STATION AREA PLANNING FINAL REPORT

for the 4 proposed commuter rail stations along the southeast portion of the Red Rock Corridor:

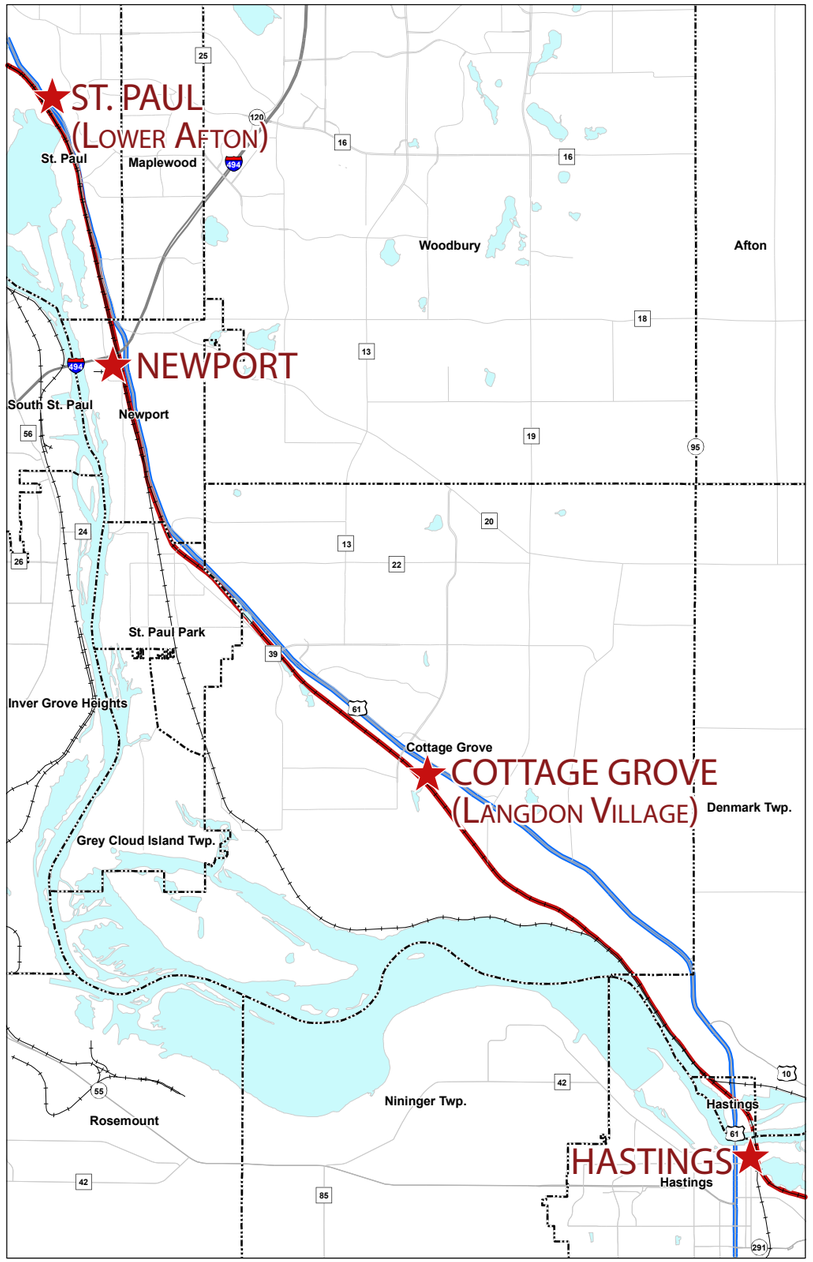
- HASTINGS
- COTTAGE GROVE (LANGDON VILLAGE)
- NEWPORT
- ST. PAUL (LOWER AFTON)

Sponsored by Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC)
and Washington County

Prepared by Hay Dobbs, P.A.
220 South 6th Street, Suite 165
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612.338.4590 Phone
612.337.4042 Fax

July 7, 2011

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT



RED ROCK CORRIDOR STATION AREA PLANNING

FINAL REPORT

Blank Page

FUNDING PARTNERS

This study was funded by federal funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through a grant agreement between Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)

The local match is provided by the Regional Railroad Authorities of Washington, Ramsey and Dakota Counties as part of their contributions to the Red Rock Corridor Commission.

A portion of the funding for this study was also provided by the Counties Transit Improvement Board. The Counties Transit Improvement Board is taking regional transit to the next level in the metropolitan area. Since April 2008, five counties – Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington – have utilized a quarter-cent sales tax and a $20 a motor vehicle sales tax, permitted by the Minnesota Legislature, to invest in and advance transitway projects by awarding annual capital and operating grants. The Counties Transit Improvement Board works in collaboration with the Metropolitan Council and Carver and Scott counties.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Red Rock Corridor Commission

Joe Harris, Chair; Dakota County
Jen Peterson, Vice-Chair; City of Cottage Grove
Mark Stenglein, Hennepin County
Janice Rettman, Ramsey County
Autumn Lehrke, Washington County
Myra Peterson, Washington County (Former)
John Hunziker, City of St. Paul Park
Barb Hollenbeck, City of Hastings
Jim Keller, Denmark Township
Steve Gallagher, City of Newport
Corbin Hopkins, City of Newport (Former)
Lee Helgen, City of St Paul
Cam Gordon, City of Minneapolis
Ex-Officio Members: Goodhue County, Prairie Island Indian Community,City of Red Wing, Canadian Pacific Railway

Citizen's Advisory Committee

Betsy Leach, St. Paul
Mary Ann Newman, Newport
Gregory Hanson, Newport
Emily White, Newport
Richard Remackel, Cottage Grove
Perry de Stefano, Cottage Grove
Lynn Moratzka, Hastings
Ron Toppin, Hastings
Sandi Dingle, St. Paul Park
Skip Soleim, Denmark Township

Washington County

Andy Gitzlaff, Senior Planner and Project Manager
Ted Schoenecker, Transportation Planning Manager

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Josh Olson, Planning Associate

Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Barbara Dacy, Executive Director

Dakota County

Sam O'Connell, Senior Transit Specialist

Goodhue County

Ken Bjornstad, Deputy Director Public Works

Metropolitan Council

Steve Elmer, Planning Analyst
Karen Lyons, Senior Planner

Mn/DOT

Jon Solberg, Senior Transportation Planner
Bob Vockrodt, Senior Transportation Planner (Former)

Metro Transit

Scott Thompson, Senior Transit Planner

City of Hastings

John Hinzman, Planning Director

City of Cottage Grove

John Burbank, Senior Planner
Howard Blin, City Administrator (Former)

City of Newport

Brian Anderson, City Administrator

City of St. Paul

Christina Morrison, City Planner
Allen Lovejoy, Principal Planner

Consulting Team

HAY DOBBS (Lead Firm):
- Tom Dobbs, Principal, Planner, Project Manager
- Gary Hay, Principal, Planner
- Kristin Petersen, Planner, Assistant Project Manager
- Tom Johnson, Public Relations (Former)

PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF:
- Phil Pasterak, Implementation Manager
- Charles Collins, Senior Transit/Rail Engineer
- Tushar Advani, Project Architect

BONESTROO:
- Jay Demma
- Scott Israelson
- Ciara Schlichting
- Theresa Maahs,
- Tyler Newhall

PIERCE PINI & ASSOCIATES:
- Peter Muehlbach, Project Engineer

TUNHEIM PARTNERS:
- Darin Broton, Account Supervisor
- Stephanie Trow, Account Executive
- Kristin Gast (Former)

DUAN CORP:
- Frank Duan, President

PIXEL FARM

FRANZ REPROGRAPHICS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1-28	CORRIDOR OVERVIEW PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS STATION AREA PLANNING STUDY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RAIL ANALYSIS - CORRIDOR WIDE MARKET ASSESSMENT TOD PLANNING APPROACH COTTAGE GROVE SITE SELECTION IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS
LOWER AFTON 29-44	LOCATION & CONTEXT STATION AREA VISION TECHNICAL ANALYS SUMMARY STATION AREA PLANS IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS
NEWPORT 45-60	LOCATION & CONTEXT STATION AREA VISION TECHNICAL ANALYS SUMMARY STATION AREA PLANS IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS
LANGDON VILLAGE 61-76	LOCATION & CONTEXT STATION AREA VISION TECHNICAL ANALYS SUMMARY STATION AREA PLANS IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS
HASTINGS 77-94	LOCATION & CONTEXT STATION AREA VISION TECHNICAL ANALYS SUMMARY STATION AREA PLANS IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

(Available under separate cover)

1 Study Area Inventory and Baseline Analysis Technical Report
2 Public Involvement Activities Summary
3 Market Assessment Memo
4 Final Station Area Plan Technical Report
5 Environmental Analysis Memo
6 Cost Estimate Memo
7 TOD Implementation Plan
8 Implementation Plan

RED ROCK CORRIDOR COMMUTER RAIL

INTRODUCTION

CORRIDOR OVERVIEW

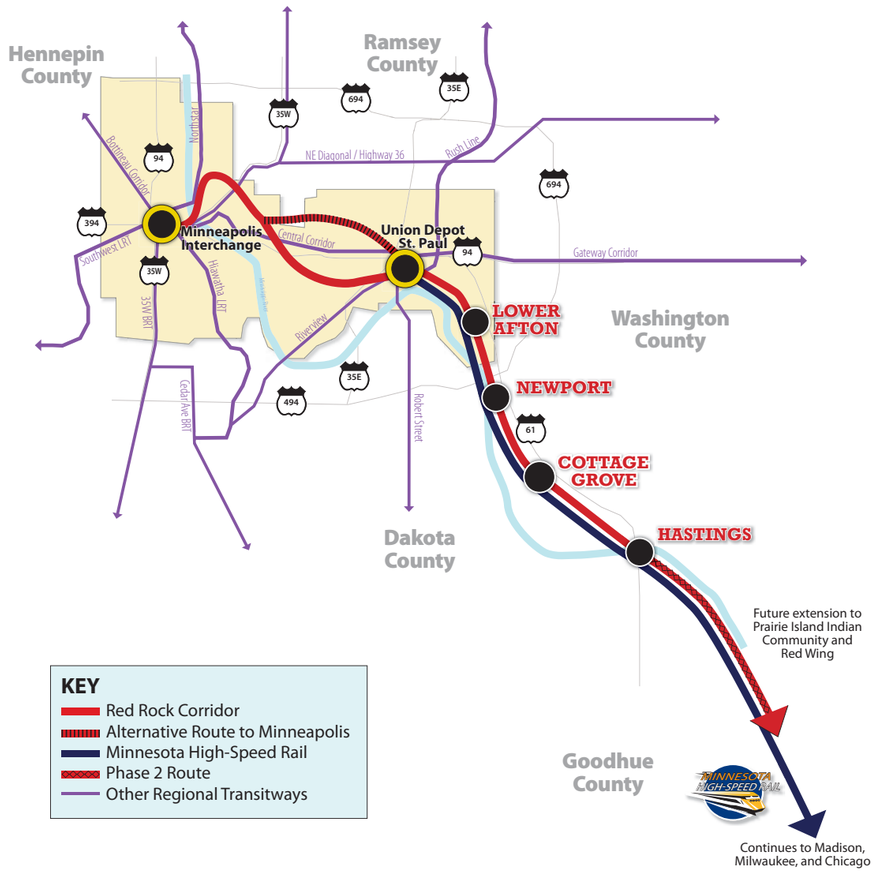
Location and Context

The Red Rock Corridor runs from Hastings, MN through downtown St Paul to Minneapolis. The corridor is approximately 30 miles in length—11 miles from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul and 19 miles from St. Paul to Hastings. The corridor includes Trunk Highway (TH) 61 and Interstate 94 and both the Canadian Pacific (CP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainlines with connections to the Union Depot in St Paul and the Interchange in Minneapolis.

The Corridor has regional, statewide, and national significance as a primary transportation route for automobile, truck, and rail travel. TH 61 is a principal arterial and part of the National Highway and National Scenic Byway systems.

Population growth in the study area has been increasing and is projected to continue to increase at a rate higher than the core of both Minneapolis and St. Paul. In the southeastern portion of the study area, beyond I-494, population growth rates range from two times higher than the study area average for Hastings to three times higher for Cottage Grove. Although the highest employment densities in the study area are in the downtowns of both St. Paul and Minneapolis, the highest employment growth, in terms of overall percent of change, is projected for the other corridor communities. Despite the growth in some of the outlying areas, 94 percent of the jobs in the study area are within Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the primary commute pattern is to these downtowns. This pattern is expected to continue into 2030.

