Red Rock Corridor Commission Agenda
Wednesday, October 26, 2016
Open House: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Meeting and Public Hearing 6:30 p.m.

****Note the time and date change****

Newport City Hall
596 7th Avenue
Newport, MN 55055

	Action Requested
1. Introductions	Information
2. Approval of Agenda	Approval
3. Consent Items*	Approval
a. Checks and Claims	
b. Minutes from September 22, 2016 Commission Meeting	
4. Implementation Plan Update/Public Hearing*	Approval
5. Communications Update*	Information
6. Other	Information
a. Commissioner Reports	
b. November/December meeting TBD	
7. Adjourn	Approval

**Enclosures*

For questions regarding this material, please contact Lyssa Leitner, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority at (651) 430-4314.

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

DATE: October 18, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Checks and Claims

Included is the:

Johnson Group September Invoice		$1,820.83
Kimley Horn August Invoice		$17,048.35
	TOTAL	**$18,869.18**

Details on the overall status of the budget for these contracts are attached.

Action:
Approval

Red Rock Corridor Communications

Consultant Johnson Group
Contract No. 9992
Expiration Date
Business Unit Public Works
Object Code
Updated

Task No.	Task Description	Johnson Group	Task Total
1.0	**Email Marketing**	$7,200.00	$7,200.00
2.0	**Social Media Posting and Mgmt**	$3,600.00	$3,600.00
3.0	**Media Relations**	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
4.0	**Awarness Campaign**	$7,000.00	$7,000.00
7.0	**Website Updates & Maintenance**	$2,500.00	$2,500.00
8.0	**Website Hosting**	$180.00	$180.00
NA	**Contingency**	$1,520.00	$1,520.00
	Total Contract Cost	$25,000.00	$25,000.00
	Total Project Cost	$25,000.00	$25,000.00

Invoice Number / Date	Tasks								
	Email Marketing	Social Media	Media Relations	Awareness Campaign	Website Updates	Website Hosting	Contingency	Total Contract Cost	Total Project Cost
1020594 - 3/30/2016		$300.00		$716.66	$262.50			$1,279.16	$1,279.16
1020670 - 4/29/2016		$300.00		$583.33			$112.50	$995.83	$995.83
1020739 - 5/31/2016		$450.00		$583.33		$180.00		$1,213.33	$1,213.33
1020819 - 6/29/2016		$450.00		$583.33				$1,033.33	$1,033.33
1020882 - 7/29/2016		$450.00		$583.33				$1,033.33	$1,033.33
1020933 - 8/31/2016		$450.00		$583.33				$1,033.33	$1,033.33
1021004 - 9/30/2016	$600.00		$525.00	$583.33	$112.50			$1,820.83	$1,820.83
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
Amount Billed to Date	$600.00	$2,400.00	$525.00	$4,216.64	$375.00	$180.00	$112.50	$8,409.14	$8,409.14
Percent Complete	8.3%	66.7%	17.5%	60.2%	15.0%	100.0%	7.4%	33.6%	33.6%
Amount Remaining	$6,600.00	$1,200.00	$2,475.00	$2,783.36	$2,125.00	$0.00	$1,407.50	$16,590.86	**$16,590.86**

Red Rock Corridor Implementtaion Plan

Consultant Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Contract No. 9342
Expiration Date 10/31/2016
Business Unit
Object Code
Updated 9/28/2016

Task No.	Task Description	Task Total
1.0	Project Management and Coordination	$70,116.87
2.0	Review and Assess Previously Completed Work	$3,053.60
3.0	Public Engagement and Agency Coordination	$58,886.28
4.0	Ridership Forecast	$79,613.60
5.0	Service Plan Development	$19,004.48
6.0	Capital and Operating Costs	$35,055.60
7.0	Update Station Planning to Reflect BRT	$21,446.16
8.0	Implementation and Financial Plan	$28,518.10
9.0	LPA Process	$19,599.52
10.0	Draft and Final Report	$17,102.48
11.0	Alternative Analysis	$150,000.00
12.0	Miscellaneous Services-Contingency	$40,000.00
	Total Contract Cost	$542,396.69
	Direct Expenses	$7,460.00
	Total Project Cost	$549,856.69

Invoice Number / Date	Tasks												Total Contract Cost	Direct Expenses	Total Project Cost
	Project Management and Coordination	Review and Assess Previously Completed Work	Public Engagement and Agency Coordination	Ridership Forecast	Service Plan Development	Capital and Operating Costs	Update Station Planning to Reflect BRT	Implementation and Financial Plan	LPA Process	Draft and Final Report	Alternative Analysis	Miscellaneous Services-Contingency			
6550933 2/28/2015	$1,843.31	$1,183.22	$8,100.61										$11,127.14	$0.00	$11,127.14
6633503 3/31/2015	$14,182.08		$2,202.72	$6,955.56									$23,340.36	$80.51	$23,420.87
6710352 4/30/2015	$7,792.39	$1,309.94	$10,571.09	$23,537.55								$55.37	$43,266.34	$400.25	$43,666.59
6787282 5/31/2015	$5,982.93	$560.44	$3,032.82	$211.71								$389.64	$10,177.54	$67.86	$10,245.40
6880852 6/30/2015	$3,899.06		$4,329.96	$5,455.49	$5,050.64	$499.82			$44.32				$19,279.29	$173.29	$19,452.58
6964217 7/31/2015	$3,734.28		$13,590.87	$1,839.24	$2,686.78				$531.66				$22,382.83	$4,630.20	$27,013.03
7048838 8/31/2015	$3,039.89		$4,122.00	$19,184.37	$2,606.21							$45.24	$28,997.71	$694.56	$29,692.27
7138466 9/30/2015	$2,850.13		$3,885.98	$6,685.08	$5,684.66	$1,062.65							$20,168.50		$20,168.50
7205932 10/31/2015	$3,584.87		$3,635.61	$6,569.14	$2,913.50	$16,798.16							$33,501.28		$33,501.28
7324195 11/30/2015	$4,964.52		$1,317.12	$3,405.58		$7,043.27	$443.00		$322.75				$17,496.24	$57.05	$17,553.29
7416893 12/31/2015	$5,509.93		$3,743.70	$181.51	$43.92	$354.40	$5,771.03						$15,604.49	$123.05	$15,727.54
7523604 1/31/2016	$7,928.25		$5,305.26			$1,317.19	$11,144.82						$25,695.52	$472.10	$26,167.62
7607649 2/29/2016	$3,216.30		$44.55	$3,889.60		$1,624.34	$24,115.40	$4,846.73			$4,208.71	$917.15	$42,862.78	$218.34	$43,081.12
7715651 3/31/2016	$11,801.59			$6,223.92		$2,736.33	$23,475.43	$13,058.51		$1,123.30	$10,933.64	$354.40	$69,707.12	$33.90	$69,741.02
7834287 4/30/2016	$8,816.64			$6,031.32		$4,331.85	$13,562.11	$9,628.79		$1,435.45	$2,392.88		$46,199.04	$233.70	$46,432.74
7971872 5/31/2016	$10,027.47			$4,570.63		$969.51	$10,346.75	$1,457.34		$999.31	$480.54		$28,851.55	$73.44	$28,924.99
8052764 6/30/2016	$6,372.20			$4,165.17		$3,699.87	$9,411.91	$6,214.69		$9,723.10			$39,586.94	$120.42	$39,707.36
8193298 7/31/2016	$3,248.51			$193.21			$1,194.77	$1,931.74		$2,756.02			$9,324.25	$19.62	$9,343.87
8287239 8/31/2016	$2,115.28						$2,285.61	$1,554.36		$11,072.58			$17,027.83	$20.52	$17,048.35
Amount Billed to Date	$110,909.63	$3,053.60	$63,882.29	$99,099.08	$18,985.71	$40,437.39	$101,750.83	$38,692.16	$898.73	$27,109.76	$18,015.77	$1,761.80	$524,596.75	$7,418.81	$532,015.56
Percent Complete	158.2%	100.0%	108.5%	124.5%	99.9%	115.4%	474.4%	135.7%	4.6%	158.5%	12.0%	4.4%	96.7%		
Amount Remaining	($40,792.76)	$0.00	($4,996.01)	($19,485.48)	$18.77	($5,381.79)	($80,304.67)	($10,174.06)	$18,700.79	($10,007.28)	$131,984.23	$38,238.20	$17,799.94	**$41.19**	**$17,841.13**

Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2016
Newport City Hall
4:30 p.m.

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Marion Greene	Hennepin County RRA	X
Janice Rettman	Ramsey County RRA	X
Jim McDonough	Ramsey County RRA	
Karla Bigham, Chair	Washington County RRA	X
Mike Slavik	Dakota County RRA	X
Jen Peterson, Vice Chair	City of Cottage Grove	X
Myron Bailey	City of Cottage Grove	
John Kummer	Denmark Township	
Mark Vaughn	City of Hastings	X
Cam Gordon	City of Minneapolis	
Tracy Rahm	City of Newport	X
Jane Prince	City of St. Paul	
Keith Franke	City of St. Paul Park	X

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	
Ron Allen	Goodhue County	
Jess Greenwood	Goodhue County	
Judy Mitchell	Canadian Pacific Railway	
Marc Mogan	Prairie Island Indian Community	

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Staff	Agency	Present
Jan Lucke	Washington County RRA	
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County RRA	X
Hally Turner	Washington County RRA	X
Emily Jorgensen	Washington County RRA	X
Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County RRA	X
Matt Parent	Dakota County RRA	X
Joe Scala	Hennepin County	

Others	Agency	
William Reynolds	Kimley Horn	X
Katie White	Metropolitan Council	X

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Agenda Item #1: Introduction

Chair Bigham called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Introductions were made by commission members, staff, and others present.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Peterson to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rettman. All were in favor, **Approved**. Motion Carried.

Agenda Item #3: Consent Items

Motion was made by Commissioner Slavik to approve the check and claims, and the meeting minutes from July 28, 2016 Commission Meetings. The motion was seconded by Mayor Franke. All were in favor, **Approved.** Motion Carried.

Commissioner Bigham recognized Washington County Planner Lyssa Leitner for her award as Top 40 Under 40 in Mass Transit magazine.

Agenda Item #4: Implementation Plan Update

Hally Turner, Washington County, described the previous outreach meeting for the project and the upcoming meetings. Ms. Turner noted that if other cities would like a Red Rock update at their council meetings they should contact her.

Ms. Turner summarized the draft Implementation Plan document, a 15 month process, which contains details on service planning, travel demand forecasting, alternatives evaluation, cost estimation, financial plan and station area plans for the Red Rock Corridor. Ms. Turner noted that all of this information was previously presented to the Commission and that this would be a higher level summary of the draft plan document. The Implementation Plan is available for public comment until October 26th.

Ms. Turner highlighted that the Red Rock Corridor Commission meeting in October has been changed to Wednesday, October 26th at 5:30pm for an open house and then a public hearing at 6:30pm.

Commissioner Bigham asked to make sure that the meeting information is readily available for the commission members to send out to the public.

Ms. Turner noted that she had brought flyers for the commission members to take with them to give to the public. Additionally, a press release, newsletter update, and social media messages had been drafted and were ready for release to notify the Technical Advisory Committee and the public that the implementation plan was available for comment.

Ms. Turner began her presentation, showing that today's presentation will cover project schedule, final report overview, recommendations, and next steps. The goal of the Implementation Plan was to outline detailed technical elements, station area plans, schedule and costs of staged investments, partner responsibilities through 2040, and stakeholder buy-in through resolutions of support. The Implementation Plan was a 15 month study to complete the technical analysis, project documentation, and approval processes.

Mr. Reynolds, Kimley-Horn, began to present a high level summary of the final report for the implementation plan. Mr. Reynolds thanked the commission for the opportunity and their flexibility throughout the process. The final report consists of seven chapters; executive summary, project background, stakeholder engagement, preferred alternative, financial plan, phasing plan, recommendations and next steps. Mr. Reynolds noted that the technical appendix and all of the other appendices are available, which include more details on the analysis completed. The implementation plan itself is meant to be a digestible summary of the plan.

