walkable street grid, a creekside trail system, and a growing network of bicycle routes, as well as excellent access to the regional transportation system. Service to the Downtown Santa Rosa Station on the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) line began in 2017 and Santa Rosa CityBus has begun high-frequency service in several key routes that start and end downtown, increasing the range of options available for getting around. As the heart of Santa Rosa grows in the coming years, more and more trips will begin and end downtown. An integrated network of complete streets will provide a range of safe, convenient, and enjoyable options for getting from place to place.

This chapter articulates a strategy to improve connections to and within downtown, with an emphasis on improvements that support other choices beyond the car. It presents a range of transportation improvements and programs to support downtown development and make it safe, easy, and convenient to get to and through the Downtown Station Area.
ROADWAY NETWORK

The Downtown roadway network is based on the General Plan’s roadway classifications, which includes highways, regional streets (boulevards/parkways), transitional streets (avenues/main streets), and local streets as shown on Map MOB-1. The primary links to the regional roadway network include the US 101 and State Route (SR) 12 freeways, with Third Street serving as the primary corridor connecting its east and west sides. College Avenue, another east-west corridor, serves as the Downtown Station Area’s northern boundary. Secondary east-west connections crossing US 101 include Ninth Street and Sixth Street. US 101 bisects downtown: to the west, a continuous north-south surface street corridor is formed by the combination of Cleveland Avenue, Wilson Street, Railroad Street, and Olive Street. To the east of US 101 is a “grid” network of streets, with B Street serving as the primary north-south corridor through the core, and E Street the primary corridor for the eastern portion. Other major north-south connections to other parts of the city include Mendocino Avenue, which extends northward from downtown, and Santa Rosa Avenue which extends southward.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

Within Downtown, there are two performance metrics for traffic movement: Level of Service (LOS) and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Level of Service (LOS) measures the relative ease or difficulty of traffic movement at designated points along a roadway using letter-based categories ranging from LOS A to LOS F, with LOS A representing the best conditions with minimal delays, and LOS F representing the most traffic congestion. VMT is a metric that represents the total number of miles driven per day by persons traveling to and from a defined area. From an environmental perspective, development that generates less per capita VMT reflects less auto usage, and correspondingly, lower fossil fuel consumption and production of greenhouse gas emissions. Areas with a diversity of land uses, densities, walking and bicycling networks, and proximity to transit generate less VMT than separated land uses seen in low-density, suburban residential developments, commercial districts, or isolated suburban office complexes.

The Santa Rosa General Plan states that the City will maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better along all major corridors but exempts roadway segments within the Downtown area from meeting level of service standards. Two exceptions are College Avenue and Dutton Avenue, which run along the boundary of the planning area rather than being fully contained within the area.
Figure MOB-1: Roadway Classifications

- **Highway**
- **Regional/Arterial Street**
- **Transitional/Collector Street**
- **Local Street**
- **Private Road**

- **Undercrossing**
- **SMART Rail**

Source: City of Santa Rosa, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020
While the LOS metric will be retained for operational purposes, it cannot be used to assess transportation-related environmental impacts in these areas, as updates to State law require that jurisdictions switch to a VMT metric in 2020.

RECENT STREET NETWORK CHANGES

The DSASP envisions the transformation of existing fragmented networks into complete and connected neighborhood villages. New street types have been identified to create a finer grained street network while still fitting within the City’s current street classification system. Reconfiguring certain roadways and improving intersections will enhance connectivity and create infrastructure that maximizes multi-modal transportation options. The cost of these improvements can be funded as development occurs through the City’s capital facilities fee (CFF). Roadway additions and improvements are shown on Map MOB-2 and described in the table below.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL MOB-1: A well-connected street grid that optimizes multi-modal access, connectivity, and safety for all users.

POLICIES

**MOB-1.1** Maintain a roadway classification system as illustrated in Figure MOB-1, with the following segments as Boulevards designed to accommodate transit, bicycles, and pedestrian facilities together with vehicle traffic:

- Santa Rosa Avenue from Sonoma Avenue to South A Street
- E Street from Sonoma Avenue to College Avenue

**MOB-1.2** Implement the program of circulation improvements shown in Table MOB-1 to optimize circulation, improve multi-modal connectivity, and enhance roadway safety.

**MOB-1.3** In developing the design for the reconfiguration of Mendocino Avenue, assess the feasibility of angled parking in conjunction with sidewalk widening.

**MOB-1.4** Conduct an engineering study to determine the appropriate configuration of the Roberts Avenue extension as a local street.

**MOB-1.5** Continue to exempt the Downtown Station Area from the citywide level of service (LOS) standard established in the General Plan for the purpose of roadway operations planning.

**MOB-1.6** Use technology to optimize transportation system operations, potentially including adaptive signal operations or transit signal priority software.

**MOB-1.7** Incorporate traffic calming measures such as bulbouts where feasible at intersections to slow vehicle speeds and increase the visibility of pedestrian crossings.