Metro Transit currently operates peak-period service on Routes 361 and 365 between Cottage Grove and the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The Metropolitan Council (Met Council) also contracts for peak period service on Route 364 from Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park and Newport to downtown St. Paul. Park-and-ride lots on Lower Afton Road in St Paul and in Cottage Grove are currently served by transit in the corridor.



Highway 61 is the principal arterial serving the transportation needs of the corridor. The Metropolitan Council projections for 2030 show the entire length of Highway 61 in the study area as a congested corridor. With the projected traffic growth and no planned improvements, all key locations on Highway 61, including ramps and intersections, are forecast to operate at Level of Service (LOS) F during both peak periods in year 2030. The existing bus service is equally affected by congestion on Highway 61 and I-94. No transit alternative is currently available from Hastings to downtown St. Paul or downtown Minneapolis.

As population and employment increase, demand for transportation increases and a transit solution is needed. In 2007, an Alternatives Analysis was completed which identified commuter rail as the long-term transit investment for the corridor. Expanding bus service, increasing bus frequency and providing additional park-and-ride facilities are the strategies towards building transit ridership in the corridor prior to the construction of commuter rail. The Commuter Bus Feasibility Study completed by the Red Rock Corridor Commission in 2009 outlines a preferred service development plan that is both cost-effective and generates a high level of ridership. Several cities in the study area have also adopted land use and/or comprehensive plans supportive of transit improvements prior to the initiation of the Station Planning Study. A number of the plans are specifically aimed at increasing densities near potential transit stops or stations in order to promote increased ridership both on the existing express bus system and a future transitway system, should a system be implemented.

Station Area Planning Study

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority, on behalf of the Red Rock Corridor Commission, have retained a consultant team led by Hay Dobbs to prepare Station Area Plans, Site Master Plans, and Environmental Analysis of the southeast stations along the Red Rock corridor.

The study will look at stations in the following four communities:

- **ST. PAUL (Lower Afton)**
- **NEWPORT**
- **COTTAGE GROVE**
- **HASTINGS**

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Studies, Plans, and Impact Statements

Prior to the start of the Station Area Planning Study, several planning efforts had been completed in the Red Rock Corridor. The following pages contain summaries of relevant plans and studies that affect the Red Rock Corridor. Please refer to these studies in their entirety for additional information.

State & County Agencies

MnDOT Commuter Rail System Plan, 1999

MnDOT, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, completed a Commuter Rail System Plan in 1999. This plan identified the Red Rock Corridor (then defined as Hastings to downtown St. Paul) as a Tier One Corridor to be implemented before 2010. Red Rock was placed next in order behind the Northstar Corridor commuter rail line for implementation. The Central Corridor, between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul, has also been studied for commuter rail as part of the MnDOT's commuter rail plan, and was recommended as a segment to be implemented before 2010. The Central Corridor has since evolved into an LRT line be St. Paul and Minneapolis and the Red Rock Corridor now is understood as extending from Hastings to Minneapolis. The timelines for implementation have been delayed as well.

Red Rock Corridor Commuter Rail Feasibility Study, 2001

A Commuter Rail Feasibility Study was completed by MnDOT for the Red Rock Corridor in 2001. At the beginning of the study the work analyzed the corridor from Hastings to downtown St. Paul. As the study progressed, it became apparent that a connection to Minneapolis was needed in order to raise potential ridership. Extending service to Minneapolis lengthened the corridor from 19 miles to 30 miles and moved its terminus from downtown St. Paul to its existing terminus in downtown Minneapolis. Based on the results and findings of this study, it was recommended that commuter rail be advanced to the next phase of study, the Alternatives Analysis. The Alternatives Analysis was completed in 2007.

Red Rock Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study, 2007

In November of 2007, an Alternatives Analysis was completed for the Red Rock Corridor. The study analyzed transit services from Hastings to Minneapolis in a variety of configurations, modes, frequencies and alignments. It also evaluated several transit options for cost-effectively addressing transportation problems in the Corridor, including building commuter rail and expanding express bus service. The recommendations suggested phasing the construction and operation of these transit services in the Corridor. The study revealed that expanding bus service, increasing bus frequency, and providing more park & ride facilities are the first steps toward building a stronger transit base in the Corridor. This stronger base is a key component in the phasing of Corridor improvements prior to the implementation of commuter rail.

Metropolitan Council 2030 Transportation Policy Plan, 2008 Update

The Red Rock Corridor is in the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan as a transitway corridor from Hastings through St. Paul to Minneapolis.

Red Rock Corridor Commuter Bus Feasibility Study, 2009

In late 2009, a commuter bus feasibility study was completed by the Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) to determine the expected ridership increase along with the requisite capital and operating costs for increasing and expanding bus service in the Red Rock Corridor. This anticipates including an extension of service to Hastings and the Red Wing/Prairie Island community. The study indicated that improvements will be needed to the existing Park & Ride facilities at Lower Afton Road in St. Paul and new Park & Ride facilities should be constructed in Newport and Hastings. A future phase would extend service down to the Prairie Island Indian Community and the Red Wing Area. Portions of these recommendations are currently in the implementation phase.

Union Depot Environmental Impact Statement, 2009

The Union Depot Environmental Assessment was published on August 24, 2009. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed on April 26, 2010.

In 2003, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) completed its Phase II study of Union Depot in downtown St. Paul. This study described how several different modes of public transportation now serving, or planned to serve, downtown St. Paul, can fit together in a thoughtfully de-

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS, CONTINUED

signed multi-modal transit terminal located at the Saint Paul Union Depot. This work followed a Phase I study that analyzed alternative locations for the multi-modal transit terminal and resulted in a preferred site location - Saint Paul Union Depot. It was determined that the Union Depot offers the best opportunity for a facility that can meet the needs of the city, region and state, while enhancing the role of St. Paul and the Twin Cities as a hub and central place for the Upper Midwest.

Between 2000 to 2010, the RCRRA purchased several properties associated with the original Union Depot including its concourse/waiting room and train deck. In June 2009, the RCRRA agreed to purchase the Depot's Head House. The RCRRA has completed the environmental documentation for the Depot and is currently under construction in preparation of the reopening to Amtrak, inter- and intra-city bus service, as well as enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections. Union Depot is schedule to reopen in 2012. Central Corridor Light Rail will have a stop at the Depot in 2014.

Minnesota Department of Transportation

Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Passenger & Freight Rail Plan, 2009

The 2008 session of the Minnesota Legislature mandated that MnDOT prepare and submit a Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan. The plan, completed in late 2009, provides guidance for rail initiatives and investments in the state, and will be included in the State Transportation Plan upon completion. The plan is necessary in order for Minnesota to be compliant with federal planning and funding requirements. The plan develops an overall vision for effective utilization of the state's rail network and its future development. It identifies priority rail corridors, programs, and projects that will offer effective improvements or expansion for passenger travel in and out of Minnesota. The plan seeks to enhance freight access to markets and efficient, competitive services to rail customers, as well as improvements to overall freight flows and logistics. The development of the plan is important to the Red Rock study because the BNSF and Canadian Pacific (CP) main line tracks within the Red Rock corridor are part of a significantly utilized inter-regional freight transportation network. The existing Amtrak Empire Builder passenger rail line also uses these main lines as well as the proposed high speed rail (HSR) route from the Twin Cites to Chicago. The report states that Minnesota needs more than $9 billion in new rail spending over the next 20 years to improve freight and passenger networks across the state.

The Interchange
connecting people and places

The Interchange in Downtown Minneapolis Intermodal Station Study - Phase II, 2010

Along with the Union Depot in St. Paul, Downtown Minneapolis is anticipated as a major intermodal hub within the Twin Cities metro area. A study (Phase I) completed in 2006 provided space needs and operating requirements for the facility. The construction and opening of the new Minnesota Twins ballpark has had a direct effect on the location, sizing, and operations of the intermodal facility. The purpose of the second study (Phase II) is to identify options for short and long-term spatial requirements and capacity needs for the facility, and phasing of systems to support increased capacity. Phase II, which began in 2009, involves the analysis of land use, traffic, pedestrian, bicycle, parking, access, and circulation issues within half a mile of the station to accommodate additional LRT lines (Southwest and Central, and potentially others such as Bottineau), additional Commuter Rail lines (including Red Rock and North Star), the Northern Lights Express (NLX) Intercity Passenger Rail (Minneapolis to Duluth) and potentially High Speed Rail (HSR) from Chicago. The final plan will include station design alternatives that accommodate commuter and inter-city passenger rail and while facilitating seamless intermodal connections between these various modes of travel, LRT, express and local bus service.

(Review completed Exec. Summary and update above as needed)

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

East Metro Rail Capacity Study, Anticipated completion in Fall 2011

In 2010, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) commissioned the East Metro Rail Capacity Study to identify impacts and recommend capacity solutions to the freight rail network for the introduction of commuter, high speed, and passenger rail to the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota. The Study has been done in collaboration with the BNSF, Canadian Pacific, Union Pacific, Amtrak, multiple short line railroads, and multiple government agencies.

The purpose of this study is to identify how multiple high speed, passenger, and commuter rail corridors can utilize the freight rail system to access the regional multimodal transit hub at the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul. The study area includes significant freight infrastructure and three class one railroads. The infrastructure includes the Robert Street Bridge, Hoffman Junction/Interlocking, Westminster Junction, and the railroad yards to the southeast of the Union Depot. Together, this infrastructure handles 5% of the nation's freight volume and is home to both Canadian Pacific's and BNSF's transcontinental mainlines between the Pacific Northwest and Chicago. The study is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2011.

City and Local Agencies

The four host cities adopted Comprehensive Plans and Land Use Policies supportive of transit prior to initiation of the Station Area Planning Study. This section contains a summary of information pertinent to the addition of a Red Rock Transit Station in each of the four host communities.

City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, St. Paul, MN
Date of Adoption: February 24, 2010

Transportation Plan Strategies:
Proposed strategies to guide investment in the transportation system:

1. Provide a safe and well-maintained system
2. Provide balance and choice
3. Support active lifestyles and a healthy environment
4. Enhance and connect the city

Cordinated Transportation and Land Use:
- Create true transportation choices for residents, workers, and visitors, in every part of the city.
- Support transit-oriented design through zoning and design guidelines.
- Promote creative in-fill housing near transit corridors to increase transit-supportive density and housing choices.

Increased Transit Ridership:
- Build Central Corridor LRT and improve and extend bus service and facilities serving proposed LRT stations.
- Expand commuter options with Travel Demand Management (TDM).
- Work with Metro Transit to study and implement possible corridors for new bus rapid transit, LRT, streetcars, or commuter rail lines serving Saint Paul.

Pedestrian/Bicycle:
- Strengthen pedestrian pathways between housing, transit, and neighborhood services.
- Develop and maintain a complete and connected bikeway system.
- Create a comprehensive system of bicycle network and pedestrian path signage and way-finding.
- Complete bikeways safety audit to evaluate design, function and connectivity of existing facilities.

Connectivity:
- Promote collaboration for future high-speed rail service between Union Depot and Chicago.
- Work with the Port Authority, adjoining cities and counties, commercial railroads, and logistics companies to address the limited ability and growing demand for processing freight at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Intermodal Yards in the Midway Area.
- Provide better alternatives for accessing community events.

2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, Newport MN
Date of Adoption: October 2011

Major Transportation Infrastructure Projects:
- The State of Minnesota is scheduled to complete the construction of improvements to TH-61 and I-494 by 2010, bringing to a close a 12 year process of property acquisition and construction activities.
- Because of tax base decline and job loss the City is working to foster and encourage redevelopment and infill development to take advantage of the improved regional transportation infrastructure.
- No new significant transportation projects are anticipated within the next 10-15 years.

Land Use:
Note: The Newport station site is located in a mixed-use area, however the city is currently working to redefine a zoning area specific to transit oriented design and allowing for high density development.
Goals:

- Encourage transit-oriented design principles (buildings close to street, high-density mixed-use, pedestrian links, visibility) for redevelopment areas, particularly in the areas near the proposed Red Rock Commuter Rail stop.
- Cluster commercial land use at key nodes along major transportation routes as opposed to strip commercial development.
- Study the development of a traffic access management areas and elements in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

City Streets:
- During the past 15 years the City has embarked upon an aggressive street reconstruction program that has rebuilt approximately 70% of the streets in the community. The remaining 30% show the classic signs of pavement failure including alligatoring, raveled edges and frequent patching, as am caused by poor drainage.
- The City will need to develop streetscape standards that address the upgrade and resurfacing of the streets in the Old Town area west of TH-61, and in the Main Street area east of the highway. The City will likely continue to address these upgrades by selecting projects as funds permit, addressing upgrade of 2 to 3 miles of roadway every three to five years.