Mr. Reynolds started with the project background, highlighting how the studies in this corridor have changed from the Alternatives Analysis in 2007, which focused on peak hour commuter service to the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU) in 2014. The AAU focused on all-day, bi-directional service in the corridor using bus rapid transit (BRT). The project goals that emerged from the 2014 AAU focus on mobility, cost, development, and environment.

Mr. Reynolds described the stakeholder engagement processes that were used during this process. Engagement was used to introduce the project to the public and get an understanding of what residents were looking for as well as engagement around specific station areas. In-person engagement was conducted at open houses, park-and-rides, community vents, targeted city meetings, and a tour of the red line. Engagement produced a few key themes showing the

public was interested or had concerns about the frequency of service, all-day service and park-and-ride options. Online engagement was also used via the project website and social media.

The fourth chapter of the plan is the Preferred Alternative. Mr. Reynolds stated that this is a dense chapter. The first decision that was made was to designate two alternative routes for consideration for the Implementation Plan. Alternative 1 was the route that was produced by the AAU with 45 minute travel time and 6 stations. Alternative 2 was a route with 12 stations providing more direct access to communities. Alternative 2 is considered the "full build" alternative and was deemed the "Preferred Alternative" through the initial analysis for the Implementation Plan. Alternative 2 shares stations with the Gateway BRT and provides service from Union Depot all the way down to Hastings. With the preferred alternative came phasing priorities. The first priority is to build today's transit service and ridership in the corridor with the Routes 367 (express bus service from Hastings to Minneapolis via Newport Transit Station) and Route 363 (local bus service between Cottage Grove and downtown Saint Paul. Mr. Reynolds showed a matrix exploring interim BRT options with a variety of station options throughout the corridor with 2040 Passengers Per In Service Hour (PPISH)—a measure used in the region to understand expected performance. The evaluation showed that the current options do not present strong performance to implement a complete bus rapid transit line in the near term. Ridership would need to increase about 33% to meet the regional standard for bus rapid transit ridership.

Commissioner Bigham asked if the target of 33% more ridership was meant to qualify for a complete bus rapid transit implementation plan. Mr. Reynolds clarified that yes that the corridor would need to reach 2400 boardings to trigger the full implementation of BRT.

Ms. Turner, Washington County, then began the presentation on the Financial Plan Recommendations chapter of the Implementation Plan. The first recommendation is to seek multiple sources for Red Rock prioritized investment. The Red Line Bus Rapid Transit used about 37 different funding sources. The second recommendation is to phase the improvements by investing in a series of small improvements over time. The third recommendation is to consider local opportunities help fund small investments.

Commissioner Bigham stated that federal funding would be hard for Red Rock to qualify for given the smaller size of the project.

Ms. Turner agreed and stated that the size of Red Rock creates a challenge to be creative and find local funding to support the project and state funding is not sustainable at this time.

Commissioner Bigham stated that Red Rock is a unique situation. Gateway and Red Line are large enough to qualify for federal funding. However, Red Rock will still get done.

Ms. Turner stated the last recommendation is to continue performance evaluation and reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as the project needs arise.

Ms. Turner then began the overview of Chapter 6, the Phasing Plan. The first phase is the near term phase from 2016 to 2020. The first recommendation of Phase I is to work with Metro Transit to increase local and express service to build local ridership. The second recommendation is to work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment densities within the station areas. The third recommendation is to work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout the

day via Route 363 between Cottage Grove and Saint Paul. There is currently an application out for this service as a part of the Metropolitan Council's Regional Solicitation. If funded, there would be a 3-year demonstration project starting in 2020. The status of the application will be made known at the end of 2016 or beginning of 2017. The last recommendation is to work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings or local service within Hastings is a viable option. Hastings is currently working with DARTS to explore transit options within the city.

Commissioner Bigham stated that she would like to see additional references to Route 367 added into the plan, particularly to the long-term strategies, for public comment. The Route 367 would go from Hastings to Newport to Minneapolis. The public often asks why there isn't a route from Newport to Minneapolis. Commissioner Bigham wants residents to know that this is on the radar of the project. This is something that Commissioner Bigham and Commissioner Slavik have been working on for the past two years in the legislature and with the Metropolitan Council to implement but the transportation bills have yet to be passed.

Commissioner Slavik stated that his only comment was that calling the service "the Route 367" is better than calling it "the Hastings Service" as Hastings has committed to transit.

Commissioner Bigham concurred. The Route 367 should be included, showing that the route will span from Hastings to Newport to Minneapolis so the public with identify what Route 367 is. That is key.

Commissioner Rettman asked a point of clarification that the Routes 363 and 367 will both be included in the Phase 1 part of the phasing plan.

Commissioner Bigham stated that both should be included and public input is needed on both. If the goal is to increase ridership then people will be more supportive if they understand what is being done in the near term. Newport is very excited about their park-and-ride and ridership has increased. If there was a route to Minneapolis then the ridership would likely increase. If the public knows we are working on it additional service, it will give piece of mind.

Commissioner Rettman asked if the addition of the Route 367 could be made before the Implementation Plan is added to the website.

Commissioner Bigham stated that yes, the additional references to Route 367 will be added immediately. The feedback from the Commission will be added to the document and they will be a part of the open house. The addition of the Route 367 route would likely not go through the Regional Solicitation but instead would be a project for a different source of funding.

Ms. Turner then started presenting Phase II, the long-term plan from 2020 to 2040. The first recommendation is to implement the corridor city and county plans that were developed as a part of Phase I. The second recommendation is to update the forecasted ridership based on the comprehensive plan updates. The third recommendation is that if the Route 363 is implemented then ridership needs to be monitored. Monitoring and working with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to grow ridership to reach 1,200 passengers per day. The fourth recommendation is to replace the Route 363 with an interim BRT service when the corridor reaches the 25 PPISH.

Commissioner Rettman asked the Route 367 also be added as a part of Phase II.

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Commissioner Bigham agreed that the Route 367 should be referenced as part of Phase II as it shows a commitment to the corridor.

Ms. Turner noted that Commissioner Gordon from Minneapolis, who was not in attendance, had submitted a comment via email. Commissioner Gordon would like to see intentional references to the connection to Minneapolis in the long term investments.

Commissioner Bigham stated that the Route 367 which would end in Minneapolis shows a commitment to this corridor.

Ms. Turner stated that the last recommendation of Phase II is to continue to invest in station area development. Intentional station area development will help to boost ridership going forward.

Ms. Turner then began Chapter 7 on Recommendations and Next Steps. There are multiple recommended on-going strategies to support transit. The first recommendation is to advocate for multimodal investments. Multimodal investments help build ridership. The second recommendation is to advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. The third recommendation is to continue to monitor the corridor for transit performance and needs to determine the timing for implementation.

Ms. Turner then stated that the approval process action tonight is to release the Implementation Plan draft with the recommended edits for the 35 day public comment period before the October 26th open house and public hearing. Pending the approval on October 26th then resolutions of support would be sought through the end of 2016.

Ms. Turner stated that the action requested is to release Draft Final Implementation Plan for public comment pending the Commission's edits.

Commissioner Greene stated that she was excited to realize at the project is at this point in the process. Commissioner Greene stated that she was thrilled and wanted to acknowledge the staff.

Commissioner Bigham stated that she agreed. The regional approach to transit is exciting. This a good opportunity. The public will provide good comments. Commissioner Bigham then stated she had a question about the detailed report. One expense item was listed as support facilities such as "yards." Commissioner Bigham asked for clarification that the yards are for the storage of buses. If so, Commissioner Bigham asked if there is an opportunity to partner with the Gateway Corridor or some other opportunity to save on overhead for that cost.

Ms. Leitner, Washington County, clarified that the cost in the packet is a unit cost for a shared facility. This approach was also used in the Gateway Corridor Project.

Commissioner Bigham stated that the expense was on page 21 for Alternative 2B. Metropolitan Council is hoping for $7.2 million from the bonding process for a new garage. Commissioner Bigham stated that this category may still be a little fluid and could present an opportunity for Gateway or Red Rock if there is some flexibility.

Motion made by Commissioner Greene to release the Draft Implementation Plan per the Commission's comments. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Rahm. All were in favor, **Approved**. Motion Carried.

Agenda Item #5: Communications Update

Ms. Turner stated that the project website has had 2,000 views in the last month. More view are anticipated in the upcoming month with the release of draft implementation plan. The number of Facebook "likes" (332) are growing. Commissioner Bigham had an op-ed come out in August and can be found in the packets next month. For the release of the Implementation Plan there are plans for social media and flyers to promote the plan.

Commissioner Bigham asked that the Commission share the information on their own social media with their residents.

Commissioner Rettman asked for an amended copy of the draft Implementation Plan with the Route 367 added so that the plan could be given to the Ramsey County Board. Commissioner Rettman stated the need for consistency with communications.

Commissioner Slavik stated that there was social media post about the Newport Park-and-Ride for the state fair.

Commissioner Bigham stated that she had the information available for the commissioner reports portion of the meeting.

Agenda Item #6: Other

A. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Bigham reported that Newport Park-and-Ride had over 11,000 riders for state fair. The Cottage Grove had about 28,000. It was a great opportunity. CTIB has been in the news lately with Southwest. But there was a partnership between CTIB, Hennepin County, and Metro Transit to close the gap for Southwest.

Commissioner Greene stated that we need to think regionally and CTIB is very much a part of that.

Commissioner Bigham stated that Gateway will be going through a similar process. Additionally, American Public Transportation Association (APTA) named Metro Transit as the transit system of the year. There is an event this coming weekend to celebrate. Also, Metro Transit set the single record use for the transit system on September 1, 2016.

Commissioner Greene stated that Lyssa Leitner received her award for 40 under 40 from Mass Transit Magazine. Commissioner Bigham stated that we already acknowledged Ms. Leitner for the award.

Commissioner Bigham stated that if no other commissioner had reports then we will move on.

B. Implementation Plan Open House/Next Meeting

Commissioner Bigham stated that the next meeting is October 26, 2016, Newport City Hall 5:30 pm for the Open House, 6:30 pm for the Red Rock Corridor Commission Meeting.

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Motion made by Commissioner Slavik to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rettman. All were in favor, **Approved**. Motion Carried.

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RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

DATE: October 18, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Implementation Plan Update – Approve FINAL Implementation Plan

Background
An Implementation Plan for phased transit improvements in the corridor, including eventual bus rapid transit (BRT) service, has been underway since the beginning of 2015.
The Implementation Plan goals are to:

- identify more specific construction and capital costs;
- revise station area plans guided by market analysis for bus rapid transit;
- determine a funding plan; and
- establish a phased approach for implementation of the plan.

The Implementation Plan outlines near- and long-term strategies for implementing BRT and ties those strategies to funding needs. At the September 22, 2016 Red Rock Corridor Commission meeting, the members approved the DRAFT Implementation Plan for public comment.

Meetings and Events
Recent

October 6, 2016	Business and Civic Advisory Committee meeting
October 18, 2016	Washington County Board of Commissioners presentation
October 19, 2016	Cottage Grove City Council presentation
October 20, 2016	Newport City Council presentation

Upcoming

November 7, 2016	City of Saint Paul Transportation Committee presentation

Changes to the Draft Implementation Plan
In response to the comments received at the September 22, 2016 Red Rock Corridor Commission meeting, additional clarification was included for proposed Route 367—express bus service between Hastings and Minneapolis via Newport—in the sections discussing strategies for the long term. In addition, connecting Red Rock Corridor service to Minneapolis was emphasized as an opportunity to provide links to the regional transit system and major destinations.

The draft Final Implementation Plan is attached to this memo for the Commission's review.