**MOB-1.8** Prohibit cul-de-sacs and interruptions of the street grid in order to promote connectivity.

**MOB-1.9** Design the street network to minimize cut-through vehicle traffic in residential areas.

**MOB-1.10** Coordinate with Caltrans to identify improvements needed to maintain adequate operations at the US 101/SR 12 interchange, including adjacent on-ramps from City streets.

Fourth Street at Mendocino Avenue after the reunification of Courthouse Square.
### Roadway Network Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Roberts Avenue Extension</th>
<th>Donahue Extension</th>
<th>SMART Extension- North South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reconnect Roberts Avenue as a local street between Third Street and Sebastopol Road via the existing SR 12 freeway overpass that crosses the SMART rail line and multi-use path. The street is also identified in the 2007 Specific Plan.</td>
<td>Extend Donahue Street north approximately one block from Ninth Street to Maxwell Court as a local street. The street is also identified in the 2007 Specific Plan.</td>
<td>Connect Third and Sixth streets via a new local street through the parcel to the west of the downtown SMART Station, to be constructed as part of that site’s development. Install a traffic signal at Third Street and interconnected with the adjacent SMART crossing to maintain safe operation. The street and signal are also identified in the 2007 Specific Plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Roadway Reconfiguration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>E Street</th>
<th>Mendocino Avenue</th>
<th>Santa Rosa Avenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change the existing two travel lanes in each direction to one travel lane in each direction with a center turn lane and bike lanes between College Avenue and Sonoma Avenue. E Street would maintain its arterial/collector classification.</td>
<td>Change the existing dual northbound lanes and single southbound lane to single lanes in each direction with a center turn lane between Fourth Street and Tenth Street.</td>
<td>Change the existing two travel lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction plus a center turn lane and bike lanes between Sonoma Avenue and Maple Avenue and would remain an arterial/collector street. Create northbound merge transitions between Maple Avenue and Oak Street, and southbound merge transitions between Sonoma Avenue and Charles Street. Modify the block of Santa Rosa Avenue to the north of Sonoma Avenue to include a single northbound lane in order to create sufficient space to stripe bike lanes where they do not currently exist. Coordinate traffic signals on the corridor between the Transit Mall (Second Street) and Petaluma Hill Road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Modified Intersections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>College Avenue/ Dutton Avenue</th>
<th>College Avenue/ Cleveland Avenue</th>
<th>Dutton Avenue/ SR 12 West Ramps</th>
<th>Dutton Avenue/ Sebastopol Road</th>
<th>Third Street/ B Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add a new northbound right-turn lane, and widen the southbound approach to provide dual left-turn lanes. The northbound right-turn lane is identified in the 2007 Specific Plan, while the dual southbound left-turn lanes are new to the proposed Plan.</td>
<td>Add a new northbound right-turn lane.</td>
<td>Add a second left-turn lane with 300 feet of storage on the westbound off-ramp. The resulting configuration would include a left-turn lane, left-through lane, and right-turn lane.</td>
<td>Reconfigure eastbound Sebastopol Road to include dual left-turn lanes at the intersection. The dual eastbound left-turn lanes are also identified in the 2007 Specific Plan.</td>
<td>Add a new southbound right-turn lane.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Roundabouts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sixth Street/ A Street</th>
<th>Seventh Street/ A Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Install roundabout for traffic calming.</td>
<td>Install roundabout for traffic calming.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure MOB-2: Roadway Improvements

Proposed Improvements
- Intersection Improvements
- Roundabout
- New Street
- Potential Opportunity to Relocate Lanes

Undercrossing
SMART Rail

Source: MTC, 2019; City of Santa Rosa, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020

019; City of Santa Rosa, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Whether riding a bike on the Prince Memorial Greenway, taking a stroll to Old Courthouse Square, or scootering to the SMART Station, Downtown Santa Rosa offers a comprehensive network of trails, bikeways, and pedestrian-friendly streets, shown on Map MOB-3. As more housing, jobs, and desirable downtown amenities are added, improvements that enhance the existing network and make it comfortable, easy, and fun to get around will help to in-crease the share of people who choose to use modes other than a car.

EXISTING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Santa Rosa is currently recognized as a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. The City’s current bicycle network has approximately 115 miles of bikeways and has grown by 40 percent since the last Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update in 2010. Downtown’s bicycle infrastructure also includes short-term bicycle parking throughout downtown on sidewalks, plazas, and in parking garages. Significant in-vestments and commitments to future improvements will continue to enhance the pedestrian experience in Santa Rosa, including traffic signal improvements, sidewalk installations, pedestrian signal installations, traffic calming, and bikeway improvements. Additionally, Santa Rosa has significant non-infrastructure assets that support walking and bicycling as transportation – relatively flat topography, a pleasant, sunny climate, a strong culture of biking and walking for recreational trips, and a vibrant core that is a short and easy walk or bike ride away for many residents.