Railroad:
- The City of Newport provides a major throughway for both the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and the Canadian Pacific (CP) railways. These companies own two through tracks and various sidings in the City. The rail lines parallel TH-61 interconnecting Saint Paul with the City of Hastings and points south.
- Presently there are over 80 train trips through the City per

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS, CONTINUED

day. BNSF railroad planners are considering adding another back. 20-year projections call for 120 train trips throughout the community.
- At the conclusion of the TH-6/I-494 project there will be four remaining low (rail traffic) volume road/street crossings in the City: First Avenue, at the Saint Paul Park/Newport boundary, Second Street east of 7th Avenue, on Maxwell Avenue at the Cold Storage Spur, and lastly at Red Rock Road at the Saint Paul/Newport boundary.

River Traffic and Barge Facilities:
- Although the City of Newport is located on the Mississippi River there is very little river based transportation activity that is associated with the community.
- Flood protection levees and steep banks preclude access to the river except for riparian property owners who maintain private docks for pleasure craft.
- There is a commercial barge, bulk oil unloading facility that is located at the west end of 21st Street, which is operated by the Erickson Oil Company.
- The City does not anticipate that significant development of new river accesses through 2030.

Bike/Pedestrian:
- The City of Newport has developed a system of bike and pedestrian trailways providing interconnections to regional trails in the City of Saint Paul (Point Douglas), Saint Paul Park (CSAH 22) and the City of South Saint Paul (Levee Regional Trail). Additional trail connections have been identified by the Parks Board.
- These trails provide regional connectivity to parks and trails in Dakota, Ramsey and Washington County.

2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, Cottage Grove, MN
Date of Adoption: March 2, 2011

Roadway Systems:
Goal: Provide a safe, high-quality, and cost effective multi-modal transportation system.
- Transportation improvements will be coordinated with the plans of MnDOT, Washington County, and adjoining communities.
- The City will support regional improvements to major transportation facilities serving the city.
- A network of sidewalks and trails will be constructed in all new developments and , where feasible, in developed areas.

Goal: Expand transit options serving Cottage Grove.
- The City will continue to support and participate in the Red Rock Corridor Commission and its efforts to implement commuter rail service in the Red Rock Corridor. This will include conducting station area planning for potential station locations in Cottage Grove.
- The City will continue to support development of a high speed rail corridor between St. Paul and Chicago on an alignment through Cottage Grove to help reduce the cost of implementing commuter rail service in the Red Rock Corridor.

Rail Systems:
Existing:
- Two commercial rail lines running in Cottage Grove: The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) running parallel the Mississippi River, and The Canadian-Pacific Railroad (CP Rail) running south of and parallel Highway 61.
- The BNSF supports an average of 40 trains/day at a maximum speed of 40 mph. The CP Rail supports approximately 28 trians/day at a maximum speed of 79 mph.
- The CP Rail supports the 3M Cottage Grove plant and several businesses in the Cottage Grove Industrial Park. Currently, railways serve the primary function of freight transportation.
- There are three existing at-grade crossings, all with low-traffic volumes and controlled with crossing arms, lights and signals:
  1. Belden Boulevard near West Point Douglas Road
  2. At the 3M Cottage Grove plant
  3. 115th Street and River Acres Road

Future:
- Use of railroad in the Cottage Grove Industrial Park should be developed to its maximum capacity.
- Rail operations in residentially zoned areas should be carried out in the least disruptive manner.
- Development of vacant property that abuts a rail line, in any zoning district, should be done in a manner that will provide a buffer between railway and residential.
- The City is currently reviewing and will potentially implement "quiet zones" at the Belden and 115th crossing.
- Latest safety technologies are to be used at existing at-grade crossings and at no time can future at-grade rail/roadway crossings by approved without extensive exploration into other, safer alternatives.
- Protection of the environment and citizens from possible problems during the transportation of hazardous and other materials should be a high priority for all involved with the monitoring and regulating of such activity.

Transit:
Existing:
- Only peak period express bus service to St. Paul and Minneapolis, operated by Metro Transit
- Weekday Dial-a-Ride service from 6 am to 6 pm, operated by Metropolitan Council
- Weekday Metro Mobility door-to-door service available to persons certified under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Future:
- Short term expansion of bus service and long term implementation of commuter rail service in the Red Rock Corridor.
- Short term bus improvements include expanded express bus

service and addition of crosstown service potentially connecting with Robert Street Transitway, the Hiawatha LRT Line, the airport, and Mall of America.

Langdon Area:
While station site planning evaluated two site options within Cottage Grove, the city has deemed Langdon Village as the preferred site. The Langdon area, located south of Highway 61 and east of Jamaica Avenue, is the site of the nineteenth century Langdon Village. The area was included in the Red Rock Corridor study as a potential Cottage Grove station location for commuter rail line. The previous comprehensive plan also described this area as a station location and designated Langdon for mixed use development. This designation envisioned a combination of commercial and medium to high density residential development to best complement the transit investment. The current plan retains the mixed use land use designation for Langdon and places the area in Staging Area 3. Utility extensions to the area and subsequent urban development will not occur until a master plan of the area is completed.

CITY OF HASTINGS

2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, Hastings, MN
Date of Adoption: October 18, 2010

Transit System:
- Hastings is located along the proposed Red Rock Commuter Rail corridor. Hastings should identify existing transit passenger and support facilities and future improvements to and expansion of these facilities. Passenger and support facilities include shelters, transit centers, stations, and park-and-ride lots.
- An existing park-and-ride lot is located at TH 61 and USTH 10. A new park-and-ride lot is planned with the Red Rock Commuter Rail.
- The City of Hastings is outside the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District.
- Hastings is in Market Area III and is in the area of potential of transit service expansion. Transit service options for Market Area III include peak-only express, small vehicle circulators, midday circulators, special needs paratransit (ADA, seniors), and ridesharing.
- There is no regular route transit service in the City today.
- Dial-a-ride service for seniors and persons with disabilities is provided by Dakota Areas Resources and Transportation for Seniors (DARTS).

Highway 61:
- Existing average daily traffic volumes along Highway 61 vary from approximately 32,000 near each of the bridges to 28,000 near 15th Street.
- By year 2020, traffic volumes on Highway 61 are projected to range from 32,000 immediately south of the Mississippi River bridge to 42,000 at the Vermillion River crossing.
- The design of the roadway is presently inadequate to accommodate the existing and projected volumes.

Bridge Reconstruction:
- MnDOT has finalized the contract for the Hastings Bridge replacement project. Permanent construction activity is scheduled to start in October, and the new bridge scheduled to be completed in May of 2013.
- A tied arch bridge will be constructed, and will carry four lanes of traffic (two northbound and two southbound).
- There will be a 12 foot wide common use pedestrian/bike path from 4th Street to the North Loop that will run beneath the bridge, a plaza area south of 2nd Street, and parking directly beneath the bridge between 2nd Street and the Mississippi River

Bicycling Routes
- Over the last ten years, the City has developed a fairly extensive trail system designed for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized recreational activities.
- The system is comprised of off-street trails, parkways containing side-street trails, and on-street bike lanes.
- The trail system links neighborhoods to community attractions and provides recreational opportunities.

Hastings Historic Design Guidelines

The Hastings Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) was created by the City Council in 1977 to promote the conservation of the city's heritage. Staffed by the director of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), this nine-member commissioned is empowered to conduct the historic and cultural resources inventory of the city, recommend properties for historic site designation, conduct design reviews for designated properties, and sponsor a variety of public education activities.

The HPC has adopted the Historic Design Guidelines as a base for conducting design reviews. This guideline lists element that must remain unchanged in existing historic buildings and the standards for new construction in areas deemed part of a historic district. (See city map of historic districts in Section 9.) New construction and addition guidelines are vague, but generally state that the new structure should be of a similar scale, size, height, massing and material as the surrounding buildings, and should relate to the character of the existing streetscape, including the pattern of rooflines, windows and entries. Acceptable building materials include stone, brick, rusticated concrete block, and decorative terra cotta and stucco. Roof equipment projecting above the height of the roofline should be set back and made not visible, and historic features such as transoms, divided lights, signband and bulkheads typical of many storefronts should be included in new design where appropriate.

STATION AREA PLANNING STUDY

Purpose

The purpose of the Station Area Planning Study is to advance the transit planning efforts in the Red Rock Corridor in preparation for the eventual application and funding requests for a Federal New Starts Project. The schedule for a Federal New Starts Transitway Development Process is outlined on the next page. The Station Area Planning Process is represented in blue and purple.

Scope and Schedule

The Red Rock Station Area Planning Study was an 18 month study that examined the 4 southeast transit stations in the Red Rock Corridor. The study, conducted from the Fall of 2009 to Spring 2011, included the following elements:

- Corridor Website Development and Relaunch
- Corridor and Station Visualization including 3D Animation
- Preparation of Station Area Plans
- Preparation of Concept Station Plans
- Preliminary Environmental Analysis and Documentation
- Market & Transit Oriented Development Analysis
- Preliminary Cost Estimates
- TOD Implementation Guide
- Project Management and Agency Coordination
- Extensive Public/Stakeholder Participation and Support

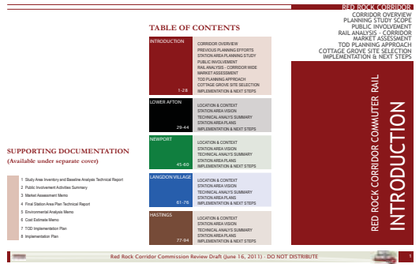
Station Area Planning Study Final Report

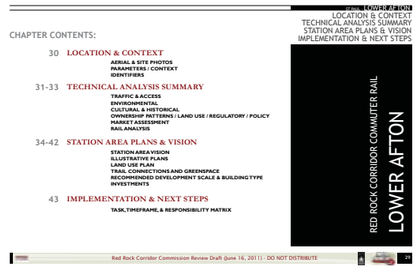
The Station Area Planning Final Report is divided into 5 sections, consisting of an introductory chapter that summarizes the planning process, corridor analysis, and background information relevant to the study. The introductory chapter is followed by four individual station chapters that document the final station area concept plans and vision for each of the station areas in the study. Each of the five chapters are designed to be printed and viewed either separately or as a comprehensive final report:

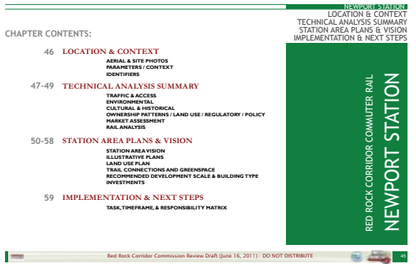
1) Introduction
2) Lower Afton (St. Paul)
3) Newport
4) Langdon Village
5) Hastings

Additional research, analysis, and information can be found in the supportive documentation for this report. The supportive documentation, available under separate cover, includes the following:

- Study Area Inventory and Baseline Analysis Technical Report
- Public Involvement Activities Summary
- Market Assessment Memo
- Preliminary Statio Area Plan Technical Report
- Final Station Area Plan Technical Report
- Environmental Analysis Memo
- Cost Estimate Memo
- TOD Implementation Plan
- Implementation Plan