Implementation Plan Public Comments

The draft plan was shared with Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Business and Civic Advisory Committee (BCAC) members to share with their networks. Red Rock Corridor staff delivered flyers to locations throughout the corridor including park and rides, libraries, government centers, and coffee shops. Information about the draft Implementation Plan and the opportunity to comment were included on the Red Rock Corridor website and Facebook page. An accessible version of the draft document is available on the website.

The comments received prior to this packet being finalized have been attached. Copies of any additional comments received before public hearing will be provided to the Commission members at the October meeting.

Next Steps
If the Red Rock Corridor Commission approves the document as the FINAL Implementation Plan, the schedule to conclude the Implementation Plan process is as follows:

Date	Action
October 26, 2016	Red Rock Corridor Commission holds open house and public hearing, and adopts final Implementation Plan report based on changes from to public comments
November – December 2016	Resolutions of Support for Implementation Plan findings from all city and county partners

Action
Approve the FINAL Implementation Plan via the Resolution of Support

Red Rock Corridor Commission Public Hearing

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

PREPARED FOR

Red Rock Corridor Commission

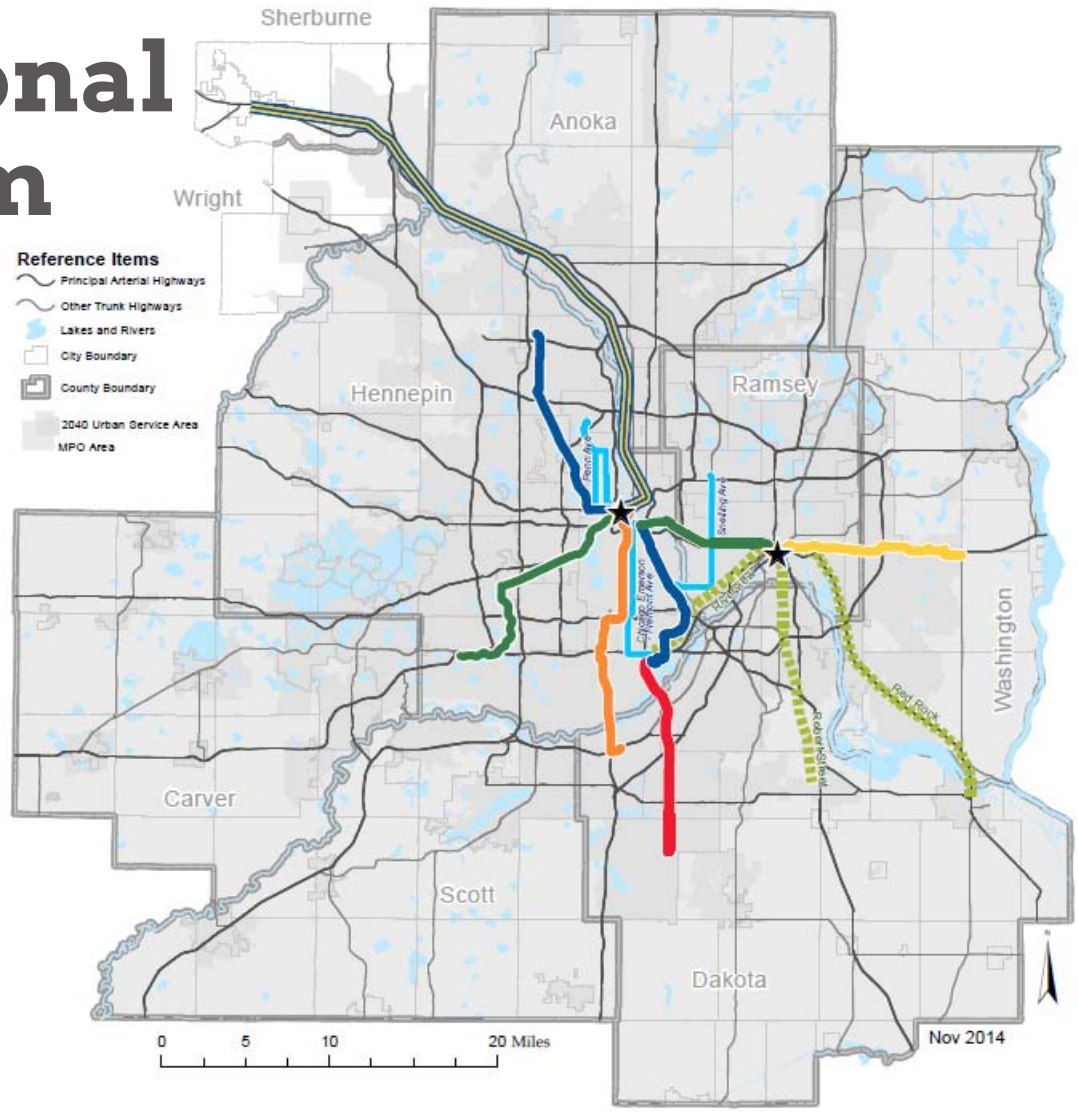
PREPARED BY

Kimley»Horn

PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

October 26, 2016

Part of a Regional Transit System



RED ROCK SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

Project Background

Alternatives Analysis (2007)

- Focus on peak hour, commuter service

→

AAU (2014)

- Focus on all-day, bi-directional service

Mode		Vehicle	Travels on:	Hours of Service
Bus Rapid Transit		Specialized BRT Vehicle	 Also will travel on shoulder when congested	 5 A.M. 12 A.M.
Express Bus		Bus		 6–9 A.M. 3–7 P.M.
Commuter Rail		Train		 6–9 A.M. 3–7 P.M.

Purpose of the Implementation Plan

- Implementation Plan that Outlines:
  - Detailed technical elements
    - Service plan, stations, vehicles, etc.
  - Station area plans
  - Schedule and costs of staged investments
  - Partner responsibilities through 2040
  - *Stakeholder buy-in, detailed resolutions, and momentum*

Project Goals

- **Goal 1**: Provide Mode Choice and Service Plan that Meets the Demonstrated and Forecasted Needs of Corridor Communities

Mobility

- **Goal 2**: Cost Effectively Address Transportation Problems in the Corridor

Cost

- **Goal 3**: Increase Opportunities for Community and Economic Development Throughout the Corridor

Development

- **Goal 4**: Improve Quality of Natural and Built Environment

Environment

In-Person Engagement

- Open Houses
- Park-and-Ride Outreach
- Outreach at Community Events
- Targeted City Meetings
- Red Line Tour
- Online Engagement
  - Website
  - Facebook

Key Themes:

Frequency of Service

All-Day Service

Park-and-Ride Options

Bus Rapid Transit Alignment







RED ROCK SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

Implementation Plan Summary

- Operating and maintenance costs are not in line with other regional transit systems
- Unclear funding path for capital costs and therefore no set evaluation process
- Best performing BRT phase by 2040 is to Cottage Grove with Gateway Stations
  - Misses regional ridership target by 33%
- Utilize regular route transit as a way to monitor for when BRT could be implemented

Financial Plan Recommendations

- Seek multiple sources to fund the Red Rock Corridor prioritized investment
- Invest in a series of small improvements to implement the project over time
- Consider local opportunities to help fund small investments
- Reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as project needs arise

Multiple Sources

Phased Improvements

Local Funding Partnerships

Continued Performance Evaluation

Phase I: Near-Term (2016–2020)

- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and increase local and express bus service
- Work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment density within station areas
- Work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout most of the day between Saint Paul and Cottage Grove (Route 363)
- Work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option

Increase Local & Express Service

Comprehensive Plan Updates

Route 363

Hastings Service

Phase II: Long-Term (2020-2040)

- Implement the corridor city and county comprehensive plans with a focus on development within and around station areas
- Update forecasted ridership based on comprehensive plan updates
- If Route 363 is implemented, monitor ridership; work with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day
- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and/or increase express bus service between the Red Rock Corridor cities and downtown Minneapolis (such as Route 367)
- Replace Route 363 with an Interim BRT service when estimated it reaches 25 passengers per in-service hour
- Continue to invest in station area development

Implement Comprehensive Plans

Revise Ridership Forecasts

Optimize Route 363

Connecting Service to Minneapolis

Convert Route 363 to BRT

Invest in Station Areas

Ongoing Strategies

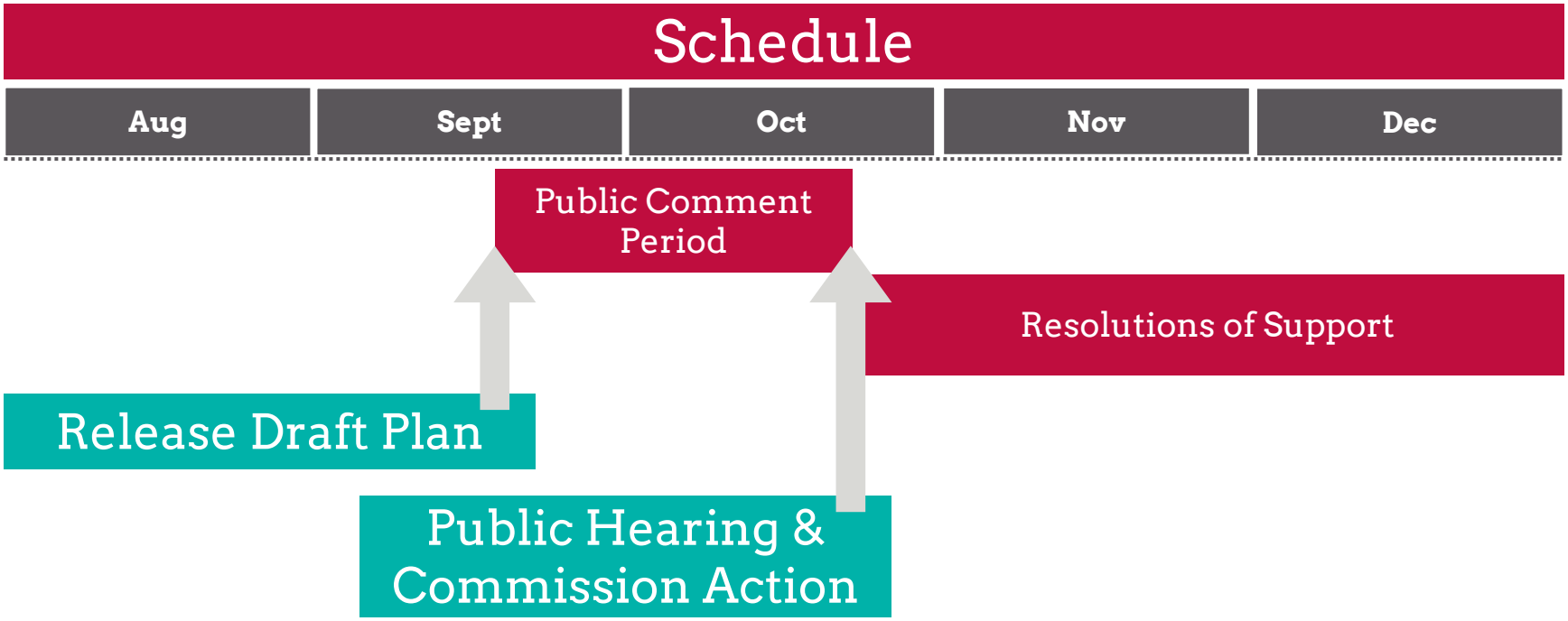
- Advocate for integrated multimodal investments including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements that support mobility throughout the Red Rock Corridor
- Advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. This includes advocating for sustainable federal, regional, and local funding sources
- Continue to monitor transit needs and performance in the corridor to determine the timing for implementation of additional transit services, alternative modes, and capital improvements

Multimodal Investments

Seek Mobility Improvement Funding

Monitor Performance

Approval Process



Public Hearing Process

- If you wish to speak, please sign up at the front table.
- State your name and address before you begin your statement.
- Each speaker's time will be limited to ***three*** minutes. Please honor this time limit.
- The meeting is video recorded; comments will become part of the public and project record.
- The format of the public hearing is to listen and record the comments. Questions will not be responded to during the public hearing. Staff are available after the hearing to address questions or comments.
- Written comments may be submitted at the front table.