Several locations downtown have some of the highest rates of bicycling and walking activity, including Sonoma Avenue and Brookwood Avenue; and Santa Rosa Avenue and Second Avenue. Barriers to active transportation include the city’s highway system, which divides Downtown into four quadrants and creates challenges for way-finding, crossing, and bicyclist/pedestrian comfort. Infrastructure improvements to comfort, attractiveness, and connectivity will further enhance Downtown’s bicycle and pedestrian network.

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Downtown also includes significant off-street infrastructure connecting to a network of beautiful natural spaces. The creekside trail system, which includes the Prince Memorial Greenway and the Joe Rodota Trail, provides through-
Figure MOB-3: Creeks, Trails and Bikeways

Existing Bike and Pedestrian Network
- Class I Shared Use Path
- Class II Bicycle Lane
- Class III Bicycle Route

Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Network
- Class I Shared Use Path
- Class II Bicycle Lane
- Class III Bicycle Route
- Buffered/Upgraded Lanes/Boulevard
- Trail Access Point
- Trail Bridge
- SMART Train
- Planning Area
- Park/Open Space

*Greenway path downstream of Pierson Street is gravel.

Potential Daylight Santa Rosa and Matanzas creeks
ways for both bicycle and pedestrians in a natural setting. The Prince Memorial Greenway, a major component of the city’s efforts to clean up and restore Santa Rosa Creek, originates in Downtown and runs along the creek on the north side of SR 12. The Joe Rodota Trail starts from its connection to the Prince Memorial Greenway on the north side of Santa Rosa Creek just west of Highway 101, passes under SR 12 alongside the SMART right-of-way, and then runs west adjacent to the south side of SR 12. Additionally, the SMART Trail runs parallel to the SMART Station tracks from the North Santa Rosa station to West Sixth Street. Gaps in the trail system prevent a continuous network, especially between the SMART Trail and Joe Rodota Trail. While the trail along Santa Rosa Creek provides a functional east-west connection, it would benefit from more trail access points and improved wayfinding on surface streets. Additionally, existing development tends to face away from the creek or is fenced off, which can make the trail feel uncomfortable or hard to access. Opportunity also exists to “daylight” the creeks that flow under the City Hall complex as that site is developed. An extension of the greenway as redevelopment takes place would provide a continuous path from Prince Memorial Gateway Park eastward to Brookwood Avenue.

EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS

Several elements of the existing development pattern network present barriers to pedestrian and bicycle access. These include US 101 and Santa Rosa Plaza Mall, which divide the eastern and western portions of downtown and disconnect Fourth Street. These barriers require pedestrians to travel via under- and over-passes in some locations and make for routes that are circuitous and unintuitive. Stronger east-west connections, including Santa Rosa’s creekside trails, will help to improve linkages between two of the Downtown Station Area’s main activity centers, Old Courthouse Square and Railroad Square and more broadly between the eastern and western boundaries of the Downtown Station Area.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

The DSASP builds on the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and its stated vision: “Santa Rosa is a community where walking and bicycling are comfortable, convenient, and common for people of all ages and abilities.” The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan provides recommendations for sidewalk extensions, improved crossings, and pathways on corridors likely to serve high volumes, as well as new bicycle facilities throughout the downtown street grid.
The Creek Master Plan, includes objectives related to provision of access to creekside trails, creek restoration projects at publicly owned parcels, and implementing policies for development adjacent to waterways that integrates the creek into new and re-developed neighborhoods.

**Pedestrian Improvements**

Optimized signal timing, crosswalk markings and other improvements for better pedestrian connectivity and comfort will occur at several intersections shown on Figure MOB-4, including those recommended in the 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Specific facility designs for these locations may include pedestrian-priority signals, scramble intersections or other interventions to be developed by the City on a case-by-case basis due to the highly varied context at each intersection or midblock crossing location. Additionally, streetscape enhancements discussed in Chapter 4 Urban Design and Civic Spaces, will occur in the Core and Station Areas. Crosswalk striping, parklets, wayfinding, art or lighting at the locations shown in MOB-5 will enhance the pedestrian experience and improve walkability.

**TYPES OF BICYCLE FACILITIES**

- **Shared Use Path (Class I)**- Shared use pathways are completely separated from the street and provide right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians, with cross flows of motorized traffic minimized.

- **Bike Lanes (Class II)**- Bike lanes are painted lanes for cyclists. Wider lanes or buffers may be used to protect against doors from parked vehicles (known as Class IIB).

- **Bike Routes (Class III)**- Bike routes are roadway segments where bicyclists and motorists share the travel lane. These segments typically include shared lane markings or “sharrows” to indicate the shared nature of the travel lane. “Sharrows” may have green paint underlying them to increase visibility to motorists.

- **Separated Bikeway (Class IV)**- Separated bikeways are located within the roadway, but are for the exclusive use of bicyclists and are physically separated from travel lanes. Treatments that provide physical separation from passing vehicles include curbs, parked cars, bollards, or planters.
Creek Oriented Development Improvements

The Citywide Creek Master Plan envisions future redevelopment of the City Hall complex into a mixed-use project with high-density housing and community-oriented uses. This redevelopment would present the opportunity to daylight Santa Rosa and Matanzas Creeks that run under the site, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements could be added alongside the creeks. Standards and guidelines for new development along the creeks in the Downtown Station Area will ensure “eyes on the creek” as redevelopment occurs and a level of comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists during daytime and evening hours. Improvements to trail connections, such as between Joe Rodota Trail, the SMART Trail, and new development at the SMART site, enhance navigability of the overall system.