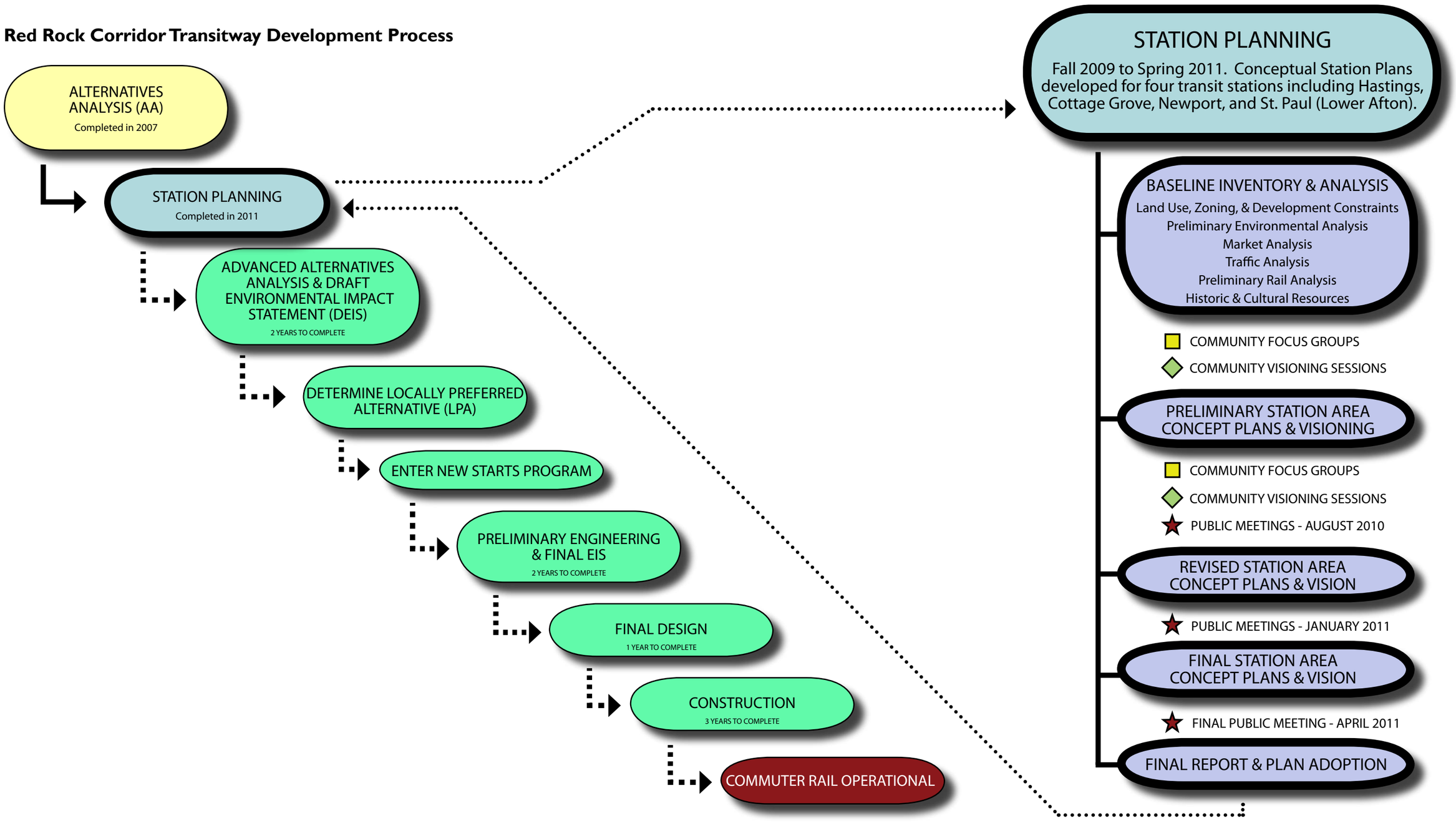








Red Rock Corridor Transitway Development Process



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Approach

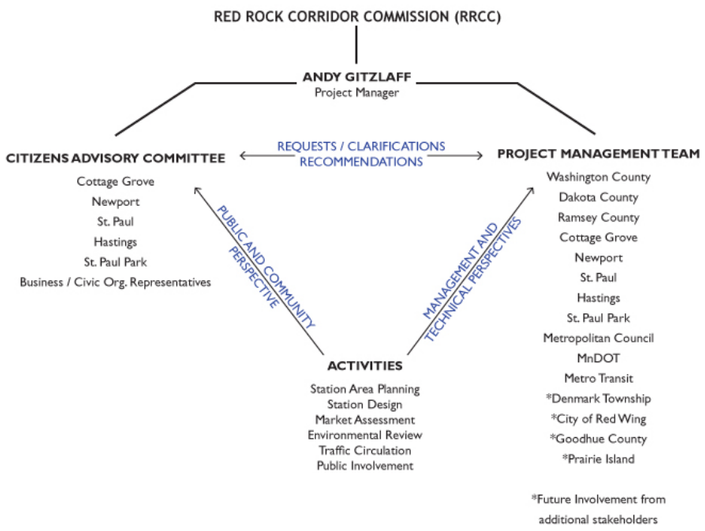
The Station Area Planning Study made public invovlement and community engagement and integral and essential part of the planning process during all phases of the study. At the onset, a Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) and Project Management Team (PMT) were established.

Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC)

Add description and Role / Purpose.

Project Management Team (PMT)

Add description and Role / Purpose.



Summary of Meetings

COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

5 Community Focus Groups were held during April and May, 2010 with the following civic organizations in each of the four communities:

- Planning District #1, St. Paul
- Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce
- Newport Business Association
- Hastings Downtown Business Association
- Hastings Rotary Club

Each meeting began with a presentation from project staff or consultants followed by discussion, questions and responses. Minutes were taken at each meeting and the attendees were asked to fill out a brief questionnaire before leaving. A meeting summary of the comments provided during each of the Focus Group meetings is included in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.

BUS RIDER SURVEYS & FOCUS GROUP

On August 16th, 2010, 358 bus rider surveys were distributed at the Lower Afton and Cottage Grove Park & Ride lots. 43% of those surveys were completed and returned with many riders indicating an interest in attending a bus rider focus group meeting which was held on:

- Tuesday, September 28th, 2010

A summary of the 154 returned bus rider surveys and of the comments and feedback received during the bus rider focus group is included in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.



VISIONING SESSIONS - ROUND 1

As part of the public participation process, visioning sessions were held in order to engage key Stakeholders, Property Owners, Developers, City Planning Commission Members and Elected Officials. Staff from Hastings, Cottage Grove, Newport, and St. Paul provided lists of stakeholders from each community and they were invited to Visioning Sessions held on the following dates:

- Hastings City Hall, April 27, 2010
- Newport City Hall , April 28, 2010
- Cottage Grove City Hall, April 29, 2010
- St. Paul District 1 at the Battle Creek Rec Center, May 3, 2010

Each Session began with a presentation describing the role of the Red Rock Corridor Commission followed by a project summary and description of previous studies that have defined the study and set in motion the process for station area planning and design. For example, the Alternatives Analysis, previously identified potential station sites in each of the four communities. The characteristics of each site were presented during each meeting, including existing conditions and field observations. Staff from each community presented the local planning framework and this was followed by a discussion of potential development opportunities at each station area. After the presentation, the attendees were asked to provide input on their vision for the station areas. A meeting summary of the comments provided during each of the Visioning Sessions is included in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.

VISIONING SESSIONS - ROUND 2

A second round of Visioning Sessions were held in each community a few months after the initial Visioning Sessions:

- Newport City Hall, July 7, 2010
- Cottage Grove City Hall, July 8, 2010
- St. Paul District 1 at the Battle Creek Rec Center, July 13, 2010
- Hastings City Hall, July 14, 2010

At each of these meetings, a presentation was given that gave an overview of the study; presented initial environmental, market, and traffic analysis; and introduced concept plans for the station. After the presentation, stakeholders were invited to discuss the plans and provide feedback in a Q&A period and through questionnaires. A summary of the comments provided on the questionnaires is included in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.





TOD TOUR AND COMMUTER/LIGHT RAIL RIDE

On July 22, 2010, a group representing members of the Red Rock Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) , Project Management Team (PMT), project consultants, and elected officials rode local transit and took a walking tour of transit-oriented development and mixed-use development in the Twin Cities area. The tour included a ride on the Hiawatha Light Rail line, a Commuter Coach bus, and the Northstar Commuter Rail; and walking tours of Bloomington Centeral Station and NE Minneapolis. The group also listened to several presentations throughout the event:



- Mark Fabel from McGough Construction, project manager for the Bloomington Central Station project for over 10 years, about Planning, Marketing, Financing, and Managing the project.
- Glen Markegard, Acting Planning Manager for the City of Bloomington, about the planning and zoning changes surrounding the station.
- Chuck Ballentine presented concept plans for the Multi-modal Interchange at Target Field
- Mark Nevinski from the City of Coon Rapids about development opportunities at the station and beyond as well as their planning process and zoning changes related to commuter rail.
- Anoka County Commissioner Erhart



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, CONTINUED

OTHER EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

As part of the public involvement plan, project staff, CAC memebers, and PMT members represented the Red Rock Corridor Station Area Planning Study at various festivals, fairs, events, and press conferences:

- Elected Officials Breakfast Event at Tinucci's
- Press Conference Kick Off at the Capitol
- National Train Day
- National Night Out in St. Paul
- Pioneer Day in Newport
- Strawberry Fest in Cottage Grove
- Saturday Night Cruise In in Hastings
- Commuter Fairs in Minneapolis and St. Paul

Project representatives distributed handouts about the Red Rock Corridor and the Station Area Planning study, and at some events, Red Rock whistles that promoted the corridor and directed people to the updated website.





PUBLIC MEETINGS - ROUND 1 (Preliminary Plans)

In August 2010, public meetings were held in each of the four communities:

- Hastings City Hall, August 17, 2010
- Newport City Hall, August 18, 2010
- Cottage Grove City Hall, August 19, 2010
- St. Paul Battle Creek Rec Center, August 25, 2010

At each meeting, preliminary station area concept plans were presented. After the presentation a questionnaire / survey was distributed to collect feedback and comments on the plans. In Cottage Grove, an Audience Response System (ARS) was used to collect feedback and responses in lieu of questionnaires. The questionnaire and ARS responses are summarized in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.



PUBLIC MEETINGS - ROUND 2 (Revised Plans)

In August 2010, public meetings were held in each of the four communities:

- Newport City Hall, January 10, 2011
- Hastings City Hall, January 11, 2011
- Cottage Grove City Hall, January 12, 2011
- St. Paul Battle Creek Rec Center, January 13, 2011

At each meeting, revised station area concept plans were presented. followed by an open house style Q&A period. Written comments were also accepted during the meetings. The informal feedback and written comments are summarized in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.







FINAL OPEN HOUSE

The final public meeting for the study was an Open House for all four communities held at the Washington County Service Center.

- April 6th, 2011 for the Cities of St. Paul, Newport, Cottage Grove, and Hastings

At the meeting, final station area concept plans, illustrative renderings, cost estimates, and station area information were displayed on presentation boards. A four minute animation showed a three dimensional representation of the concept plans for each of the four stations: Hastings, Cottage Grove, Newport, and Lower Afton (St. Paul). There was a brief welcome and introduction by Red Rock Corridor Chair / Dakota County Commissioner Joe Harris, comments from Red Rock Corridor Vice-Chair / Cottage Grove Councilmember Jen Peterson, and closing remarks by Citizen's Advisory Committee member Skip Soleim followed by an open house style Q&A period. The informal feedback and written comments received are summarized in the Public Involvement Tech Memo, available under seperate cover.







PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, CONTINUED

Summary of Newsletters, Press Releases, and Communication Efforts

Tunheim Partners has administered communications efforts in Partnership with Hay Dobbs for the Red Rock Corridor Commission since November, 2009. Efforts have included media relations, writing and sending news releases and alerts to create buzz around milestones for the Commission, as well as community relations; writing and sending articles to community newsletters and to e-News subscribers. Tunheim Partners has also assisted the Red Rock Corridor Commission in the re-launch of its website and worked to drive traffic to the website through all communications efforts.

The following list outlines Tunheim Partners' communications efforts throughout its contract with Hay Dobbs. Red Rock Corridor articles that have been written and submitted

News Releases and Media Alerts

The following list outlines each of the news releases and media alerts that have been written and submitted to the Red Rock Corridor media list. The list specifies the headline of the news release or media alert and the date that it was issued to the media.

- Red Rock Corridor Seeks Funds for Transit Development, Stimulate Job Creation
  February 8, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor Commission Names Community Leaders to its Citizens Advisory Committee
  March 24, 2010
- Three Members Added to Red Rock Corridor's Citizens Advisory Committee
  August 4, 2010
- Design Concept Released for Future Red Rock Transit Station in Hastings
  August 10, 2010
- Revised Concept Designs and Station Plans for Future Red Rock Commuter Rail Transit Station in Newport and Cottage Grove
  August 12, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor to Announce Design Concepts for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  August 12, 2010
- Design Concepts Released for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  August 16, 2010
- Design Concept Released for Future Red Rock Transit Station in St. Paul
  August 18, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor to Announce Revised Concept Designs and Station Plans for Future Red Rock Commuter Rail Transit Stations
  December 21, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Announce Revised Concept Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Station in Cottage Grove and Newport
  December 28, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Announce Revised Concept Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Station in Hastings
  December 28, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Announce Revised Concept Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Station in St. Paul
  December 28, 2010
- Red Rock Corridor's Newport Transit Station Included in Governor Dayton's Bonding Proposal January 31, 2011
- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Showcase Final Conceptual Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  April 4, 2011

e-Newsletters

The following list outlines each of the e-Newsletters that have been written and sent to the Red Rock Corridor e-Newsletter subscriber list. The list specifies the headline of the e-Newsletter, the date that it was sent to subscribers and how many people were on the subscriber list.

