

CHAPTER 11. TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

SERVICE MISSION

Promote transportation services and infrastructure to enhance industrial, commercial, and residential growth and facilitate the efficient movement of people and commerce.

There are five Transportation Strategy goals:

1. Promote the concept of balanced growth by developing a comprehensive highway system.
2. Support transportation policies that reinforce investment in older neighborhoods and improve traffic flow in Des Moines.
3. Explore alternative means of transportation.
4. Support public transportation as an essential service for the City of Des Moines and metropolitan area.
5. Support the future development of the Des Moines International Airport, including its concept as an intermodal facility.

RESULTS

Questions in this section focused on automobile traffic and conditions, alternative modes of transportation, and the Des Moines International Airport. Overall,

respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with Des Moines' transportation systems overall (67%) and airport service in general (87%).

Des Moines' road system was rated highly by 63 percent of the respondents, who felt that it was either adequate or very adequate (Table 11-1). In a related question, about half of the respondents (54%) reported that traffic congestion was somewhat of a problem on a typical day when traveling to and from work. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents reported that traffic congestion was not a problem, while eight percent thought it was a great problem. Fewer respondents reported an adequate bus system (38%). However, over one-third (38%) did not know enough about the bus system to provide a valid rating.

Table 11-1. Percent Adequacy of Bus and Road Systems in Des Moines

	Adequate or Very Adequate	Inadequate or Very Inadequate	Don't Know
Bus system	38	25	38
Road system*	63	35	2

* Primary use of road system by passenger car

Respondents were most satisfied with the flow of traffic around the city (72%) and the city’s overall transportation (67%) (Table 11-2). Over half were dissatisfied with timely street repair (52%) and street conditions (50%). The findings for the latter complement those in Chapter 4, Infrastructure Strategy; of all the services questioned about, participants identified a high level of dissatisfaction with street repair and repaving (49%). Regarding the comments received for services in Chapter 4, 44 percent were complaints about street repair, including unfilled potholes, lack of paving for older streets, unpaved streets, lack of fixing streets and curbs, and keeping alley ways paved and maintained.

Several respondents reported that they did not know enough about transportation issues, including 40 percent about bus services, 32 percent about the use of calming techniques, 28 percent about street development for new growth, 24 percent about street improvements consistent with land use, and 23 percent for notification of street projects (Table 11-2).

Additionally, Des Moines has been working on developing alternatives to automobile transportation for several years. The alternatives include providing bicycle and walking trails and sidewalks and connecting bicycle trails. Further, they are concerned with the safety of alternative routes and the physical appeal of the landscape.

Table 11-2. Percent Satisfaction with Road Transportation in Des Moines

	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Flow of traffic	72	26	2
Transportation overall	67	25	8
Street project notification	52	24	23
Street development for new growth	51	21	28
Street improvement consistent with land use	51	24	24
Use of calming techniques (i.e., roundabouts)	50	18	32
Street conditions	49	50	1
Timely street repair	42	52	6
Bus services	37	23	40

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with these alternatives. Table 11-3 shows that respondents are satisfied with these transportation alternatives, with 60 percent or more indicating satisfaction.

In general, respondents were satisfied with operations at the Des Moines International Airport (Table 11-4). A majority of

respondents were satisfied with parking (73%), security (68%), availability of flight information (68%), and baggage claim (64%). About half of the respondents were satisfied with flight patterns (49%) and the food court (46%). About one-third of the respondents reported that they did not know about flight patterns or the food court.

Table 11-3. Percent Satisfaction with Alternative Transportation

	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Physical appeal of the landscape	69	20	11
Safety of alternative routes	66	11	22
Walking trails	63	8	29
Bicycle trails	60	8	32
Sidewalks	61	30	8
Connectivity of bicycle routes	61	24	24

Table 11-4. Percent Satisfaction with Airport Operations

	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Parking	73	9	18
Security	68	9	23
Availability of airline flight information	68	10	21
Baggage claim	67	11	22
Flight patterns affecting livability of homes (i.e., noise)	49	17	34
Food court services	46	17	37

COMMENTS

A total of 55 comments were related to the Transportation Strategy. As shown in Table 11-5, most of the comments on transportation pertained to bus service and public transportation. The remarks about bus services included a need for expanded bus service, help with seniors and disabled individuals, and additional benches, and

generally asked that the city provide better bus services. Public transportation also was mentioned frequently, with comments for the city to provide 24/7 service (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and affordable services for seniors, as well as to support alternative modes of transportation.

Table 11-5. Transportation Strategy Comment Categories

	N	Examples
Airport	3	Noise, abatement, security
Bicycle lanes	6	Add more bike lanes
Bus service	14	Increase routes, services
Freeway, highway	6	Noise abatement, improve
Traffic flow	4	Better re-routes, improve flow
Public transportation	11	Increase, offer more services
Specific street comments	9	Add pedestrian bridge at Fleur, MLK work too expensive, increase Valley Drive lanes
Other	2	Add shuttle bus, likes road system