East-West Connectivity Improvements

Improvements to east-west connectivity seek to connect Courthouse Square and Railroad Square through enhanced bicycle and pedestrian routes shown in Figure MOB-4. Components include:

- Underpasses at Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Olive streets activated with lighting, public art, wayfinding, and space for pop up uses like retail, food, live performances, recreation activities, and other events to strengthen the connection to/from the core and Railroad Square. Improved bicycle and pedestrian connection under US 101 at Sixth Street that strengthens the link between the Railroad Square Sub-Area to the Courthouse Square Sub-Area. These improvements may also connect and improve navigation to downtown's cultural, historical, and recreational assets. Examples include unique, thematic, or visually consistent signage or art, or informational kiosks.

- A bicycle and pedestrian connection along Fourth Street through the Santa Rosa Plaza Mall to strengthen and facilitate connectivity between Courthouse and Railroad Squares. This will be achieved by exploring different programs with property owners to enhance the existing connection through the Mall, such as extending hours of operation, adding high-visibility wayfinding signage, and locating certain shops to activate the connection.

- Downtown Loop. A strengthened transit connection along Third Street will link Court-house Square and the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) station and the regional Joe Rodota Trail, whether by way of a trackless trolley, enhanced CityBus service, or on-demand electric vehicle (see Map MOB-5).
Figure MOB-4: Planned Pedestrian Improvements

- Pedestrian Improvements
- New Bike/Pedestrian Connection
- Bike/Pedestrian Improvement
- Streetscape Enhancement (striping, parklets, wayfinding, art, lighting)
- Existing Trail

Legend:
- Pedestrian Improvements
- New Bike/Pedestrian Connection
- Bike/Pedestrian Improvement
- Streetscape Enhancement (striping, parklets, wayfinding, art, lighting)
- Existing Trail

Source: City of Santa Rosa, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020
GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL MOB-2: A comfortable, convenient bicycle and pedestrian network that is a viable, attractive alternative to the automobile.

POLICIES

MOB-2.1 Establish bicycle lanes and pedestrian routes that connect key destinations by implementing the 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

MOB-2.2 Connect southbound bicycle infrastructure on B Street between First and Fourth streets with a class II bicycle lane.

MOB-2.3 Collaborate with SCTA on implementation of a bike share program to provide on-demand access to a network of rentable bicycles.

MOB-2.4 Work with SMART and the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department to establish an off-street trail connection between Santa Rosa Creek and West Sixth Street:

- Connect the junction of the Joe Rodota Trail and SMART trail near the Prince Memorial Greenway to West Third Street.
- Locate the West Third Street trail crossing at the future intersection serving the SMART property.
- Establish a bicycle and pedestrian connection between West Third Street and West Sixth Street through the SMART property.

MOB-2.5 Design pedestrian and bicycle trails to be highly visible and accessible from creek-adjacent development:

- Allow and encourage property owners to provide direct access to trails that abut their properties through the installation of access gates where fencing currently exists.
- Any fencing along trails should be as low and visually permeable as possible, such as three-foot high split rail fencing.
- Work with property owners and Sonoma County to address safety, security, and maintenance in selecting creek access points and designing fencing.

MOB-2.6 Require new development adjacent to the creeks to employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and adhere to "eyes on the creek" development standards and design guidelines.

MOB-2.7 Activate bicycle and pedestrian connections under US 101 and SR 12 with enhanced lighting, public art, and wayfinding signage to improve visual quality and perception of safety.

MOB-2.8 Provide bicycle parking as a street amenity throughout the Downtown Station Area and ensure adequate short- and long-term bicycle parking at the Downtown SMART Station and Transit Center.

MOB-2.9 Within the Core and Station Areas, visually highlight crosswalks and heighten pedestrian comfort with curb bulb-outs, changes in paving material or striping, signage, and/or signalization.

MOB-2.10 Close gaps in the sidewalk network and ensure continuous pedestrian access throughout the Downtown Station Area. Currently, short gaps exist along Brookwood and West Third Street, and utility infra-structure on College poses a barrier to pedestrian travel.

MOB-2.11 Conduct a study to assess the feasibility of auto-free corridor within the Downtown Station Area. The study should identify candidate corridors and pilot projects, including temporary street closures.

MOB-2.12 Promote pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Prince Memorial Greenway and Santa Rosa Creek Greenway to provide an east-west connection across the planning area.

MOB-2.13 Identify maintenance needs and funding mechanisms for the Prince Memorial Greenway to improve and maintain the corridor to accommodate a variety of passive and active uses.
GOAL MOB-3: Strengthened east-west connections and links between Old Courthouse Square and Railroad Square.