- The Red Rock Corridor Needs Your Help
  February 1, 2010 219 subscribers
- Come Out to Support the Red Rock Corridor on Monday
  February 4, 2010 210 subscribers
- Red Rock Corridor Commission Names Community Leaders to its Citizens Advisory Committee
  March 24, 2010 236 subscribers
- Bringing new life to the historic Hastings Depot
  May 4, 2010 245 subscribers
- Coming Soon: Concept Plans for Transit Station Areas
  July 28, 2010 282 subscribers
- Public Takes First Look at Future Red Rock Transit Station Areas
  September 15, 2010 275 subscribers
- Langdon Village selected as the preferred site for the Red Rock Transit Station in Cottage Grove
  December 3, 2010 324 subscribers
- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Announce Revised Concept Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  December 22, 2010 318 subscribers
- Reminder: Open Houses for Future Red Rock Corridor Transit Stations Coming Fast
  January 6, 2011 320 subscribers

- Large Majority of Bus Riders Excited for Enhanced Transit Options in the Red Rock Corridor
  February 28, 2011 325 subscribers

- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Showcase Final Conceptual Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  March 15, 2011 328 subscribers

- You are Invited to See the Final Plans for Future Red Rock Transit Stations
  March 31, 2011 325 subscribers

- Public gets a Glimpse of Future Transit Stations
  May 17, 2011 330 subscribers

Community Newsletter Articles

The following list outlines each of the Red Rock Corridor articles that have been written and submitted to community newsletters. The list specifies the issues for which an article was written and the date that the article was submitted to the outlet.

Cottage Grove:
- May 2010 Issue
- July 2010 Issue
- October 2010 Issue
- December 2010 Issue
- February 2011 Issue
- June 2011 Issue

District 1 News:
- Summer 2010 Issue
- Fall 2010 Issue

Hastings:
- Summer 2010 Issue
- Fall 2010 Issue
- Summer 2011 Issue

Newport:
- Summer 2010 Issue
- Fall 2010 Issue
- Winter 2011 Issue
- Spring 2011 Issue
- Summer 2011 Issue

Prairie Island Indian Community:
- May 2010 Issue
- April 2011 Issue

South St. Paul:
- June/July 2010 Issue
- August/September 2010 Issue
- February/March 2011 Issue

St. Paul Park:
- Spring 2010 Issue
- Spring 2011 Issue

News Clips

The following list outlines each media placement the Red Rock Corridor has received. The list specifies the headline of the piece, media outlet it was placed in and the date it ran.

- High-speed train route to Chicago likely to take year to map
  Star Tribune December 23, 2009 297,478 subscribers

- MnDOT releases $9 billion rail plan
  Minnesota Public Radio December 21, 2009 5,147 (unique monthly visitors)

- Newport Commuter lot gets initial OK from Washington County board
  Star Tribune January 19, 2010 297,478 subscribers

- Finally, Wakota Bridge Span is at hand
  Star Tribune January 19, 2010 297,478 subscribers

- State, federal officials tout long-term transportation plans
  Finance and Commerce January 26, 2010 1,300 subscribers

- Sieben bill could mean a park and ride for downtown Hastings
  Hastings Star Gazette January 28, 2010 5,700 subscribers

- Washington County: Plan for transit hub take step forward
  Stillwater Gazette January 28, 2010 2,504 subscribers

- Viewpoint: Tough choices to be made this session
  South Washington County Bulletin February 4, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- Red Rock Corridor / Rail line subject of information forum
  Pioneer Press February 4, 2010 191,591 subscribers

- Communities push Red Rock line
  Red Wing Republican Eagle February 8, 2010 6,000 subscribers

- Red Rock line pushed for passenger rail
  Pierce County Herald February 8, 2010 3,941 subscribers

- Red Rock train on track for '18 in southeast metro
  Star Tribune February 10, 2010 297,478 subscribers

- Backers set to market Red Rock corridor plan
  Pioneer Press February 10, 2010 191,591 subscribers

- Red Rock backers launch marketing blitz for rail plan Pioneer Press February 10, 2010 191,591 subscribers

- Transit station: New business hub?
  South Washington County Bulletin March 3, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, CONTINUED

- Local residents named to Red Rock Corridor Advisory Committee
  South Washington County Bulletin March 24, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- Editorial: Cities will be hubs for future transit
  Star Tribune June 6, 2010 504,616 subscribers

- A new, wider Wakota Bridge opens in early July
  Pioneer Press June 26, 2010 191,591 subscribers

- Rail authority seeks grants for Red Rock, Rush Line corridors
  South Washington County Bulletin July 21, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- It's time for train talk
  Hastings Star Gazette July 21, 2010 5,700 subscribers

- Red Rock adds three citizen advisors
  Finance and Commerce August 6, 2010 1,300 subscribers

- Growth to sprout with rail line
  Star Tribune August 11, 2010 297,478 subscribers

- 4 open houses this week preview Red Rock commuter rail line
  **NOTE: 48 people visited the website from the article, which was the biggest peak in traffic website traffic.*
  Pioneer Press August 17, 2010 191,591 subscribers

- Public this week gets peek at commuter rail plans
  South Washington County Bulletin August 18, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- Our View: Give taxpayers a voice on city hall
  South Washington County Bulletin August 26, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- An Autumn surprise
  South Washington County Bulletin November 9, 2010
  11,000 subscribers

- Park and ride lot downtown gets go-ahead
  Hastings Star Gazette January 20, 2011 5,700 subscribers

- Redevelopment predicted with Red Rock Rail
  South Washington County Bulletin January 23, 2011
  11,000 subscribers

- A park and ride in Hastings, minus the ride
  Star Tribune January 29, 2011 297,478 subscribers

January Open House Coverage

- Plans for depot area materialize: Public meeting planned for January 11
  Hastings Star Gazette January 6, 2011

- Red Rock Corridor plans on display
  Pioneer Press January 5, 2011

- Red Rock Open Houses Encourage Public Engagement
  Transit for Livable Communities January 31, 2011



Final Open House Coverage

- Red Rock Corridor Commission to Present Transit Station Designs
  KSTP- Hastings-Cottage Grove March 15, 2011

- South news briefs
  Star Tribune March 29, 2011

- Red Rock Corridor Commission to showcase final conceptual plans for future Red Rock transit stations
  South Washington County Cable (Channel 14) – Newport and Cottage Grove Bulletins
  March 29, 2011

- Red Rock Corridor Open House April 6
  Ramsey County Regional Rail News Website

- Open House Information Newport Website

- Open House Information Washington County Website

- Commuter rail to Hastings takes baby steps, as bus vs. train debate continues
  Pioneer Press April 2, 2011

- Red Rock transit station plans to be unveiled
  South Washington County Bulletin April 5, 2011

- Red Rock Corridor Open House April 6 - Reminder
  Ramsey County Regional Rail News- Website

- Final Red Rock Corridor Commission Plans Released
  KSTP- Hastings-Cottage Grove April 6, 2011

- Lower Afton park & ride lot expansion worries locals
  Southwest Review News April 8, 2011

- First of five stages complete in Red Rock project
  Hastings Star Gazette April 13, 2011

Google Analytics

Google Analytics have been used to track the website traffic of redrockrail.org since the its re-launch in February, 2010. Below are details of traffic on the website from February, 2010 – April, 2011.

Visits: This is the total number of unique visitors to the website. Since February 2010, there have been a total of 7,656 visitors to the Red Rock Corridor website. The monthly average for unique visitors to the site is above 500 visitors.

Highest Number of Visits: The following outlines the dates with the highest number of page visits since the website re-launch in February 2010. Each of these peaks can be attributed to news and media relations around the Red Rock Corridor:

- August 17, 2010 – 106 visits
  - Pioneer Press article ran on August 17, 2010
  - Public open houses August 17 – August 25, 2010
- August 11, 2010 – 73 visits
  - Star Tribune article ran on August 11, 2010
- January 6, 2011 – 65 visits
  - Pioneer Press article ran on January 5, 2011
  - Hastings Star Gazette article ran on January 6, 2011
  - Public open houses January 10 – January 13, 2011
- February 17, 2010 – 61 visits
  - Pioneer Press article ran on February 10, 2010
  - Star Tribune article ran on February 10, 2010
  - Stories on Red Rock in South Washington County Bulletin, Pioneer Press, Red Wing Republican Eagle and Pierce County Herald
- April 6, 2011 – 61 visits
  - South Washington County Bulletin article ran on April 5
  - KSTP- Hastings-Cottage Grove posted info on April 6 on Final public open house April 6, 2011

Pageviews: This is the total number of pages that were viewed by visitors. Visitors to the site will view anywhere from 1-5 pages during a visit. Since the re-launch there have been 23,786 pageviews. The monthly average pageviews is 1,528.

Pages/Visit: This is the number of pages the average person visited on the website. The Red Rock Corridor website saw visitors viewing an average of 3.11 pages per visit. Since the corridor's website re-launch the average amount of pages visited continues to be above 3 pages per visit.

Percent Bounce Rate: The bounce rate represents the number of people who visit the Red Rock Corridor website, view one page (generally the homepage) and leave the site completely. The overall bounce rate is 49.32 percent. The monthly average bounce rate is consistently about 50 percent – A bounce rate at or below 50 percent is ideal.

Avg. Time on Site: Generally, the average person spends approximately one minute on a new website. The average time a person spends on http://www.redrockrail.org is 2:44 minutes.

Percent New: The overall percentage of new visits for the Red Rock Corridor website is 72.98 percent. The percentage of new visits remains significantly high with a monthly average of about 70 percent.

Traffic Sources Overview: Referring Sites, Direct Traffic and Search Engines make up the three descriptors and determine the source of where the visitor found the Red Rock Corridor website link. Since the website re-launch, referring sites have made up the majority of website traffic, which resulted in 41.85 percent of traffic. These are people who clicked a referral link (inside an email, press release, etc.)

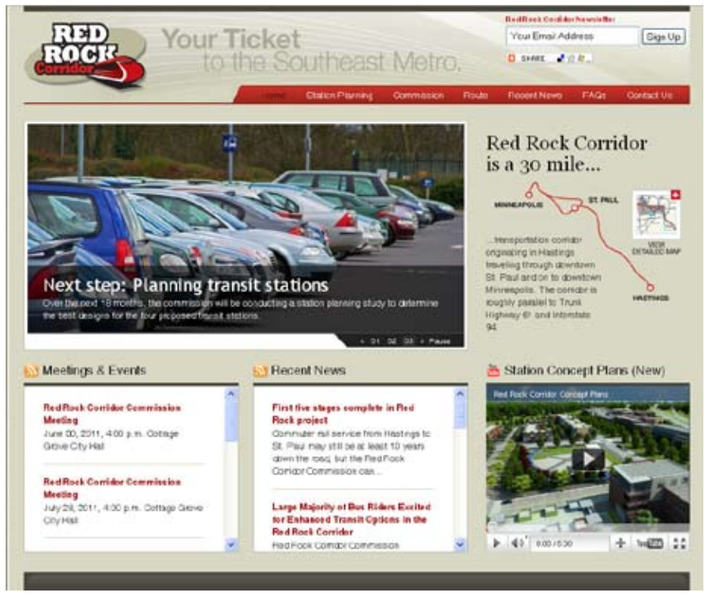
Direct traffic represents the number of people who type the link directly into their web browser. The overall percentage of direct traffic since the re-launch is 33.23. This shows us that many people are seeking out information on the Red Rock Corridor.

Finally, Search engine tools are how 24.92 percent visitors have found the Red Rock Corridor website – this number signifies people that are purposefully searching for the website, and most importantly, finding it.