Red Rock Corridor Commission Public Hearing

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

PREPARED FOR

Red Rock Corridor Commission

PREPARED BY

Kimley»Horn

PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

October 26, 2016

Gmail **Red Rock <redrockcorridor@gmail.com>**

a question, and a tentative response

4 messages

[redacted] Wed, Sep 28, 2016 at 5:57 PM

To: "redrockcorridor@gmail.com" <redrockcorridor@gmail.com>

Regarding the Red Rock Corridor implementation plan, I have not had an opportunity to study it, but I'm asking what is meant by "transit corridor?" Does it mean a dedicated roadway as proposed for the unreasonably expensive Gold Line (that is actually intended to promote development, not provide better transit)? If so, I'm opposed.

Otherwise, if the buses will use the already-established roadways, I'm probably for it.

Red Rock <redrockcorridor@gmail.com> Mon, Oct 3, 2016 at 1:43 PM

[redacted]

Thank you for the inquiry. Red Rock will run on established roadways, though some improvements will be needed when bus rapid transit is being constructed. For example, the buses could run on the shoulders along Highway 61 when congestion warrants it, like buses currently do between the downtowns. Improvements would likely the needed to shoulders in some areas for the buses.

Once you review the Implementation Plan, you will see that full bus rapid transit service will likely not be built in the corridor in the near term. Instead, we have listed recommendations to help build transit ridership in the area, while improving transit access sooner than later.

I'm happy to answer any other questions you may have.

Regards,

Hally Turner, Red Rock Corridor Staff

[Quoted text hidden]

[redacted] Mon, Oct 3, 2016 at 5:10 PM

To: Red Rock <redrockcorridor@gmail.com>

Thank you; this is reassuring information. I think you can understand my concern in view of the fact that officials have avowed that the Gold Line's main purpose is promotion of development, and that it would run on a special roadway to cost roughly $1/2-billion.

[Quoted text hidden]

Red Rock <redrockcorridor@gmail.com> Fri, Oct 7, 2016 at 7:19 AM

[redacted]

Thanks for your comments. I will include them in the information we provide to the Red Rock Corridor Commission.

Regards,

Hally Turner

[Quoted text hidden]

WordPress [redacted] Wed, Oct 19, 2016 at 10:53 AM
To: redrockcorridor@gmail.com

First Name: [redacted]
Last Name: [redacted]
Address: [redacted]
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Does expanding local bus service suit your transportation needs?

Yes. The current Newport route (364) is fine for commuting for work, but if there was more service or other options, I would use it for other types of commuting. Also, a more direct link to Minneapolis may be successful because there are many hubs in that area.

25 years from now, how do you think your transportation needs will change?

I think a rail-line through this area would work well. Also, most of the routes are currently going to the downtown, but congestion on the highways is maybe more from suburb to suburb traffic. If there were more routes that connected suburbs to each other, not just the downtown, that would be very convenient.

How would a high-frequency and all-day bus service impact how you would get to work or run daily errands?

Very much -- most of my errands are either in Woodbury or Cottage Grove. If there was regular service to Cottage Grove or Hastings, I might switch to those areas over driving to Woodbury or West Saint Paul. Or, if there were buses to Woodbury, I would likely use them for errands.

What kind of goods and services would you like to be able to walk to from a future transit station?

Smaller shops and conveniences, hospitals, public buildings (libraries, government buildings), apartment buildings or homes. I really like areas like Uptown or University Ave in Saint Paul that have a mix of business and homes.

Do you have other comments about the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan?

Not really, but keep Newport in the plan!

Had more in-depth answers the first time, but this is what I recall.

[redacted]

Red Rock Corridor Commission

Resolution No. 2016-01

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINDINGS OF THE RED ROCK CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND ADOPTING THE FINAL REPORT

WHEREAS, the Red Rock Corridor Commission was established in 1998 to address transportation needs in the Red Rock Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Red Rock Corridor is approximately 20 miles, and connects downtown Saint Paul with its East Side neighborhoods and the suburbs of Newport, Saint Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and Hastings; and

WHEREAS, the Red Rock Corridor transitway project will provide for transit improvements in the southeastern portion of the Twin Cities; and

WHEREAS, the Alternatives Analysis Update completed in 2014 identified bus rapid transit as the mode best aligned with the needs of the corridor; and

WHEREAS, a 15-month study for the Implementation Plan for bus rapid transit service along the Red Rock Corridor has concluded; and

WHEREAS, the final route considered for the implementation plan provides direct access to residents, businesses, and jobs in the cities along the corridor; and

WHEREAS, the completed Implementation Plan recommends a phased approach with near-term and long-term strategies to building transit ridership and introducing BRT to the corridor; and

WHEREAS, based on technical information and public engagement, the completed Implementation Plan establishes the near-term goal of supporting improved local and express bus service to help build transit ridership in the southeast metro; and

WHEREAS, based on technical information and public engagement, the completed Implementation Plan establishes the long-term goal of developing bus rapid transit in the southeast metro; and

WHEREAS, the completed Implementation Plan contains financial, development and service plans for improving existing transit service and the build out of bus rapid transit; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Red Rock Corridor Commission approves the adoption of the Implementation Plan for the Red Rock Corridor.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution in a true and correct copy of the Resolution presented to and adopted by the Red Rock Corridor Commission at a duty authorized meeting thereof held on the 26th day of October 2016 as shown by the minutes of said meeting in my possession.

ATTEST:

COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON

_____

DATE

_____

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
BIGHAM	____	____	____	____
GREENE	____	____	____	____
GORDON	____	____	____	____
FRANKE	____	____	____	____
KUMMER	____	____	____	____
PETERSON	____	____	____	____
PRINCE	____	____	____	____
RAHM	____	____	____	____
RETTMAN	____	____	____	____
SLAVIK	____	____	____	____
VAUGHAN	____	____	____	____

DATE: October 18, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Communications Update

Website
There have been 1882 website views in the last 30 days.

Facebook
The Facebook page is up to 336 likes. There have been no instances where comments needed to be removed from the Facebook page in accordance with the Commission's Facebook use policy.

Press
News articles published since the last Red Rock Corridor Commission meeting are attached.

1. July 20, 2016—South Washington County Bulletin
2. August 31, 2016—South Washington County Bulletin
3. September 17, 2016—StarTribune
4. September 26, 2016—MinnPost
5. September 27, 2016—Finance & Commerce

Action:
Information

South Washington County Bulletin

Viewpoint: South Washington County should be part of regional transit equation

By Karla Bigham on Jul 30, 2016 at 6:00 a.m.

As a fast-growing county, we need to work together to meet the demands this growth presents.

According to the Metropolitan Council, Washington County is expected to add 100,000 residents by 2040. As a region, we need to prepare for that growth responsibly. In the 2016 Washington County Resident Survey, the lack of access to public transit was identified as the most problematic issue in the county. Employers need transit options to offer to current employees and recruit new workers.

Reflecting that cross-section of concerns, meeting transit needs has become a critical regional issue that is the focus of Washington County.

Red Rock Corridor is a proposed bus rapid transit line from Hastings to St. Paul. As chair of the corridor commission, I have helped to direct a lot of time studying the needs of the area and how best to meet the future demands. Businesses, local government partners and the public have provided feedback on the corridor plan. Residents and officials from each of the cities along the route are excited about the possibility of having an all-day, bi-directional bus service available in our area. Additionally, we appreciate the support of the business community for the corridor.

We are working to build ridership along the corridor, which does take time. The Metropolitan Council is considering, with the support of the Washington County Board of Commissioners, an all-day, bi-directional bus route running every 30 minutes along the Red Rock Corridor. Additionally, the Newport Transit Station will be a State Fair Park and Ride lot this year. This additional location will provide

publicity for the station and alleviate the overflow at the Cottage Grove Park and Ride during the busy time. I would like to thank the Metropolitan Council for its approval of the additional location.

A comprehensive transportation system must have a regional approach. Residents of south Washington County travel to and from all areas of the Twin Cities, and we need to be part of that transit equation. To have a comprehensive transportation system, there needs to be a state partner. I was disappointed that the state Legislature failed to pass a transportation bill this past legislative session. The lack of state funding makes it more difficult for counties to complete necessary road and bridge projects or expand transit options in the east metro. My hope is that there will be a special session at which a comprehensive transportation bill is passed with a transit component to meet the needs of our fast growing region.

Please feel free to contact me at karla.bigham@co.washington.mn.us (mailto:karla.bigham@co.washington.mn.us) or 651-430- 6214 with any questions. Have a wonderful summer. Thank you for allowing me to be your Washington County commissioner.

Karla Bigham represents Washington County District 4, which includes Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, Grey Cloud Island Township, Denmark Township and parts of Woodbury and Hastings.

Recommended for you



Bailey to seek third term as mayor

The Opinion page is a forum for editorials, reader letters, guest viewpoints and reactions to views expressed on this page.

Opinion

"Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press ..."
— The First Amendment

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Red Rock vs. common sense

Red Rock Corridor BRT (bus rapid transit) is a 30-mile project from Hastings to St. Paul's Union Depot and is one of many metro projects proposed by the Metropolitan Council. The estimated cost for Red Rock started out in 2007 at $75 million. In 2013 that dropped to $45 million and in 2015 it dropped to $28.6 million. This is interesting as the 11-mile Red Line Corridor into Apple Valley costs $112 million to build.

In addition to the initial costs to build Red Rock, there will also be the ongoing yearly operational costs of approximately $7 million that will be provided by the taxpayers.

A Met Council survey shows 3 percent actually use a mass transit system. You can see this for yourself. Stop by the $6 million Newport Transit Station and count the cars there on any given day.

Using the initial costs and the annual operational costs, and the 3- to 4-percent ridership, we can calculate that it will cost the taxpayers approximately $33.93 per rider per day on the Red Rock Corridor — whether you ride the bus or not.

Washington County is part of the Red Rock Corridor Commission, which is advocating this spending. It's interesting to note that Minnesota House District 54A candidates Jen Peterson and Keith Franke are both on this commission. You may want to contact them to share your views on this boondoggle express.

Leon Moe
Cottage Grove

No park use after dog attack

I read the article about the attack on FeFe. We used to take our dogs to the dog park almost daily. Then one day my dog Jake got attacked by a large black lab. Luckily, the lab had a muzzle on it or Jake would've been dead.

I don't blame the dogs as much as their owners. Most dog owners are responsible, but there are some that don't pick up after their dog and they let them roam freely even though they know the dog has violent tendencies.

We've never gone back to WAG Farms or any other dog park.

Kevin Dahlen
Cottage Grove

Breed myth shouldn't be perpetuated

A photograph of my dog and I taken at the Cottage Grove Safety Camp this year was used in support of an article about an updated dangerous dog ordinance in St. Paul Park. In that many folks associate certain breeds as being dangerous, including rottweilers, I'm concerned that that will be the connection made by readers.

The rottweiler in the photograph is a tested and registered therapy dog, and has been for over three years. One of the educational activities we participate in is dispelling myths about breeds often associated with dangerous dogs. My hope is that the relationship of this photo and article don't perpetuate the breed myth.

Seth Williams
St. Paul Park

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SOUTH METRO

Dakota County's divorce from transit board is getting messy

10 ARTICLES THIS MONTH. SUBSCRIBE (HTTPS://USERS.STARTRIBUNE.COM/PLACEMENT/6/ENVIRONMENT/3/SIGN-UP/START) FOR MORE LOG IN
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By Emma Nelson (http://www.startribune.com/emma-nelson/261800211/) Star Tribune

SEPTEMBER 17, 2016 — 4:25PM

Dakota County officials are exploring whether they can stop contributing money to the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB), an unprecedented move that could jeopardize regional transportation projects.