POLICIES

MOB-3.1 Reconnect Fourth Street to provide bicycle and pedestrian access through the Santa Rosa Plaza Mall. Work with property owners to explore options/programmatic solutions for reconnection that could involve clear and coherent wayfinding and/or extended hours of operation. Solutions should also consider the appropriate tenant mix and surface materials to use along the connection.

MOB-3.2 Work with Caltrans to provide space for and permit pop-up retail, food, and performances in the underpasses at Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets.

MOB-3.3 In the event of redevelopment of 10,000 square feet or more at the Santa Rosa Plaza Mall, require new development to provide safe, convenient connections to the pedestrian and bicycle network.

MOB-3.4 Develop and implement a wayfinding strategy to visually and thematically connect key destinations within the Core and Station areas. The strategy should consider elements such as branding, signage, mapping, informational kiosks, and thematic walking tours.

EXISTING NETWORK

Bus Transit

The Santa Rosa Transit is the busiest transit hub in the North Bay, with over 500 buses entering and exiting each weekday. Transit operators, including Santa Rosa CityBus, Sonoma County Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Mendocino Transit, and Greyhound, provide affordable, accessible and environmentally-friendly connections to jobs, education, shopping and recreation for the region. In addition, the city contracts for paratransit services to provide curb-to-curb transportation for eligible elderly and disabled persons who cannot use fixed route bus services.

CityBus, a division of the City of Santa Rosa’s Transportation and Public Works Department, provides the most rides for local fixed-route bus service and demand-responsive paratransit service among all Sonoma County transit services. CityBus ridership is one of the top ten largest among transit providers in the Bay Area. Nearly all CityBus routes stop at the main Transit Mall, radiating out towards the city’s neighborhoods and residential areas. CityBus is supported by route planning technologies and real-time bus arrival information.

Between March 2015 and August 2016, the City of Santa Rosa completed Reimagining City-Bus, a phased, comprehensive re-design of the CityBus system. Reimagining CityBus details the design approach and guidelines that will drive route changes into the future, including route types, designations and service design principles, spacing between routes and final connectivity. With the implementation of Reimagining Phase I, CityBus started providing 15-minute headways on Mendocino Avenue, Sebastopol Road, and Santa Rosa Avenue. Existing and planned high-frequency routes downtown are shown on MOB-5. Longer-term improvements, part of Phase II, include increasing headway to ten minutes on Mendocino Avenue, and increased headways to 15 minutes further south to Todd Street via Santa Rosa Avenue, east to Mission via Sonoma Avenue and Montgomery Drive, and along the current CityBus Route 10 between the Transit Mall and the Coddingtown Transit Hub. In the future, as population and employment density increase in the planning area, the capacity to support higher-frequency transit will continue to grow.

SMART Station

The SMART train line was completed in 2017 and provides direct connections between North Santa Rosa to its terminus at Larkspur, with planned extensions
The Santa Rosa Transit Mall includes several transit operators that connect to the rest of the city, county, and beyond.

The Downtown SMART Station began operations in 2017 and is a popular destination.

to Windsor, Healdsburg, and Cloverdale. SMART operates with 30-minute headways during weekday a.m. and p.m. peak hours, and one-hour headways on weekends. There are two stations within the City limits: The North Station, outside of the Downtown Station Area, and the Downtown Station in Railroad Square. According to a 2018 ridership survey, the Downtown Station ranks in the top three destinations along the SMART corridor, with 13 percent of riders alighting on an average day. That same year, 11 percent of SMART riders boarded at the Downtown Santa Rosa station on weekends and weekdays.

CityBus service connects the SMART Station to Courthouse Square and the Transit Mall on weekdays, with 10 buses an hour between 6am and 8pm. Currently, CityBus routes are accessible at three bus stops, all accessible via a pedestrian path next to the tracks. Despite a ten minute walking distance between the Downtown Santa Rosa and the SMART Station, the lack of wayfinding, discordant development pattern, and unfriendly crossing points con-strain a pleasant pedestrian and bicycling experience.

**TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS**

As more people begin to live, work, or commute from downtown, transit can play an increasingly important role in the efficient movement of people to and through the Downtown Station Area. Building on the Reimagining CityBus process, the DSASP seeks to increase future transit ridership by increasing the viability of providing expansions to transit services (including frequencies), locating the highest intensity development near key transit routes, and creating a ridership basis that supports bidirectional service every 15 minutes. Technology such as transit signal priority (TSP) software that optimizes signals for transit vehicles to ensure schedule adherence along the transit corridors is critical for reliable service and efficient traffic flow, which in support increase ridership.

As development and redevelopment increases the number of residents and employees downtown, the feasibility of establishing a fare-free zone within the Downtown Station Area should be explored as a way to further encourage transit ridership and manage mobility effectively. In the long term, the DSASP envisions a high-frequency “people mover” along Third Street to link Courthouse Square and the SMART Station. Planned high-frequency CityBus routes and a conceptual loop for this downtown “people mover” are shown in MOB-5.
Improving intermodal and multimodal connections will make transit a more convenient choice. The DSASP supports development of a transfer facility that is visibly and directly connected to SMART Station. This transfer facility will emphasize pedestrian and bicycle mobility improvements, enhanced streetscapes along transit corridors, and safe, easy connections to other transit options such as buses, taxis, and ride hailing services. More detail on the transfer facility and SMART Station design is included in Chapter 4: Urban Design and Civic Spaces.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL MOB-4: Frequent, reliable and safe transit service within the Downtown Station Area and to points beyond.