Content Overview: This section of the Google Analytics shows which pages within the Red Rock Corridor website visitors go to most often. The following numbers show how many visitors clicked each page:

- Homepage – 9,617 (40.43 percent)
- Station Planning Page – 3,635 (15.28 percent)
- Route Page – 1,826 (7.68 percent)
- FAQ Page – 1,598 (6.72 percent)
- Station-planning/Cottage Grove – 1,295 (5.44 percent)

E-mail Sign-ups: As of May 1, 2011, a total of 338 subscribed contacts have signed-up for the Red Rock Corridor e-Newsletter.



RAIL ANALYSIS - CORRIDOR WIDE

Corridor Introduction

The proposed Red Rock Corridor extends from downtown Minneapolis to Hastings, MN via Union Depot in St. Paul. Planning for station facilities and sites is under way. The purpose of this document is to describe existing conditions and rail operations issues that are affected by, or relevant to, proposed Red Rock commuter rail stations at Lower Afton Road, Newport, Cottage Grove, and Hastings. The scope of this analysis does not include comprehensive consideration of the operating and infrastructure needs along the entire rail corridor. The East Metro Rail Capacity Study (EMRCS), commissioned by Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA), is currently underway and will identify impacts and recommend capacity solutions to the freight rail network for the introduction of commuter, high speed, and passenger rail to the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul. The EMRCS is expected to be completed in Fall 2011.

Existing Conditions

The Red Rock Corridor Alternatives Analysis completed in 2007 indicated that a commuter rail service could potentially jointly operate with freight traffic on this main line rail corridor. The service would initially consist of 5 inbound trains in the am peak and 5 outbound trains in the PM peak along with one reverse commute train in each direction in each peak period. Both BNSF and Canadian Pacific (CP) railroads own and share rail infrastructure on this corridor, which is a major segment of West Coast to Chicago transcontinental freight routes for each company. The Red Rock Corridor Alternatives Analysis indicates this corridor averages about 68 combined trains per day on the joint BNSF/CP corridor. Hoffman Yard is a large and very active freight yard located near the proposed site of the Lower Afton Station. Two daily Amtrak passenger trains are also hosted.

Two main tracks are in place over the 13-mile segment between Lower Afton Road and St. Croix Tower (located north of Hastings, and north of the Mississippi River), which is the segment under consideration for this study. Each of the two railroads owns and maintains a single track (see Figure 1), but the combined tracks are operated jointly and dispatched by BNSF. For much of this route, these two tracks are separated by roughly 80'. However, from south of Newport to 3 miles north of St. Croix Tower, the CP-owned track proposed for use by Red Rock trains is located as far as two miles to the north and east of the BNSF track.

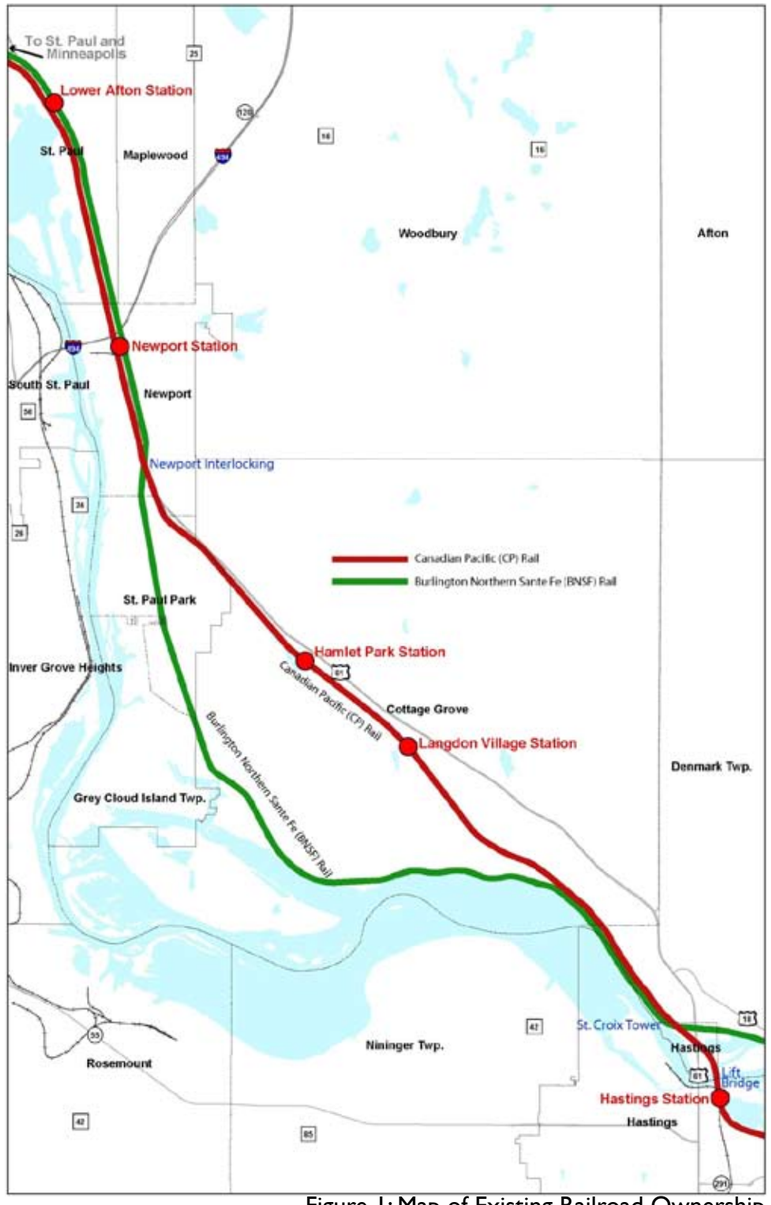


Figure 1: Map of Existing Railroad Ownership

Between Lower Afton Road and Newport, the western of the two tracks are owned by CP and the eastern track is owned by BNSF. At the Newport interlocking near 12th St., the ownership of the tracks changes sides and a pair of connection tracks allows trains to cross over between the two main tracks. South of this interlocking, the BNSF owns the western track, and CP owns the eastern track. Both of the main tracks are classified as FRA Class 4 and are remotely controlled by CTC signaling. Passenger train speeds of up to 79 mph are allowed.

Between St. Croix Tower and Hastings (just over 1 mile), there is a single CP main track, which is also equipped with CTC signaling. This route segment crosses the Mississippi River via a vertical lift bridge that is typically opened two to five times daily for durations lasting between 15 and 60 minutes.

Early coordination meetings were held with both CP and BNSF to review conceptual station plans and receive feedback and input from the railroads.

Station Area Planning Study Assumptions

The following list summarizes assumptions of this study related to the rail analysis:

- 5 Inbound trains in the AM peak
- 5 Outbound trains in the PM peak
- 1 Reverse commute train in AM and PM peak
- Commuter trains will operate on the easternmost track
- Center-loading platforms should be used where possible
- EMRCS will address rail infrastructure improvements needed

Issues and Criteria Affecting Station Locations and Configuration

The consideration of potential station locations included the following criteria:

- Minimal impact on railroad operations
- Minimal impact on local roadways
- Sufficient length for a platform of 600 feet, which permits berthing of six car trains in the future
- Sufficient space for a station facility
- Access to connecting roadways, transit and pedestrian facilities
- Parking
- Available property
- Potential for transit-oriented development
- Consistency with local planning and zoning

From a freight railroad perspective, the criteria for platform/station location also should include:

- No shortening of existing sidings, leads, or main tracks.
- Avoiding platforms within interlocking limits.
- Sightlines for wayside signals be maintained and not obscured by platforms/canopies.
- Provisions for signals to be provided near station platforms to comply with the FRA "train-leaving-station" operating provisions.

An issue that often must be considered for selection of station locations on a corridor such as this, which involves two railroads, is continuity of dispatching control. Passenger rail operations are most generally reliable and efficient if the number of "hand-offs" between railroad owners are limited. This reduces delays that can be incurred as dispatchers transfer control of trains from one to another. BNSF dispatches both tracks for the entire 13-mile segment, so this factor does not appear to be significant.

An operational issue that does affect station planning is the proposed locations of the Cottage Grove station. Both are located in the rail segment between Newport and St. Croix Tower where the two main tracks are not adjacent, but are separated by as much as two miles. For the proposed Cottage Grove station sites to be served by Red Rock commuter trains, these trains will need to be operated in both directions only on the CP-owned east track. Detailed capacity and related infrastructure improvements required to accommodate this are beyond the scope of this station planning effort. We note that a study now underway, the East Metro Rail Capacity Study, is tasked with determining infrastructure needs for both passenger and freight for this portion of the corridor. Coordination with this initiative is recommended in future phases of work.



Tracks crossing 2nd street next to Hastings historic depot

In addition to Red Rock corridor commuter trains, planning for another passenger rail service on this corridor is also under way. The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) is a proposed hub and spoke passenger rail system centered in Chicago that would serve nine Midwestern states, including Minnesota. The Red Rock Corridor segment is one possible routing for the proposed 400-mile MWRRI line between the Twin Cities and Chicago with proposed speeds of up to 110 mph. Today, only one pair of Amtrak passenger trains operates between Minnesota and Chicago in about eight hours travel time. With the MWRRI, Minnesotans could travel to Chicago on an additional six trains in five-and-half hours of travel time. Currently there are no plans for this service to make stops at any of the proposed Red Rock stations south/east of the St. Paul Union Depot

It is suggested that MWRRI service be considered in this station planning effort to the extent that if additional trackage and rail infrastructure is required to support the additional and faster trains; the new infrastructure could affect the proposed platform locations and other features. Further study will need to be conducted to forecast these infrastructure changes and/or improvements. Until that information is available, the Red Rock station planning effort will consider ways to meet Red Rock needs without constraining future MWRRI needs.



Hastings lift bridge

MARKET ASSESSMENT

Market Assessment Summary

The market assessment includes an analysis of demographic and economic conditions underlying the Red Rock Corridor. Additional market data related to construction trends and the condition of the housing and commercial markets are included in the full Market Assessment Memo, available under separate cover.

Forecasted Growth for the Red Rock Corridor

The Metropolitan Council forecasts significant growth between 2010 and 2030 within a 3-mile buffer of the Corridor, which is highlighted in the tan color at right. This amount of growth will undoubtedly require the construction and/or rehabilitation of numerous housing units and substantial commercial space, a portion of which can be accommodated in and around the station areas. Below are the 2010 and 2030 figures for population, households, and employment with their corresponding increases:

Population
2010 = 239,700
2030 = 294,300
> **+ 54,600 Residents**

Households
2010 = 91,700
2030 = 116,100
> **+ 24,400 Households**

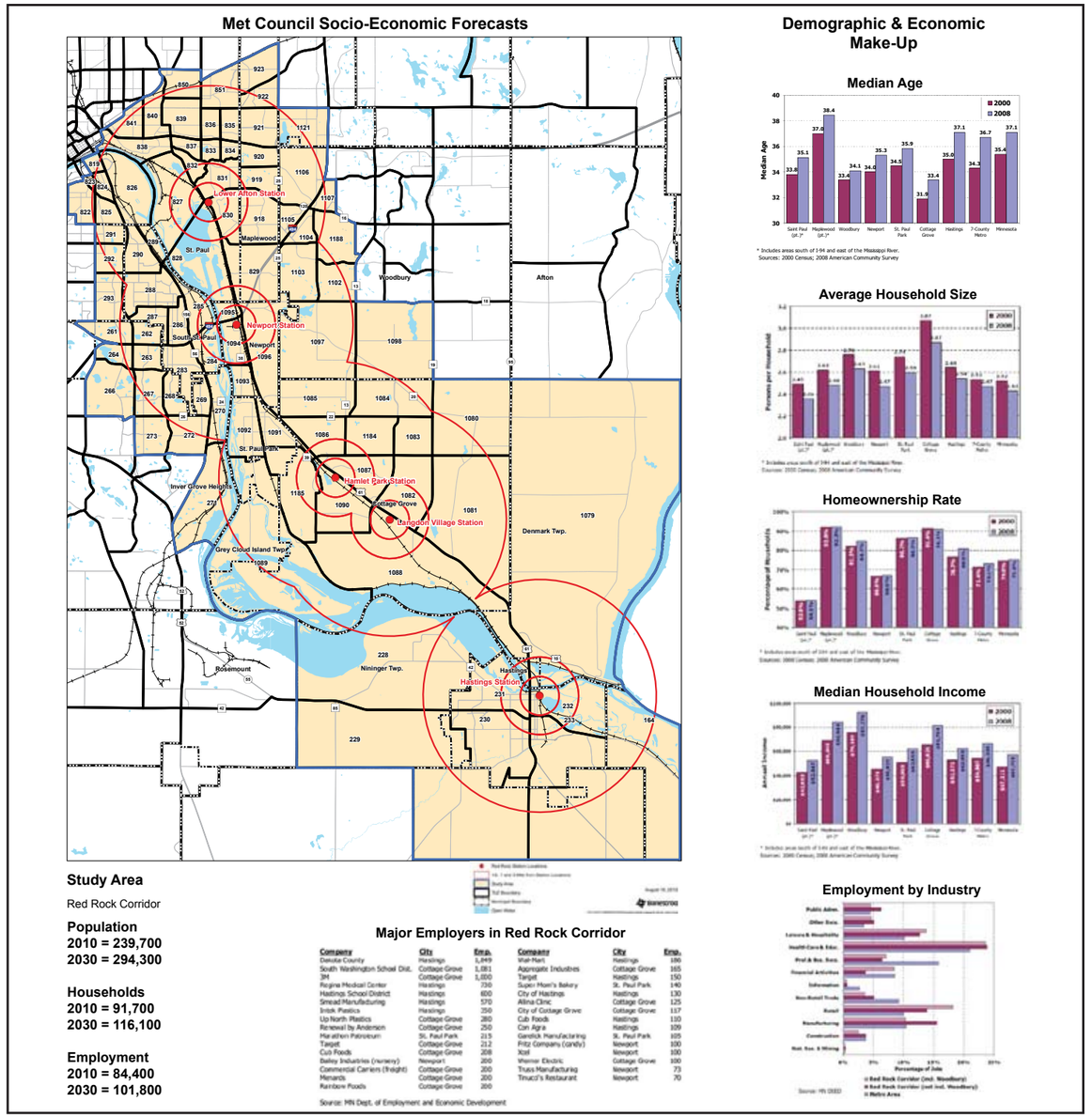
Employment
2010 = 84,400
2030 = 101,800
> **+ 17,400 Jobs**

