



Connect to the Future Project Overview

April 2019

Mission: Connect Transit provides safe, reliable transportation and access to opportunity to strengthen and enrich individual lives, our community, the economy and the environment.

Work Group Charge and Scope

The Connect Transit Board of Trustees sees in recent increased awareness of and interest in public transit a valuable opportunity to engage the community in questions related to the essential role of transit in Bloomington-Normal: What do we want our mobility platform to *be* in Bloomington/Normal? How do we want transit to figure into the daily lives of our citizens? What opportunities might Connect offer that we have yet to imagine?

In fact, these questions are foundational to Connect's 2021 Strategic Plan (see [www.connect-transit.com/documents/Final Draft Strategic Plan for 2021.pdf](http://www.connect-transit.com/documents/Final_Draft_Strategic_Plan_for_2021.pdf)), as reflected in Goal 1's focus on designing and funding "a sustainable transit system tailored to optimally serve the Bloomington-Normal community" and Goal 5's commitment to facilitating "our community's mobility evolution with innovation, future focus and collaborative leadership."

We will convene a *Connect to the Future Work Group* to take up these challenges with us and envision the public transit system our community wants and deserves.

We invite the Work Group to come to an informed understanding of the evolution of public transportation in our community to where Connect Transit stands today—core guiding principles, ridership, financial realities and possibilities, more—as members shape recommendations for our future mobility platform, including strategies for the platform's financial viability and sustainment. In sum, what do we want from our public transit system and how do we get there?

The Board seeks to understand where the community dreams our mobility platform can take us, what it might look like, and how that vision links in practical terms with the Strategic Plan. *Connect to the Future's* report with recommendations will be reviewed with input by the Community Transportation Advisory Committee and Bloomington and Normal Councils. Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the plan will move to Connect Transit staff for operational design and phased implementation.

We encourage the Work Group to learn from the experiences of municipalities like ours nationwide who have navigated similar pressure points and others which lie around the bend in the process of creating truly great public mobility systems. Recommendations should be wide-ranging and ambitious, a reach for the most beneficial mobility platform our communities are willing to support and prepared to sustain for the long term.

Time frame: May-December 2019

Work Group membership: Representative of our community.

Connect to the Future Facilitator: Experienced in community development in the public transit arena: the maturation of public transit services to meet evolving municipal needs, basic tenants for sustainable funding, mobility platform as economic development, more

The Board of Trustees is heartened by this opening, and we thank Work Group members in advance for your willingness to learn, collaborate, and advance mobility as a system vital to Bloomington-Normal's future.