POLICIES

MOB-4.1 Focus the highest intensity development within a 1/4-mile of high frequency transit, including the Downtown SMART station, the Transit Center, and corridors with bus headways of 15-minutes or less.

MOB-4.2 Collaborate with transit agencies including SMART, Sonoma County Transit, Golden Gate Transit and Mendocino Transit, and Greyhound, on public programs and campaigns to increase transit use for work, shopping, entertainment, and tourism-related trips to and from the Downtown Station Area throughout the week and for special events.

MOB-4.3 Employ technology to provide real-time system updates that enhance transit predictability and reliability for users. Technological solutions could include a website; a mobile app; digital displays at transit stations and stops; posted and published schedules.

MOB-4.4 Monitor downtown development trends and implement the following transit improvements as warranted:

- Downtown Loop service, connecting the Transit Mall and SMART Station;
- Rapid Bus, a specialized service for the busiest segments of high-demand corridors that features direct route alignments and limited stops; and
- Expanded paratransit service.

MOB-4.5 Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a fare-free zone within the Downtown Station Area to incentivize the use of transit.

MOB-4.6 Pursue electrification of CityBus operations where financially and operationally feasible, including installing transit charging stations at the Transit Mall.

MOB-4.7 Enhance streetscapes within transit corridors shown on Figure MOB-4 to increase attractiveness for users and promote the use of transit, walking, bicycling, and shared mobility.

MOB-4.8 Ensure development of the SMART site facilitates convenient inter-modal transfers. Transit and shared mobility facilities should be located within a visual line-of-site of the rail station platform and connected by a clearly identifiable path at least six feet wide and free of obstructions.

MOB-4.9 Study the feasibility of expanding the Transit Mall to accommodate enhanced service, safety, and comfort.

MOB-4.10 Prioritize pedestrian safety when designing roadways and intersections serving the SMART station and Transit Center.

MOB-4.11 Ensure sufficient amenities are located at the Downtown SMART Station, Transit Center, and high-frequency bus stops to make the rider experience comfortable and convenient. Amenities may include: seating, lighting, trash receptacles, signage, sheltered waiting areas, public art, clean restrooms, and memorable design features.

MOB-4.12 Coordinate with SMART to keep the Downtown station vicinity safe, clean, and secure through:

- Regular maintenance and cleaning of the station and nearby public areas.
- Security measures, such as security patrols and/or surveillance cameras in the station and other nearby public areas.
Figure MOB-5: Future High-Frequency Transit Network

*Actual route to be determined.
**New connection through Santa Rosa Plaza could be through extended hours of operation.
TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

In addition to managing CityBus and Santa Rosa Paratransit, the City of Santa Rosa’s Transit Division provides transportation demand management services to employers and the community. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to a set of strategies that result in increased efficiency in a transportation system by changing travel behavior. The implementation of appropriate TDM programs can encourage the use of alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicles as a user’s primary mode, especially for commuting, and transition users into other transportation modes including transit, bicycling, carpooling, and walking.

Santa Rosa’s TDM program, known as the “Free Ride Trip Reduction Incentive Program,” is a combination of services, subsidies, and actions to improve the capacity of existing transportation services and infrastructure. Technical assistance, program support materials, and incentives are offered to employers in Santa Rosa. Bus pass subsidies are also offered through this program. Funding for the TDM program comes partially from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Transportation Fund for Clean Air. Other County-wide TDM strategies include subsidies, marketing and education, ridesharing programs, and State, and Regional, and Local TDM Participation.

TDM IMPROVEMENTS

The Santa Rosa City Code establishes TDM requirements for employers with over 100 employees, and voluntary programs for employers with less than 100 employees. In the near-term, the existing suite of TDM strategies can be expanded to increase incentives for Downtown employees to use non-auto commute modes, requiring developers to incorporate TDM strategies into their projects to the extent feasible, and encouraging large employers to provide on-site childcare. Exploration of Mobility As a Service (MaaS), a system enabled by combining transportation services from public and private transportation providers through a unified gateway, can also help to integrate different transportation options and facilitate coordinating trip and route planning, mode selection, and payment.

Over the longer term, a comprehensive program of TDM strategies can be developed and administrated in partnership with the City’s Parking Division, downtown businesses, developers, and agencies through a Transportation Management Association (TMA), an independent non-profit organization that works collaboratively with the City and the business community that is responsible for coordinating TDM programs. TMAs are usually more cost effective than programs managed by individual businesses because they are controlled by members and allow small employers to provide commute trip reduction services comparable to those offered by large companies, such as commuter financial incentives, rideshare matching, or Guaranteed Ride Home programs. One successful example of a TMA is Stanford University, whose wide range of TDM program elements have affected a shift in commuter behavior that has resulted in a drop in the percentage of employees commuting in single-occupant vehicles from 72 percent in 2002 to 52 percent in 2007. TDM components include a transit system (including shuttles), local and regional transit subsidies, incentive programs, a structured permit fee based on proximity to campus, and other programs.