Economy

Jobs in the Red Rock Corridor are concentrated in three economic sectors: manufacturing, retail, and educational and health care services. This is evidenced by the fact that nearly all of the Corridor's largest employers are in one of these three sectors. Therefore, it is likely that any future growth in the Corridor will be influenced by the economic activity generated by these sectors.

Demographics

The bar graphs to the right highlight key demographic trends that will influence future demand for housing and commercial space in the Corridor. In particular, the population is aging, household size is declining, homeownership is flat, and incomes are generally flat as well. These demographic trends will influence the location, size, and price point of new housing, and they will also influence the type of retail stores that will be needed.



KENOSHA, WI — Harbor Park









- 67 Miles North of Chicago
- Established City
- 70-Acre Former Auto Assembly Plant
- Near Metra Commuter Rail Station
- 400 Units of Housing

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL — Downtown





- 28 Miles Northwest of Chicago
- 19th Century Village Core
- Near Metra Commuter Rail Station
- 1,200 New Residential Units

- 160,000 sf New Retail Space
- 60,000 sf New Office
- Example of High-Density Suburban Area

ADDISON, TX — Addison Circle







- 15 Miles North of Dallas
- Adjacent to Major Office District
- Near Bus Transit Center
- 80-Acre Development with over 3,000 Residential Units in 15 Years

GRAYSLAKE , IL — Prairie Crossing



- 47 Miles Northwest of Chicago
- Developing Suburb
- Near Two Metra Commuter Rail Stations
- Open Space Protected
- Mixture of Low-Density & Medium Density

ENGLEWOOD, CO — CityCenter







- 7 Miles South of Denver
- Post War Suburb
- Former Enclosed Shopping Mall
- Integrates Big Box into Pedestrian Environment
- Mixture of Residential & Retail

RENTON, WA — Metropolitan Place





- 16 Miles South of Seattle
- Post War Suburb
- Adjacent to Bus Transit Center & Park-n-Ride Facility
- 90-Unit Building with 4,000 sf Retail on Ground Floor

HILLSBORO, OR — Orenco Station







- 19 Miles West of Portland
- Developing Suburb
- 190-Acre Greenfield Development
- Includes Low-, Medium- and High-Density Development
- Highest Density Nearest Station Stop

Case Study Summary

The Red Rock station areas are very different from one another in character, land use, and development pattern. In order to provide an understanding of how transit oriented development (TOD) has been implemented across such a wide variety of suburban settings, information was collected on seven suburban examples of TOD in the Midwest and West. The examples range from very high-density developments (50+ units per acre) within redeveloping central business districts to large-scale master planned communities on the developing fringe with relatively low densities (less than 5 units per acre).

- Profiled TOD development in seven station areas
  - Wisconsin
  - Illinois (2)
  - Texas
  - Colorado
  - Oregon
  - Washington
- Commuter rail and bus
- Fully developed and developing suburban areas
- Low density and high density

A more detailed discussion of each example is included in the Market Assessment Memo, available under separate cover.

Lessons Learned

- Property values increase near station areas
- Prevailing character is important determinant of new development type
- Station area amenities increase property values
- Transit service by itself does not spur development
- Expanding transit systems increase demand for TOD
- Target market for TOD is typically older couples and young singles

TOD PLANNING APPROACH

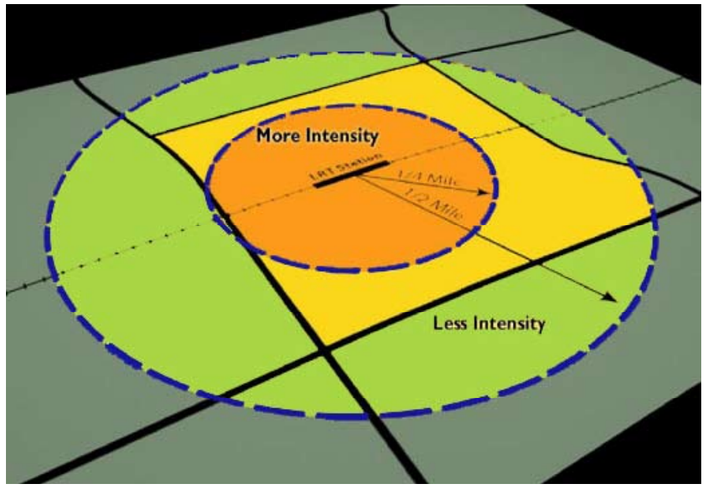
Strategies, TOD Impacts, and how the Vision can be achieved

The Vision for station area planning within each community is to introduce or enhance transit and transit amenities while allowing for phased Transit Oriented Development (TOD), where market conditions allow. The goal is to balance the needs of the transit system and parking with development needs and the needs of the local community. It is also an opportunity to connect to and improve on existing systems, including trails.

Unique identifiers and a TOD framework have been established for each of the four station areas. Concept plans have been developed that visually and spatially express the translation of the identifiers and framework into a physical system of roadways, buildings, transit components, public realm and associated systems. Each concept plan seeks to create a connected, walkable, pedestrian oriented environment surrounding each respective transit station. Park & Ride facilities along with various types of development are envisioned to be introduced in a phased and integrated manner over time.

For the Vision to be achieved, each City, each respective County, the Red Rock Corridor Commission, the Metropolitan Council, and stakeholders such as MnDOT, Metro Transit and others, must work in concert to coordinate and plan for public and private investment in each station area based on the concept plans and vision herein as well as the final project plans and recommendations.





TOD Principles

In general Transit Oriented Design is intented to:

• Create more livable, pedestrian-friendly communities

• Include an identifiable center and a prominent public realm

• Increase the convenience of transportation alternatives, including walking, bicycling, and public transportation

• Locate buildings and walking areas to promote pedestrian movement, safety, and an appealing environment

• Create a compatible mix of residential, retail, and office well-suited for surrounding neighborhood. Development of high quality, compact, construction, that is also viable, & sustainable that is all within an easy walk - 1/4 -1/2 mile – from a transit station

Each Community is Unique

Transit Oriented Design is not a "one size fits all" prescription. Each of the four host communities must tailor their approach to planning, design and implementation to respond to local conditions. These conditions include location, access, natural features, parking demand, surrounding land use, market forces, history, context and more. Fundamentally, the approach must focus on creating unique, authentic places that add value to the host community by becoming, over time, a recognizable and sustainable place. The introduction of commuter rail service should bring more than just a station and trains. It should catalyze investment, both private and public, to create a robust transit-oriented community that is compact, walkable, desireable and recognizeable.





Throughout the planning study, several planning assumptions and planning principles have guided decision-making and design.

Project Principles

1) Create a place, not just a project

2) Concentrate development near transit

3) Sensitively connect to the Natural Environment

4) Develop Complete Streets

5) Connect to Existing Uses and Neighborhoods

6) Incorporate Sustainability

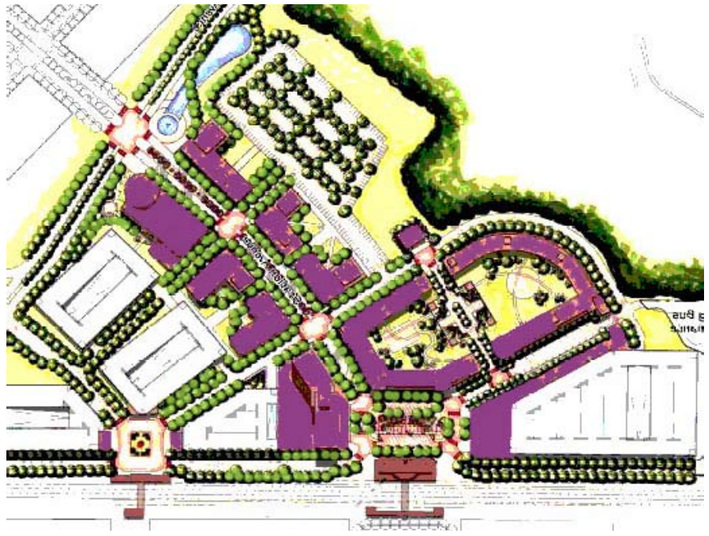
7) Allow the project to be phased over time

Create a place, not just a project....balance commuter parking with development

The most valuable property within the station area is the property located close to each transit station (provided it has easy and relatively direct access to each station). This property can generally support development of the highest and best use within the station area. At odds with this condition is the natural tendency to want to locate commuter parking close to the station. There must be a balance between these two pressures with a bias towards development and placemaking over excessive convenience.



Locating parking directly adjacent to the station precludes development and placemaking, This creates an unattractive and uninviting experience for users of the station.



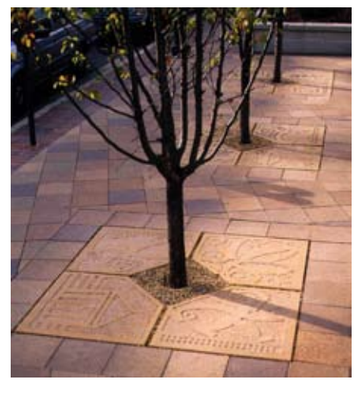
Locating development adjacent to the station, primary public open spaces and streets supports an active and desireable station area. Parking can be located behind buildings in structured and surface parking facilities so that it is accessible but not the defining element of the station area.

Create a place, not just a project....focus on the "first three hundred"

A positive user experience with the first three hundred feet of the transit station (a typical city block length) is a critical component to the success of the station area. This area largely defines the station area as it is the first and last respective experience encountered while arriving or departing the station area via transit. A highly textured, safe, vibrant, pedestrian oriented environment should support both commuters and other users of the station area. Well designed buildings should support active ground floor uses with interesting signage, good lighting and direct pedestrian access from the street/transit plaza. Street lighting, paving and pedestrian amenities such as benches, planters, trash receptacles, kiosks, bike racks and kiosks should provide visual interest and functional support.