The powerful but little-known board pools sales taxes levied in five metro counties to fund transportation projects. In June, the Dakota County board announced its intention to leave, saying the county has put more money into CTIB's coffers than it's gotten back.

Now, commissioners are facing a dilemma: Until the end of 2018, Dakota County still has to levy a sales tax and help pay for CTIB projects, but it has less say in what the body does. To make matters worse, commissioners say, they're facing retaliation for deciding to leave. Other CTIB board members ignore their questions at meetings, they say, and seem hesitant to fund Dakota County transit projects or collaborate on other regional initiatives.

"If this is the way it's going to be until the end of [2018], it's going to be a rough road," said Commissioner Liz Workman, who chairs the county's Regional Railroad Authority. "And I don't think that's fair, because they're still getting our money."

Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington and Anoka counties contribute to CTIB. Each levies a quarter-cent transportation sales tax and a $20 tax on new car sales. Dakota County's share is more than $15 million a year. It contributed 13 percent of the CTIB transit tax from 2008 to 2016 but got just 7 percent of the pooled funds.

Though Dakota County will remain part of CTIB for more than two years, its commissioners worry that the county's projects will get stiffed.

Anoka County Commissioner and CTIB member Scott Schulte said the transit board's attitude is that Dakota County shouldn't benefit from the transit tax if it's going to leave.

"It sounds like there's almost immediate retribution, from my perspective," Schulte said.

CTIB committed $37.5 million last month for the bus rapid transit Orange Line between Minneapolis and Burnsville, leaving the Metropolitan Council and Dakota and Hennepin counties to fill a $7.5 million gap that CTIB was supposed to cover.

And the Red Rock Corridor, a rapid bus line from St. Paul to Hastings, also may be in jeopardy.

"I suspect that's not going to get funded; I don't know why we would," said CTIB Chairman and Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, a zealous advocate of transit. "When your spouse says 'I'm leaving,' you don't continue making car payments for your spouse," McLaughlin said.

Dakota County Commissioner Tom Egan said the board has asked the county attorney's office to explore whether CTIB can fail to pay for projects while the county is still contributing tax dollars. If local projects don't share in the kitty, he said, Dakota County may stop contributing altogether.



(http://stmedia.startribune.com/images/ows_1471470820313
RICHARD TSONG-TAATARII, STAR TRIBUNE

The planned Orange Line, a $150 million bus-rapid transit project along I-35W, will likely get a much nicer response from state lawmakers...

Larger ramifications

Dakota County is the first CTIB member to leave the 8-year-old body. To figure out what the county's obligations are over the next two years, the county attorney's office is turning to the joint powers agreement that governs the group.

Assistant county attorney Jay Stassen called the situation "unique" and said he'll have more information for the board by its next Regional Rail Authority meeting. That conversation may be private to protect attorney-client privilege, Stassen said.

If Dakota County stops levying and contributing tax dollars before 2019, CTIB's projects — including the Southwest Light Rail line, the Bottineau Blue Line extension and the Bus Rapid Transit Gold Line — could be at risk.

Such a move could also jeopardize other regional efforts that affect Dakota County. Egan said he's concerned about joint projects with Hennepin and Ramsey counties, including upgrades to the Hennepin County medical examiner's office and the East Metro Strong transit cooperative.

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This summer, Hennepin County declined to participate in a Dakota County transit study meeting because of the county's decision to leave CTIB.

"I think timing is everything," said Hennepin County Board Chairwoman Jan Callison. "You just blow up the CTIB system. You jeopardize the Orange Line project. You do it on your timeline. And then you say, 'And now, would you please come and talk with us about our road projects?' I think it's kind of tough."

Staff writer Janet Moore contributed to this report.

emma.nelson@startribune.com 612-673-4509 emmamarienelson

MINNPOST

The Twin Cities transit system is seriously off track

By Steven Dornfeld | 09/26/16



CC/Flickr/Mark Danielson

Some would argue that the county-led system has worked well, producing the highly successful Blue and Green LRT lines. But the system provides incentives for the counties to minimize the costs and problems associated with their pet projects, and push for their development.

When Dakota County voted to pull out of the current scheme for funding transit capital projects, it underscored what has become increasingly apparent. The Twin Cities' system for planning, developing and operating transit is cumbersome, inefficient and increasingly dysfunctional.

Nearly 50 years ago, when the Legislature created the Metropolitan Council, it decided that certain public services – notably transit and sewers – could be provided more efficiently and effectively at a regional level. But over the years, the council's powers over transit have been seriously eroded and the counties have assumed the driver's seat.

In 1980, the Legislature authorized each of the metro counties to establish a regional rail authority with broad authority and taxing power to promote and develop rail projects, including commuter rail and light rail transit (LRT). They became the primary vehicles for evaluating transit alternatives in

major transportation corridors, and recommending the preferred mode and alignment to the Met Council.


Steven Dornfeld

In 2008, lawmakers went a step further, authorizing the creation of the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB). It gave metro counties the option to join the board and levy a quarter-cent sales tax as well as a $20 per vehicle excise tax – primarily to help fund the development and operation of bus and rail transitways. In the process, it effectively undermined the Met Council as the region's premiere transportation planner.

Five of the seven counties – Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington – chose to join and levy the taxes. But members of the Dakota County Board have now voted to withdraw by the end of 2018, if not sooner, saying they have contributed 13 percent of the board's revenues but received just 7 percent of its pooled funds. There have been hints that several other counties could follow.

Some would argue that the county-led system has worked well, producing the highly successful Blue (Hiawatha) and Green (University Avenue) LRT lines. In 2015, the Blue Line averaged more than 31,000 riders per weekday and the Green Line more than 37,000 – both exceeding the original estimates.

But the system provides incentives for the counties to minimize the costs and problems associated with their pet projects, and push for their development – whether or not they are regional priorities. A few examples:

- The $320 million Northstar commuter rail line, pushed by Anoka and Hennepin counties, has been a costly disappointment. The 40-mile line, extending from Big Lake to downtown Minneapolis and completed in 2009, originally was expected average 3,400 riders per weekday in its first year of operation. Northstar has yet to hit that number, averaging just 2,548 riders per weekday in 2015. And its operating subsidy per rider is a whopping $14.15 per one-way trip. (In comparison, the operating subsidy per LRT rider is $1.67).
- The $243 milllion purchase and renovation of St. Paul's Union Depot, led by Ramsey County, produced a beautiful but largely vacant building. It was touted as a multimodal transit hub and "a new platform for growth in St. Paul." But it is unlikely to ever serve much more than the current two Amtrak trains per day, plus a few intercity and casino buses. As a result, the depot is not attracting the shops and restaurants once envisioned "to support and sustain" its operation. It had operating losses of $4.5 milllion in 2014 and $4.8 million in 2015.
- On a much smaller scale, Washington County persuaded CTIB to help fund the $6.2 million Newport transit station, located in a former industrial area tucked beneath the Interstate 494-Highway 61 interchange. The station, with a heated waiting area and 170 park-and-ride spaces, is viewed by the county as a future stop on a possible bus rapid transit (BRT) from Hastings to St. Paul. But don't expect to bump into a lot of people there. As of this spring, it was serving an average of eight transit riders in the morning and 10 in the evening.

Parochialism is not the only problem that besets the current system for developing improved transit. These problems include:

Accountability and transparency: If the average citizen is trying to monitor a given transit project or see how his/her tax dollars are being spent, where does such a person turn? To the Met Council? Metro Transit? CTIB? His or her county rail authority? As a recent Citizens League report pointed out, depending on the status of the project, it might be one or two of these agencies – or all of the above.

Efficiency and effectiveness: The present funding scheme for major capital projects is strongly tilted in favor of rail, where buses might be the more cost-effective option. In 2015, Metro Transit provided 86 million rides, with 62.1 million on buses. Most transportation experts believe buses will continue to be the backbone of the region's transit system for decades to come. But Metro Transit, an operating arm of the Met Council, most often is scrambling for dollars just to keep the present bus system in operation, much less expand service.

Adequacy: With respect to major transitway projects, the region's biggest challenge is securing commitments for the 50 percent state-local funding needed to qualify for matching federal funds. The practice has been for CTIB to provide 30 percent, the participating county or counties 10 percent and the state 10 percent, but Republican lawmakers in recent years have blocked any state funding.

To keep the $1.86-billion Southwest LRT project alive, Gov. Mark Dayton and the Met Council were forced this year into a risky stop-gap funding plan that will keep it eligible for federal funding. But it hardly represents a viable solution for funding future transit improvements.

In an ideal world, the Legislature would take a fresh look at the role of counties in transit, reinstate the Met Council as the region's lead agency for transit planning and governance, and provide it with an adequate funding source – one that would allow the Twin Cities to keep pace with other major metro areas. But that is unlikely to happen.

Critics say the 17-member council already has too much power for a body appointed by the governor. But past legislatures and governors repeatedly have rejected proposals to make the council elective, fearing it would become too powerful and too independent.

Moreover, neither the Met Council nor transit has had a lot of champions at the Capitol, particularly in the Republican-controlled House. Any significant improvements in the system would require major changes in the composition and priorities of the Legislature.

Steven Dornfeld was a longtime government reporter for the Minneapolis Tribune and the St. Paul Pioneer Press, covering the Legislature, politics and public affairs. More recently he has written for MinnPost. He also worked as an editorial page writer and editor for the Pioneer Press. From 2003 to 2011, he was the Metropolitan Council's director of public affairs.

WANT TO ADD YOUR VOICE?

FINANCE & COMMERCE



The city of Newport is planning for higher density around the Newport Transit station at 250 Red Rock Crossing, which will be served by the Red Rock Corridor line between Hastings and St. Paul. (File photo: Bill Klotz)

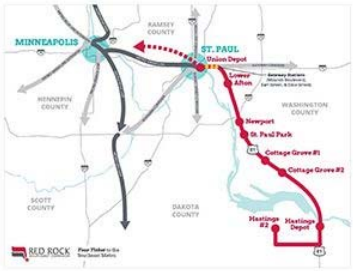
Planners aim to boost ridership in Red Rock corridor

By: Janice Bitters September 26, 2016 4:59 pm 0

To win approval for a $44 million bus rapid transit line between Hastings and the Union Depot in St. Paul, planners must first boost ridership on regular bus service.

The Metropolitan Council and federal government have ridership benchmarks that corridors should meet before they'll support the transition from regular buses to BRT, and the Red Rock Corridor doesn't have all day bus service to demonstrate the need for BRT in the corridor.

But when planners ran the numbers for future corridor ridership out to 2040, they estimated about 2,200 riders would take the line daily. That's approximately 1,200 riders short to meet the federal and local benchmarks.



The Red Rock Corridor would run between Hastings and Union Depot in St. Paul. (Submitted image: Red Rock Corridor Commission)

The key to pulling in more riders a, local officials say, is to make existing service in the corridor better, and to add density around the proposed stations.

"Getting more people to live and work within walking or biking or closer driving distance to these stations is … really what's going to be needed to make bus rapid transit viable," Lyssa Leitner, project manager for the Red Rock Corridor, said in an interview Monday.

Currently, the corridor offers express bus options, which tend to operate only during peak travel times.

The 30-mile bus rapid transit corridor would have 12 stations, including stops in St. Paul, Newport, Cottage Grove and Hastings. The route would largely follow Highway 61.

A draft implementation plan released late last week shows that officials want to start building ridership by creating a new regular bus line that would provide all-day service on a 16.5-mile portion of the corridor between St. Paul and Cottage Grove during a three-year trial. The proposed Route 363 would run every 30 minutes from 6 a.m. to as late as 10 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Route planners are aiming to reach 1,200 daily passengers in the St. Paul to Cottage Grove portion of the corridor — a number that would meet Met Council and federal ridership thresholds for that segment — before implementing

a BRT service that would run every 15 minutes most of the day. The BRT corridor would be expanded gradually, reaching Hastings last.