Emphasizing a robust and well-designed multimodal infrastructure supported by TDM incentives within the Downtown Station Area will activate street level vibrancy and walkability of the Downtown so that those who drive downtown have other transportation options once they arrive.
GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL MOB-5: Reduced reliance on single-occupant vehicles and an increased share of trips made by alternate modes.

POLICIES

MOB-5.1 Expand the Free Ride Trip Reduction Incentive Program to offer additional incentives for employees in the Downtown Station Area who walk, ride their bike, carpool, or take transit to work. Additional incentives could include parking cash-out; unlimited transit passes for districts, employers, or residential developments; bicycle commuter tax reimbursement; carpool and vanpool ride-matching services; or reimbursement for business trips made by bicycle or transit instead of private automobile.

MOB-5.2 Require developers to incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce peak hour traffic and on-site parking demand.

MOB-5.3 Encourage large scale employers to provide on-site child-care services within the Downtown Station Area.

MOB-5.4 Establish a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in collaboration with downtown employers, developers, and property managers to reduce single occupant vehicle trips, traffic congestion, and demand for parking. The TMA’s goals should include: establish trip reduction targets and offer a range/menu of programs and services to incentivize alternatives to single occupant vehicle trips, such as car share, carpool or vanpool ride-matching services; app based shared mobility programs (bicycles, scooters); secured bicycle storage facilities; fix-it bicycle repair station(s); bicycle route mapping resources; informational campaigns using brochures, boards/kiosks, or other communication outlets; and technical support to businesses and homeowner associations in the implementation of TDM measures.

PARKING

Downtown Santa Rosa is a hub of business and culture that draws people from throughout the city and the wider region, with 89 percent of the trips staying within Sonoma County, according to the Sonoma County’s Travel Behavior Study. For most people in Sonoma County, the automobile is the primary mode of transportation, and adequate parking is important for the economic vitality of commercial districts. As residential, commercial, and civic activity intensifies downtown, demand for visitor and resident parking will increase; however, Downtown’s transit-rich location, diverse and centralized mix of uses, and pedestrian-friendly public realm mean that most trips can be accomplished on foot or bicycle.

Coupled with the arrival of SMART rail service, the emergence of ride hailing apps like Uber and Lyft, and driverless cars on the horizon, it is likely that need for parking will decrease in the future. Recognizing the valuable role of public parking supply, the DSASP articulates a parking strategy that seeks to support quality of life and business vitality, while avoiding excessive supply that discourages transit ridership and disrupts the urban fabric.

Like many US cities, in the postwar period the downtown development pattern was influenced by the dominance of the car, and today the city has an expansive supply of lots, garages, and on-street parking as a result—over 5,000 public spaces in the Old Courthouse Square and Railroad Square areas. Data collected at different intervals in recent years indicates that a significant portion of the municipal supply is underutilized even during peak periods, especially in parking garages. Despite this underutilization, on-street spaces near popular destinations tend to be the most utilized due to greater visibility and convenience, which can create the perception that there is inadequate parking supply and that the solution should be to build more parking. Improved management of existing supply can ease this mismatch, and the City has already begun to implement a citywide progressive parking management strategy aimed at optimizing use of existing supply with demand-responsive pricing, adjustments to parking meter hours and other actions, which will continue separately but in parallel with DSASP implementation. Additionally, surplus municipal parking supply represents an incentive for development, in line with the DSASP vision.

Current City regulations require that all new development provide a minimum number of spaces per new housing unit or square foot of non-residential space.
The DSASP removes minimum parking requirements for all development in the Downtown Station Area and allows for “unbundled” parking. This will allow greater flexibility by allowing development to construct an amount of parking dictated by market demand. It is anticipated that this will reduce the amount of parking constructed, reducing the development costs, and reducing the cost passed on to future residents.

Unbundled parking also incentivizes participation in the City’s shared parking program, which makes surplus spaces available to residential and commercial developments by way of shared parking agreements to avoid unnecessary construction of new parking spaces. As shown on Map MOB-6, most of the downtown core is within 1,000 feet (or a 5-minute walk) of a City-owned parking lot or garage; however, occupancy count data indicates that a significant portion of the spaces in several municipal lots and garages is available during peak midday hours. These spaces could be made available to adjacent developments through shared parking agreements, potentially offering significant savings that can assist with the financial feasibility of high-density residential projects in the core. As redevelopment of surface lots involves relatively little demolition and displaced demand for parking could be accommodated in other municipal facilities, redevelopment of one more City-owned lots through a public-private partnership is another opportunity to promote housing Downtown.