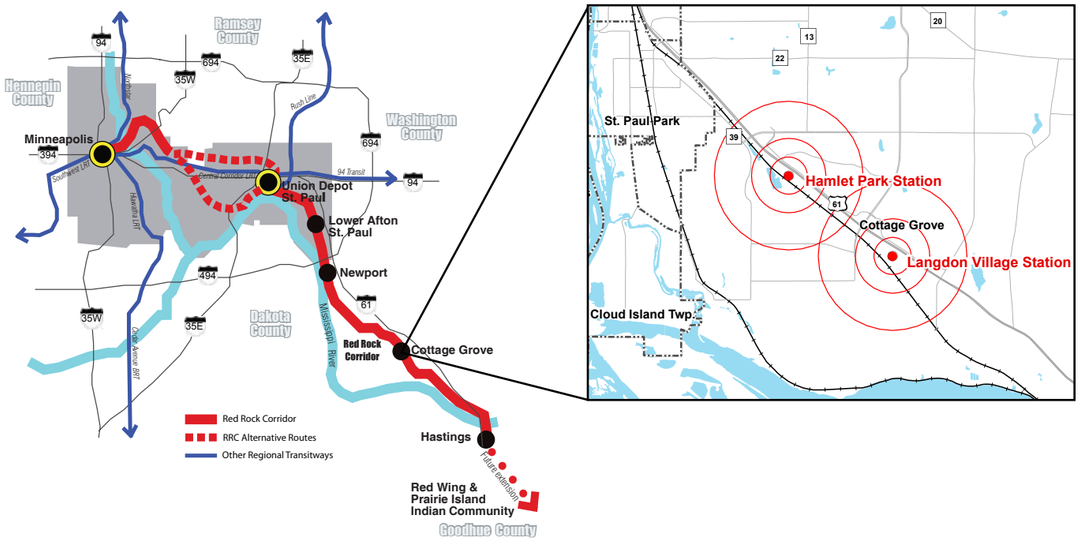








COTTAGE GROVE SITE SELECTION SUMMARY

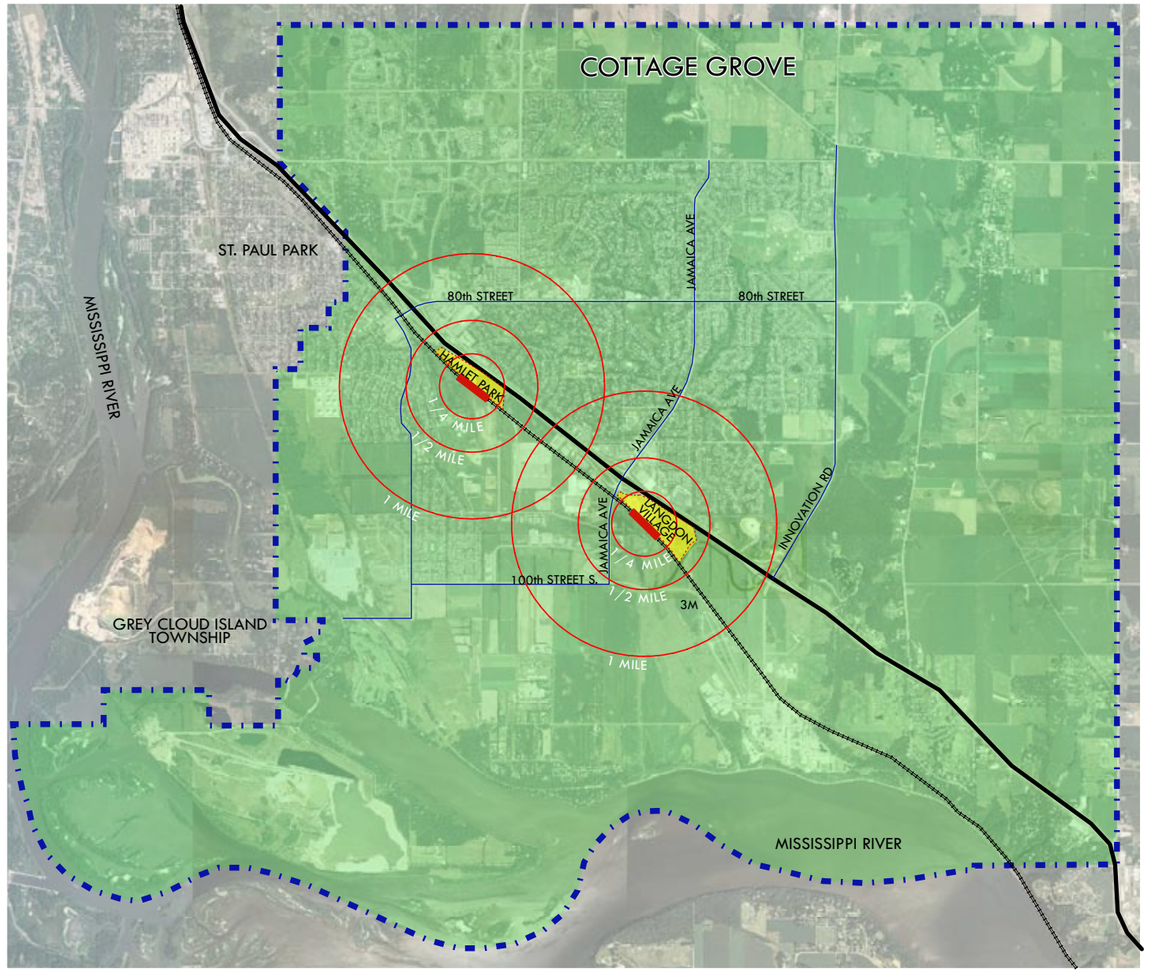


Potential Cottage Grove Transit Station Sites

Two potential sites for a Cottage Grove transit station were identified in the Alternatives Analysis: Hamlet Park and Langdon Village. Although both sites were intially explored for their opportunities and constraints during the Preliminary Concept Plan phase of the Station Area Planning Study, the Langdon Village site was ultimately selected as the preferred transit site.

In addition to the Site Selection Matrix described in the next section, the following assumptions or conditions were noted at the start of the analysis:

- Only one (1) station site will be selected for a Cottage Grove commuter rail station
- The Cottage Grove Comprehensive Plan identified Langdon Village as the future transit site for the city
- Hamlet Park is the site of the existing Park & Ride for commuter bus service



Aerial Photo of Cottage Grove - Hamlet Park and Langdon Village Site Locations

Planning Study Focus Area & Rail Platform | Major Road | Hwy 61 | RailRoad

Cottage Grove Site Selection Matrix

As part of the master planning study, a site selection matrix was developed to help weigh a variety of considerations and to guide the selection of one site in Cottage Grove. During the process, several stakeholders weighed in on the advantages and disadvantages of each site including staff from the City of Cottage Grove, Metro Transit, the Metropolitan Council, and the Project Management Team (PMT) and the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC). The matrix looked at the following 6 criteria in detail:

1) Required Site Area
2) Infrastructure
3) Physical Elements
4) Ownership/Use/Control
5) Financial
6) Local Government/Community Goals

Each of these categories contained several sub items that addressed more specific and detailed evaluation criteria.

Matrix Outcome

The rankings and weighting of each category/sub-category were discussed and established at a meeting with Cottage Grove City staff, Washington County, and consultants and were informed by discussions with Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council. The overall scores for both sites were very close, with Langdon Village scoring slightly higher (18.2) than Hamlet Park (17.5). It was noted that Hamlet Park scored higher in categories related to site geometry and existing infrastructure, while Langdon Village scored higher in categories related to Local Planning and Community Goals. Both sites were found to be viable and neither had fatal flaws.

Knowing that the City of Cottage Grove prefers the Langdon Village site, as stated in their Comprehensive Plan, the idea was presented to consider keeping the existing Hamlet Park Park & Ride facility as it is for the near term while bus service continues, and then moving the Park & Ride to Langdon Village at the time when Rail is operational. Metro Transit voiced concern over the impacts of moving the Park & Ride on ridership. It was also noted that the population center of Cottage Grove will likely shift further south and east as the population grows and the Langdon Village site would be more centrally located long-term. It is also important to consider that there are fewer long term access issues at Langdon because of the new roundabout there and because it does not require crossing active tracks, as is the case with the existing Hamlet Park site. A proposed roadway connection from West Point Douglas to Innovation / Co Rd 19 /100th Street would introduce access to the south end of the Langdon Village site.

Community Feedback

Along with the matrix, concept plans were developed for both sites.

Both potential station sites were presented at the Cottage Grove Public Meeting held on August 19, 2010. During this meeting, an Audience Response System (ARS) was used to poll meeting attendees; which included property owners, business owners, residents of Cottage Grove, city staff, consultants, elected officials and others about their preference for a preferred station site. There were just under 50 respondents that took part in the survey and their responses are summarized below:

- 81% of respondents thought that one site had more opportunities than the other
- Respondents preferred Langdon Village 4 to 1 (4:1) over Hamlet Park

Site Recommendation and Selection

Although both potential sites could serve commuter rail, Langdon Village has the best potential to meet the community's economic and development goals, and is conveniently located for residents of Cottage Grove and neighboring communities. The Langdon Village site is more in line with the goals of the Cottage Grove Comprehensicve Plan. The Langdon Village site is preferred for rail service, however, it is recommended that the Hamlet Park site remain the Park & Ride facility for bus service until the time when rail service becomes operational at Langdon Village.

The Cottage Grove City Council passed a resolution in November 2010 recommending that Langdon Village be selected as the preferred site for commuter rail transit.


Hamlet Park


Langdon Village

PREFERRED / RECOMENDED SITE

For more detailed information on the site selection process, please refer to the Preliminary Concept Plan Technical Report, available under seperate cover.

Final Report and Concept Plan

This final report only discusses Langdon Village from this point on.

IMPLEMENATION & NEXT STEPS

Planning for future growth and transportation management in the Red Rock Corridor will be critical in the coming years and decades. As part of the effort to plan and prepare for growth and enhanced transit in the corridor, the following goals have been identified:



Photo of a Metro Transit commuter coach bus.

1) PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- In the next 20 years, the southeast sector of the metropolitan area is projected to add more than 100,000 new residents, bringing even more traffic to our highway system. This growth, coupled with the new transit service, will encourage private and public sector development near stations helping to increase ridership, bring new jobs to the area, improve community connectivity, and strengthen the local economy.

2) EXPANDING TRANSIT IN THE CORRIDOR

- The project will increase transit services in the corridor by adding new and expanded Park & Rides, providing multi-modal transit stations, extending express routes to Hastings, and increasing service frequency throughout the corridor.

3) BUILD A RIDERSHIP BASE

- The project goal is to build a stronger ridership base in the corridor supporting a future transition from coach buses to commuter rail.

4) PROVIDE LINKS TO OTHER TRANSIT CORRIDORS

- Transit service in the Red Rock Corridor will connect with several other transit corridors, enabling travel throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Additionally, collaboration with current planning for a high-speed rail line from the Twin Cities to Chicago will include connections with many transit systems throughout the United States.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The matrix to the right identifies major tasks and goals in implementing commuter rail in the Red Rock Corridor. The tasks are broken down into the Immediate Term (0-5 years), Mid Term (6-10 years), and Long Term (11+ Years) and also identify the responsible parties for each task--the lead agency is marked with an asterisk.

In addition to the summary of task in the matrix, each station chapter has a station-specific implementation strategies section.

More detailed information on implementation strategies are available in the Implementation Guide, available under separate cover.

CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	TIMEFRAME			RESPONSIBILITY (*Lead)				
TASK DESCRIPTION	IMMEDIATE TERM (0- 5 YEARS)	MID TERM (6-10 YEARS)	LONG TERM (11+ YEARS)	CITY	COUNTY / RRCC	MET COUNCIL / METROTRANSIT	Mn/DOT	OTHER
Design and construct a Park & Ride facility in Newport	X			X	X*	X		
Design and construct a Park & Ride facility in Hastings	X			X*	X	X		CTIB
Expand commuter bus service to Newport with revised service plan	X			X	X	X*		
Expand commuter bus service to Hastings with revised service plan	X			X	X	X*		
Evaluate partnership opportunities and ridership for an extension of the Red Rock Corridor to Red Wing and Prairie Island Indian community	X			X	X*		X	Red Wing, Goodhue County, Prairie Island Indian Community
Advocate for High Speed Rail between Chicago and the Twin Cities	X			X	X			MN High Speed Rail Commission *
Continue public outreach efforts including website maintenance, newsletters, and other media	X				X*			
Reevaluate ridership and growth projections for commuter rail service in the Red Rock Corridor	X				X*	X		
Conduct an Advance Alternatives Analysis Study	X				X*	X		
Host workshops and meetings with developers and other interested parties to discuss and encourage private development opportunities and partnerships	X			X*	X			Washington County HRA
Conduct an Environmental Impact Statement for Red Rock Corridor	X				X*	X		
Conduct Preliminary Engineering for Red Rock Corridor		X			X	X*		
Final Design and Engineering		X			X	X*		
Service begins for High Speed Rail between Chicago and Twin Cities			X					MN High Speed Rail Commission*
Construct Red Rock Corridor Commuter Rail			X		X	X	X*	
Red Rock Service Begins			X			X*		
Add Task			X					

End of Section