If the planned phased implementation goes well, the full BRT corridor is expected to see at least 2,150 daily rides by 2040, Jan Lucke, transit and planning manager for Washington County, said in an interview Monday.

The planners' goal is to make the service in the corridor convenient and accessible enough to allow people to leave their cars at home, said Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham, who also chairs the Red Rock Corridor Commission.

The commission is also looking at implementing another new express route in the interim that would help build ridership in the corridor by serving Hastings, Newport and downtown Minneapolis.

"We're pleased with the plan that we have, and I believe that we will exceed the [ridership] plan, especially if these additional routes come in," she said in an interview Friday.

Metro Transit this year applied to the Metropolitan Council to help fund the nearly $7.5 million three-year Route 363 demonstration project, which could be operating as early as 2020. The money would primarily cover operating costs for the route.

The money would be granted through the Met Council's Regional Solicitation program, which allocates federal transportation funds. This year, the Met Council is weighing 145 applications totaling more than $535 million.

Red Rock planners will know by early 2017 whether the Met Council will grant about $5.9 million toward the demonstration line. The remaining $1.47 million would come from other local sources, according to the application.

Increasing weekday service will only fill the ridership gap so much, said Hally Turner, a planner for Washington County who presented the implementation plan to the Red Rock Corridor Commission on Thursday.

"Station-area development definitely happens before, during and after you have transit in place," she said. "Being intentional about the station-area development will give us a boost in ridership."

In Newport, city officials have been working on getting the area around the Newport Transit Station ready for development by lobbying for a tax increment financing district.

The station, at the southwest corner of Interstate 494 and Highway 61, opened in 2014 and would eventually be served by the Red Rock Line.

Planners for the Red Rock Corridor are accepting public comment and will host an open house to gather feedback on the plan on at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 26 at the Newport City Hall before they finalize the document.

Related Content:

- **Red Rock commission looks at phased approach**
- **Commission recommends Red Rock route**
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BRIDGETOWER MEDIA







Implementation Plan

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

PREPARED FOR:

Red Rock Corridor Commission

PREPARED BY:

Kimley»Horn

WSP
PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

SEPTEMBER 2016

Your Ticket to the Southeast Metro.

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Chapter 1: Executive Summary

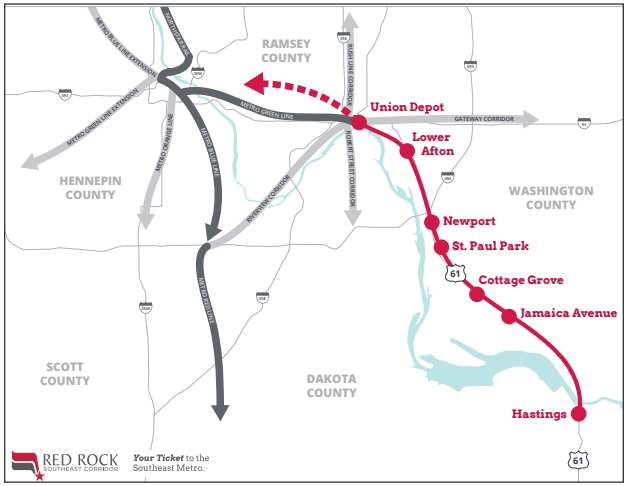


1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The Washington, Dakota, Ramsey, and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authorities completed an Implementation Plan for the Red Rock Corridor. The Red Rock Corridor is a proposed 30-mile transitway that runs along Highway 61 and Interstate 94 between Hastings and Union Depot in Saint Paul with connecting service to Minneapolis (see **Figure 1-1**).

Figure 1-1: Project Area



1.2 Purpose of Report

The Implementation Plan builds off the recommendations from the Red Rock Alternatives Analysis Updated (AAU) to create financial, development, and service plans to provide better transit connections between corridor communities and the regional network.

The following sections of the report summarize the individual tasks that form the Implementation Plan.

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Alternative Evaluation
- Preferred Alternative
- Financial Plan
- Phasing Plan

1.3 Project Goals

The following project goals were adopted by the Red Rock Corridor Commission on May 22, 2013 as part of the AAU process to lead planning efforts for the corridor.

1. Provide mode choice and service plan that meets the demonstrated and forecasted needs of corridor communities
2. Cost effectively address transportation problems in the corridor
3. Increase opportunities for community and economic development throughout the corridor
4. Improve quality of natural and built environment

1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Planning for the Implementation Plan involved outreach and coordination with community members, businesses, civic organizations, and others interested in the project. A Business and Civic Advisory Committee was established as part of the project. City and county agencies were also engaged in the process to provide direction on the project and the engagement process.

A **Public Involvement Plan** (PIP) was developed to clarify the goals and objectives for public outreach.

Engagement at Park & Rides



1.5 Alternative Evaluation Overview

Two BRT alignment alternatives were explored beyond the alternatives that were identified in the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU).

The initial alignment that was identified included a BRT alignment with a highway orientation along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hastings Depot (Alternative 1).

At the onset of the Implementation Plan, it was noted that stations along Highway 61 from the AAU may miss some of the established development along the corridor and stakeholders requested that another route be investigated. Thus, a second BRT alternative was introduced to focus more on the existing density in the corridor that would be more likely to support all-day transit service. The second alternative included stations on the east side of Saint Paul within the Gateway Corridor, into the developed part of Cottage Grove, and

further into Hastings. St. Paul Park did not have a station in the routing recommended in the AAU, so a station in St. Paul Park was added to both alternatives.

The following two project alternatives were evaluated based on projected cost, ridership, and service:

- **Alternative 1:** BRT Along Highway 61 with a Highway Orientation
- **Alternative 2:** BRT Along Highway 61 with a Community Orientation

The routes and station locations for the two alternatives are shown in **Figure 1-2** and **1-3**.

1.6 Station-Level Evaluation

During the station-level analysis, it was determined that Alternative 2 would be further evaluated with two options: Alternative 2A and 2B.

- **Alternative 2A:** BRT via 95th Street with stops at the Union Depot, Mounds Boulevard Station, Earl Street Station, Etna Street Station, Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, St. Paul Park Station, 80th Street Station, 95th Street Station, the Hastings Depot, a station along Highway 55 in Hastings, and a station near the Dakota County Offices in Hastings. The Mounds Boulevard, Earl Street, and Etna Street Stations are shared with the Gateway Corridor and utilize the transit-only guideway being developed for that corridor. Parking is assumed at the Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, 80th Street Station, the Hastings Depot, and the Dakota County Offices Station.
- **Alternative 2B:** BRT with the same stops as Alternative 2A with the exception of a stop at Jamaica Avenue rather than at 95th Street. Additionally, parking is assumed at the Jamaica Avenue station rather than the 80th Street Station for this alternative.

Figure 1-2: Alternative 1

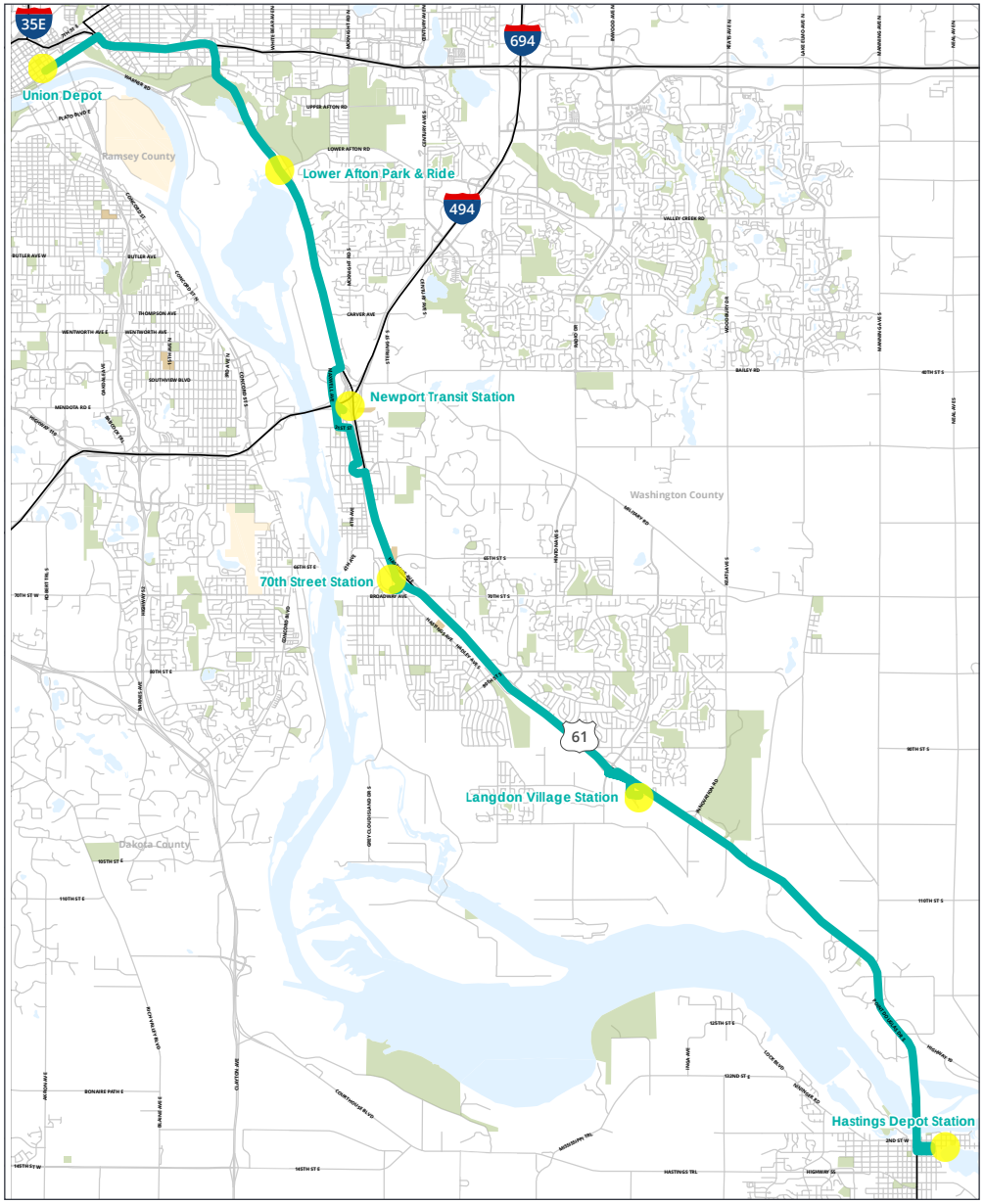
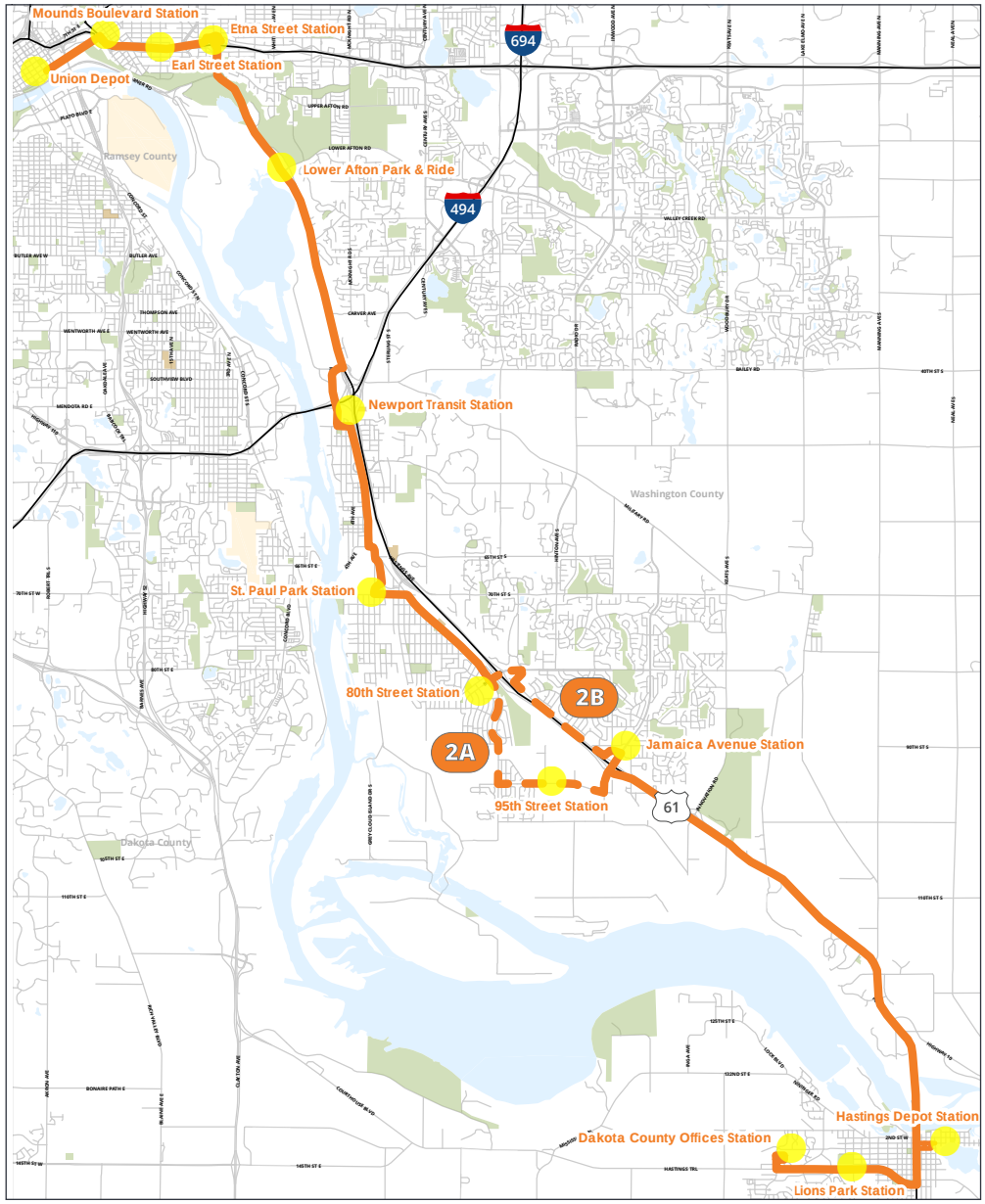