**UNBUNDLED PARKING**

For decades, zoning in cities throughout the US has required developers to sell or rent multi-family housing units together with parking spaces, even if the residents don’t need them. Unbundled parking allows developers to sell or rent parking spaces separately from housing, which can reduce the cost of housing and avoid construction of spaces that aren’t needed.
Ongoing efforts to use existing municipal parking more effectively will continue. The City is already working to optimize the use of existing spaces with demand-responsive pricing, adjustments to parking meter hours, and other actions as part of the progressive parking management strategy. Additional actions will be implemented on an incremental basis in response to evolving conditions. Technology will play a role in the strategy as well, including smart-phone apps and wayfinding signage that direct drivers to open parking spaces in real-time, automated, stacked parking systems, or parking sensors that improve parking efficiency downtown.

Apart from convenience, sense of security plays a role in public preferences for street parking over spaces in parking garages and lots. The City can encourage use of municipal facilities by taking action to enhance sense of safety and security with consistent lighting and the presence of staff on-site. Clean, well-maintained facilities also heighten sense of security.

In Montgomery County, Maryland, the County conducted an inventory and use analysis of existing parking at different times of day to develop a shared parking forecast. This forecast informed shared parking ratios for new development that reduced the number of required spaces.

Under a shared parking arrangement, the minimum number of parking spaces required for a 200,000 square foot mixed-use office and retail development was reduced by approximately 30 percent, a cost savings of $2.7 million.

The experience of Montgomery County indicates that shared parking standards can facilitate redevelopment and/or the construction of amenities by generating cost savings for property owners and can be an effective tool for achieving balance between parking and amenities for shoppers.
Table MOB-2: Parking Utilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Inventory</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Midday Utilization</th>
<th>Spaces Unoccupied</th>
<th>Total Spaces Available&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>% Available&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Garages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage 1</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>410</td>
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<td>346</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garage 3</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>400</td>
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<td>308</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>149</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<td>Garage 9</td>
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<td>296</td>
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<td>152</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage 12</td>
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<td>257</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lots</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot 2</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot 4</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1%</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot 10</td>
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<td>22%</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Lot 14</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This data represents a single point in time, although recent counts have indicated a similar utilization pattern.

1. “Spaces available” is a measure of how many spaces could still be filled for the facility while still maintaining a 10% functional supply buffer for events and contingencies.

2. “% Available” is the supply above the 10% functional buffer that is available to be leased.

Source: Walker Consultants, Downtown Santa Rosa Current Parking Conditions, December 6, 2019
Figure MOB-6: Areas Within a 5-Minute Walk of City-Owned Parking Facilities

Source: City of Santa Rosa, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020
GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL MOB-6: A balanced supply of parking that supports both quality of life and business vitality.

POLICIES

MOB-6.1 Eliminate City-mandated minimum parking requirements for all development in the Downtown Station Area and allow unbundled parking.

MOB-6.2 Require that mixed use projects involving development of over 10,000 occupiable square feet share parking between uses in order to minimize the amount of new parking constructed.

MOB-6.3 To incentivize high-density residential and mixed use development downtown, allow projects that offer 50 or more housing units (preferably affordable) located within 1,000 feet of a municipal garage or lot with underutilized parking to fulfill parking need in full or in part through municipal shared parking agreements.

MOB-6.4 Prohibit new stand-alone surface parking lots and encourage the conversion of existing parking lots to increase housing density.

MOB-6.5 Continue to implement a progressive parking strategy in the Old Courthouse Square and Railroad Square areas in order to optimize the use of supply and minimize the need for the construction of new parking facilities. Further implementing actions could include:
  - Adjusting parking meter hours and pricing for effective demand management;
  - Implementing parking maximums for new development;
  - Simplifying regulations so drivers clearly understand how to avoid a citation;
  - Improving branding, communications, and wayfinding signage; and
  - Expanding the participation of local businesses in the shared parking program through promotional/educational outreach and by identifying and addressing barriers to participation.

MOB-6.6 Implement measures to improve the sense of safety and security in municipal parking garages and lots, including consistent lighting, security presence on-site, and regular maintenance.

MOB-6.7 Apply new technologies that facilitate the efficient management of parking supply, including solutions that facilitate payments and that provide real-time information on the location of available spaces.

MOB-6.8 Allow for the development of City-owned parking lots through a public-private partnership in order to provide high-density housing.

MOB-6.9 Develop and implement a comprehensive “park-once” program that encourages visitors in the Old Courthouse Square and Railroad Square areas to park their cars in municipal facilities and then walk or use transit to get around. This may include providing free transit access within the Downtown Station Area or a reduced parking fee for participants, validated with proof of transit use.

MOB-6.10 Monitor spillover parking in established residential neighborhoods in the Downtown Station Area and expand the Residential Parking Permit Program if needed.

MOB-6.11 Allow flexible use of on-street parking spaces, curb space, and loading areas as appropriate for use of restaurants, cafes, and other businesses that activate and enhance the pedestrian realm.

MOB-6.12 Evaluate the need for additional accessible public parking spots on a biannual basis.