Figure 1-3: Alternative 2



The intention behind these alternatives was to investigate the difference in forecasted ridership between serving the predominantly industrial side (west) of Highway 61 compared to the predominantly commercial side (east) of Highway 61 between 80th Street and Jamaica Avenue.

1.7 Preferred Alternative

In January 2016, the RRCC recommended advancing a single preferred alternative for further evaluation based on the goals of the project and public input. The preferred alternative includes BRT service along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hasting Depot with deviations from Highway 61 in Newport, St. Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and in Hastings. The portions of this alternative off of Highway 61 aim to serve existing population and jobs that are more likely to support all-day, bi-directional transit service than park-and-rides. The end-to-end travel time to cover the 26.8-mile distance is assumed to be approximately 66 minutes with 124 daily trips.

Figure 1-4 shows the proposed preferred alternative service plan.

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Similar to other transitways in the region, the service for the Red Rock BRT was modeled as follows:

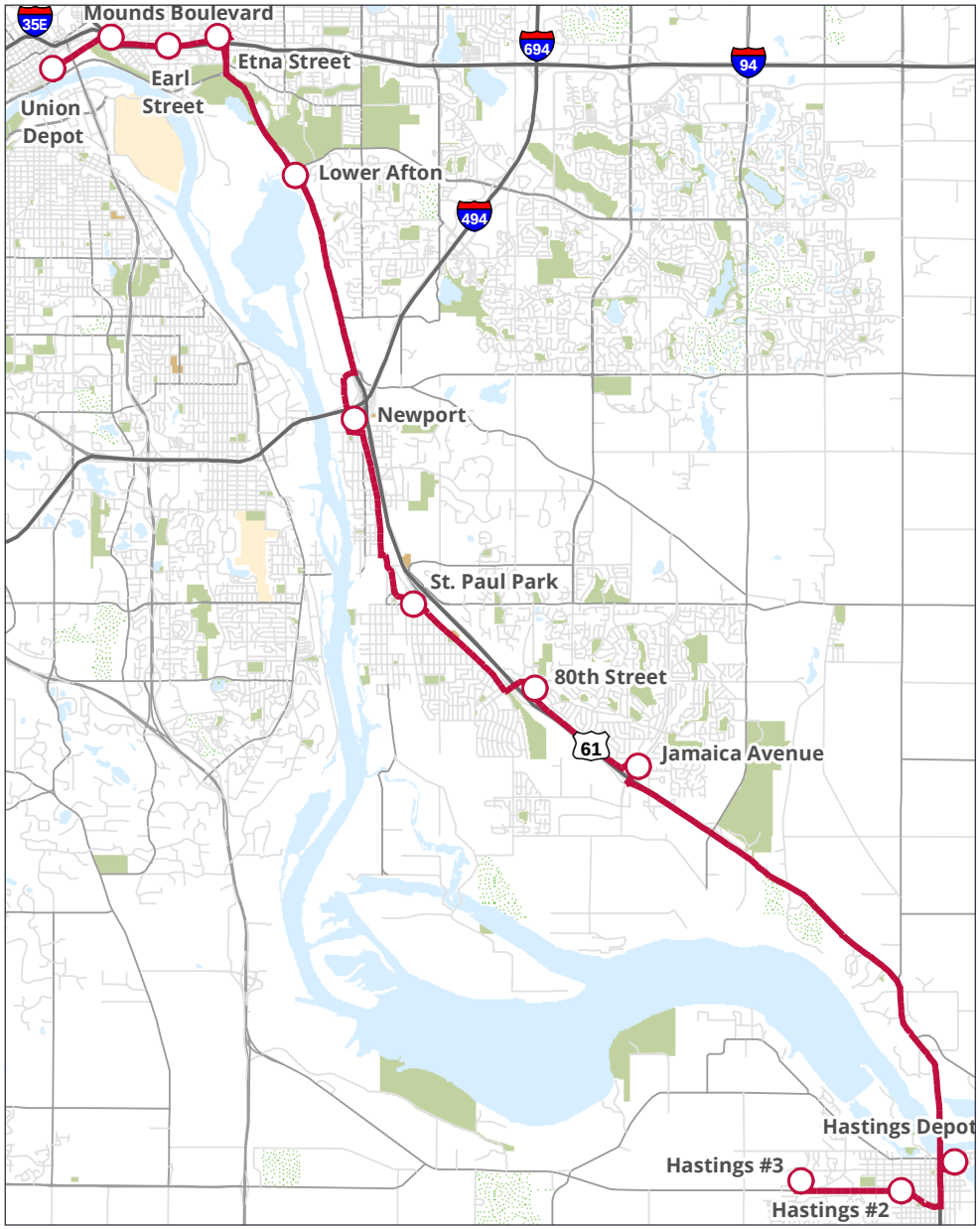
Weekday Service

- Frequency
  - 15 minutes (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
  - 30 minutes (5:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.; 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.)
- Service Hours
  - 19 Hours

Weekend Service

- Frequency
  - 30 minutes (7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.)
- Service Hours
  - 17 Hours

Figure 1-4: Preferred Alternative Service Plan



1.8 Ridership and Cost Estimation

SUMMARY OF CAPITAL AND OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) COST ESTIMATES

The total capital cost is estimated to be $44.3 million and the total O&M cost is estimated to be $7.9 million for the preferred alternative, as shown in **Table 1-1.**

Table 1-1: Summary of Capital and O&M Costs[1]

COST CATEGORY	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE COST (2015$)
Total Capital Costs	$44.3 M
Total O&M Cost	$7.9 M

RIDERSHIP PROJECTIONS

The ridership projection for the preferred alternative is 2,200 by 2040.

Key ridership information is summarized in **Table 1-2**. Year 2024 was selected as an interim year to evaluate additional local and express service within the corridor, as well as an interim build option for the Full Build BRT, since ridership for this year was required for a grant application for interim service.

Table 1-2: Ridership Results Summary

YEAR	ALTERNATIVE	EXISTING EXPRESS ROUTES	BRT	TOTAL
2024	No Build	1,350	-	1,350
2024	Interim BRT	1,270	1,550	2,820
2040	No Build	1,650	-	1,660
2040	Preferred Alternative	1,600	2,200	3,800

[1]*All cost estimates presented were calculated using 2015 dollars*



1.9 Phasing Plan

PHASE I: NEAR-TERM (2016-2020)

The first phase towards full BRT implementation is to increase local and express bus service. This includes:

- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and increase local and express bus service
- Work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment density within station areas
- Work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout most of the day between Saint Paul and Cottage Grove (Route 363, see **Section 4.6**)[2]
- Work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option

PHASE II: LONG-TERM (2020-2040)

If Route 363 is implemented, the second phase towards full BRT implementation would be based on how Route 363 performs. The next steps in this phase include:

- Implement the corridor city and county comprehensive plans with a focus on development within and around station areas
- Update forecasted ridership based on comprehensive plan updates
- If Route 363 is implemented, monitor ridership; work with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day
- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and/or increase express bus service between the Red Rock Corridor cities and downtown Minneapolis (such as Route 367)

[2]In July 2016, a Regional Solicitation Application was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for Route 363. If the grant application is successful, the service would be implemented for a three-year term starting in 2020.

- Replace Route 363 with an Interim BRT service when it reaches an estimated 25 passengers per in-service hour
- Continue to invest in station area development

1.10. Recommendations and Next Steps

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Based on the current ridership projections and cost-effectiveness of the project, a phased Implementation Plan is proposed to move forward with the development of BRT in the Red Rock Corridor.

FUNDING CONCLUSIONS

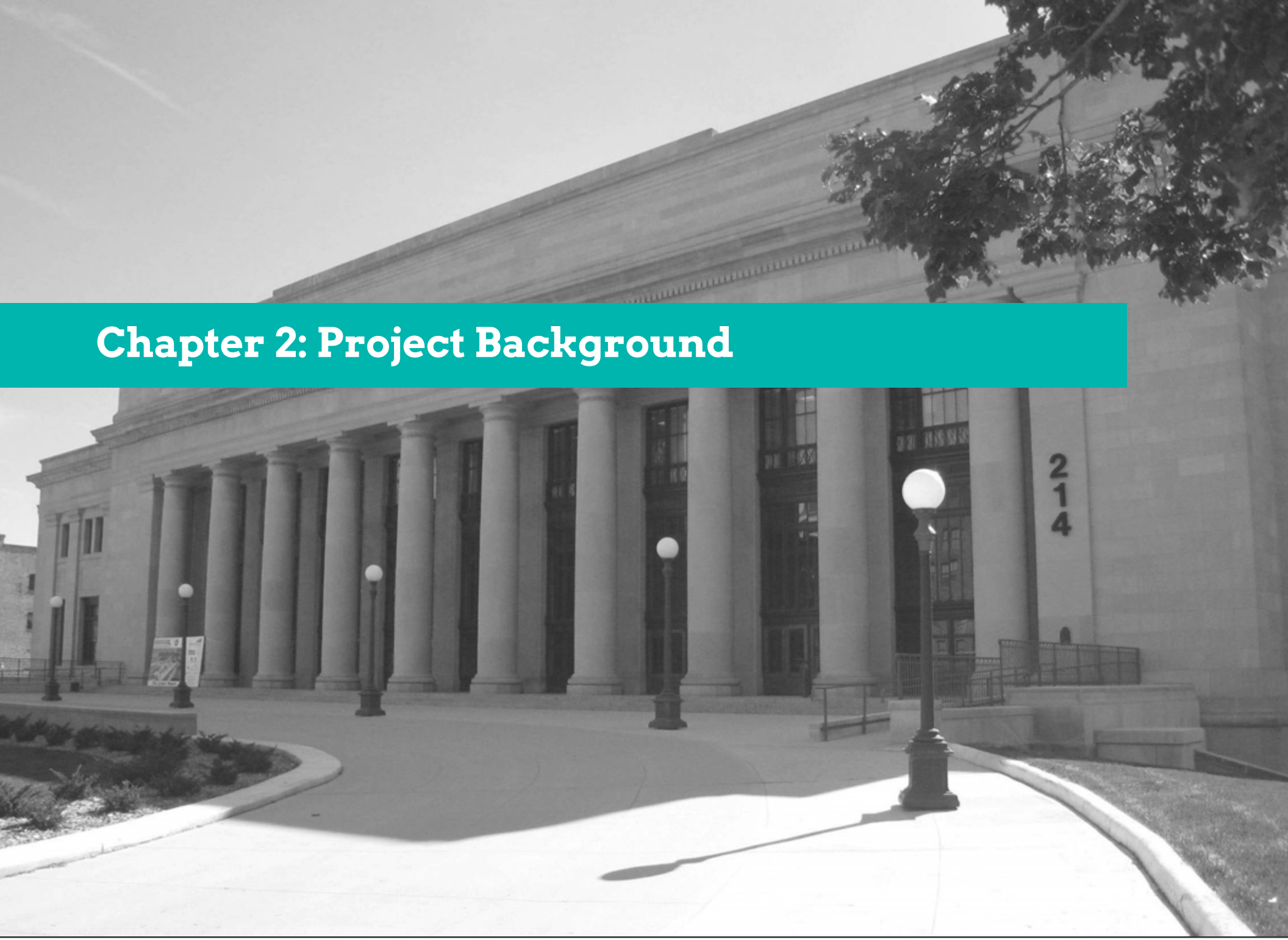
Based on the evaluation of the funding sources, the following conclusions can be made about potential revenue sources to support the capital costs of a new BRT line in the Red Rock Corridor:

- Seek multiple sources to fund the Red Rock Corridor prioritized investments
- Invest in a series of small improvements to implement the project over time in order to efficiently leverage funds from multiple sources
- Consider local opportunities to help fund small investments towards full BRT build out
- Reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as project needs arise

NEXT STEPS

In conjunction with the actions and improvements in each of the phases, there are other broad and ongoing strategies that should be pursued. They are:

- Advocate for integrated multimodal investments including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements that support mobility throughout the Red Rock Corridor
- Advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. This includes advocating for sustainable federal, regional, and local funding sources
- Continue to monitor transit needs and performance in the corridor to determine the timing for implementation of additional transit services, alternative modes, and capital improvements



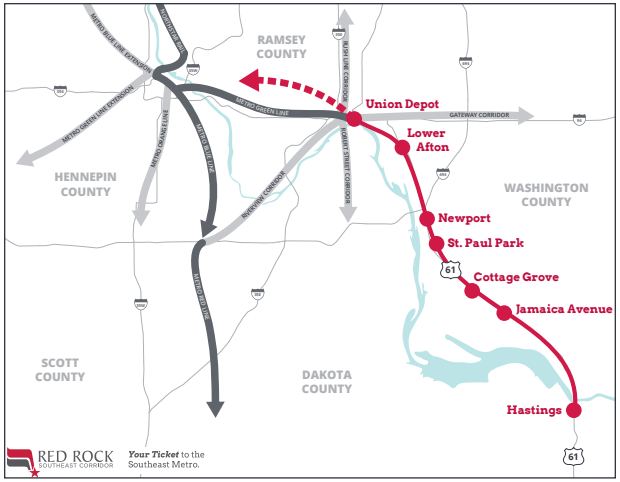
Chapter 2: Project Background

2. Project Background

2.1 Red Rock Corridor Defined

The Red Rock Corridor is a proposed 30-mile transitway that runs along Highway 61 and Interstate 94 between Hastings and Union Depot in Saint Paul with connecting service to Minneapolis (see **Figure 2-1**). The transitway will include stops in Hastings, Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, and Saint Paul. Riders can access many destinations from the Union Depot using other transit service including express buses, local buses, and the METRO Green Line.

Figure 2-1: Project Area



Previous studies have looked at transit service beyond Hastings but for the purposes of this Implementation Plan, the southern terminus of the corridor is Hastings. The corridor has regional, statewide, and national significance as a primary transportation route for automobile, truck, freight, and passenger rail travel.

The purpose of this project is to build off the recommendations from previous studies to create financial, development, and service plans for the Red Rock Corridor. These implementation plan components will lead to the long-term goal of providing better transit connections between corridor communities and the regional transit network.

2.2 Project Background

In the 1990s, the Red Rock Corridor was included as part of the region's commuter rail plan. Subsequently, the corridor was planned as a connection from the Twin Cities to Chicago via high-speed rail service.

In 2007, the Red Rock Corridor Alternatives Analysis (AA) was completed as an initial phase in attaining federal funding for future commuter rail service. This analysis concluded that commuter rail was appropriate for the long-term; especially in the event that high- speed rail was introduced into the corridor and provided a potential mechanism for reducing capital costs. The AA recommended the development of commuter bus services in the short-term to build transit demand in the corridor.

The results of the AA led to the study of commuter bus services in the corridor and station area planning work based around a long-term plan for commuter rail service. However, other regional planning work led by the Metropolitan Council, such as the 2008 Transit Master Study and the 2010 Park-and-Ride Study, and ongoing developments in the corridor reopened the door for additional study. Further study reevaluated whether commuter rail is the appropriate investment for the corridor and found that forecasted ridership is low for the estimated costs, unless those costs were shared with another capital investment, such as high-speed rail.

In addition, the East Metro Rail Capacity Study identified existing capacity constraints within the rail system that would be further strained if commuter rail service was added to the corridor. Finally, the Transportation Policy Plan adopted in November 2010 and amended in May 2013 identifies the Red Rock Corridor as being served by bus rapid transit (BRT), light rail transit (LRT), or commuter rail.

Due to changing conditions in the corridor and region and the availability of additional technical data, an Alternative Analysis Update (AAU) was undertaken to make decisions on how to create short and long-term transit improvements in the corridor. The AAU selected BRT as the alternative best aligned with the project's goals and objectives.

The AAU was completed in 2014 and can be found along with all previous studies at the Red Rock Corridor website:

http://www.redrockcorridor.com

As outlined in the final chapter of the AAU, there are broad and ongoing strategies that will be pursued. One strategy is to advocate for integrated multimodal investments including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, freight, rail, highway, and transit improvements that support mobility throughout the Red Rock Corridor. Another strategy is to advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. The final broad strategy is to continue monitoring the peak period capacity needs in the corridor to determine the timing for implementation of additional transit services, alternative modes, or capital improvements.

A summary of all previous completed work is described in the report **Previously Completed Work,** which is available in the appendix.



2.3 Problem Statement

In 2007, the Red Rock Alternatives Analysis focused heavily on issues related to peak hour mobility to the Saint Paul and Minneapolis downtowns. Additional analysis was needed to better understand transit markets in the corridor, including off-peak and reverse commute service demand, local access demand, railroad access, new station locations, connections to new transit services, level of service, and efficient use of transit infrastructure.

Communities in the Red Rock Corridor between Saint Paul and Red Wing do not currently have all-day fixed route transit service. Instead, their service is limited to peak period express bus and dial-a-ride services. As a result, community members and the Commission expressed a desire for more off-peak/all-day transit service with more access.

2.4 Project Goals and Objectives

The following project goals and objectives were adopted by the Red Rock Corridor Commission on May 22, 2013 as part of the AAU process to lead planning efforts for the corridor.

1. Goal: Provide mode choice and service plan that meets the demonstrated and forecasted needs of corridor communities.

Objectives:

- A transit option which is time competitive to the private automobile
- Reliable service
- Improve mobility throughout the day for both work and non-work trips by providing flexible duration of service
- A transit option that maximizes the number of riders and the transit modal share, among both transit-dependent and non-transit-dependent populations
- Provide connectivity among existing and planned transit/bike/pedestrian services and infrastructure throughout the region, expanding the destinations corridor transit users can access

2. Goal: Cost effectively address transportation problems in the corridor.

Objectives:

- Implement a service with operation costs per rider that are consistent with other cost effective transit systems in the region
- Create a transit service with capital costs that are consistent with other transit systems in the region
- Create a transit service with capital costs that are consistent with other transit systems in the region

3. Goal: Increase opportunities for community and economic development throughout the corridor.

Objectives:

- Support local initiatives to create transit oriented development (TOD) including, higher density housing and mixed-use commercial/retail areas within walking distance of the station areas and throughout the corridor
- Support a vibrant business community by increasing access for workers and customers to businesses in the corridor
- Increase connectivity and access from population centers to employment concentrations along the corridor

4. Goal: Improve quality of natural and built environment.

Objectives:

- Limit adverse impacts to natural, cultural, and other resources in the study area
- Reduce emissions
- Provide a fair and equitable distribution of impacts and benefits across the various populations groups in the study area
- Address existing and future safety issues along the corridor

The goals and objectives were intended to lay the framework for how alternatives will be evaluated in the Implementation Plan.

2.5 Implementation Plan Process

PROJECT TEAM

Project Management

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) is the lead agency for the Red Rock Corridor Commission, and therefore, the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan. WCRRA staff provided guidance and review over the documents associated with the development of the Implementation Plan. Other staff from Dakota, Hennepin, and Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authorities, Metro Transit, Metropolitan Council, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) were included in review of documents as needed. A **Project Management Plan** was completed for the project and can be found in the appendix.

Red Rock Corridor Commission

The Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) was formed in 1998 to address the transportation needs of the corridor. RRCC is a joint powers board of local elected officials from Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington Counties and the communities from Minneapolis to Hastings. RRCC is supported by staff from Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington County Regional Railroad Authorities.

The RRCC is an 11-member joint powers board. Commission members are listed in the **Public Involvement Plan** in the appendix. Representatives from Goodhue County, the City of Red Wing, Prairie Island Indian Community, and the Canadian Pacific Railway serve on RRCC as ex-officio members. RRCC met monthly and provided direction for the Implementation Plan.

PROJECT COMMITTEES

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is composed of technical staff (engineers and planners) from corridor communities within the study area as well as affected agencies. Key responsibilities of the TAC included providing technical input, reviewing study findings, and providing recommendations to project management and the RRCC. Meetings were held with the TAC monthly throughout the duration of the project. TAC members are listed in the **Public Involvement Plan.**

Business and Civic Advisory Committee (B-CAC)

It was determined that business and civic leaders were important to engage to advise plan development. The B-CAC is comprised of representatives recommended by the RRCC from businesses and civic organizations along the corridor. Meetings were held with the B-CAC as needed throughout the duration of the project. These meetings were beneficial for gathering input regarding the needs of those living and working along the corridor and the potential impact of decisions being made. Members also facilitated communication back to the groups they represent. B-CAC members are listed in the **Public Involvement Plan.**

STATION AREA PLANNING PROCESS

Previous station area planning for the Red Rock Corridor was oriented for commuter rail and was completed in 2012. There have been a number of changes since 2012 that impact station area planning for the Red Rock Corridor including:

- Red Rock Corridor Commission completed an Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU) in 2014, which selected Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as the preferred alternative. All station planning assumptions were tied to commuter rail before the recession
- The Metropolitan Council updated its Transportation Policy Plan, which includes land use planning guidance for station areas
- The Federal Transit Administration drafted guidelines for New Starts and Small Starts projects

Due to these changes, station area plans for each of the stations identified in the preferred alignment have been produced as a stand-alone supplement to the Implementation Plan. This includes the following stations:

- Lower Afton Park & Ride
- Newport Transit Station
- St. Paul Park Station
- 80th Street Station
- Jamaica Avenue Station
- Hastings Depot
- Hastings #2
- Hastings #3

For each station area, the plan includes a description of the following:

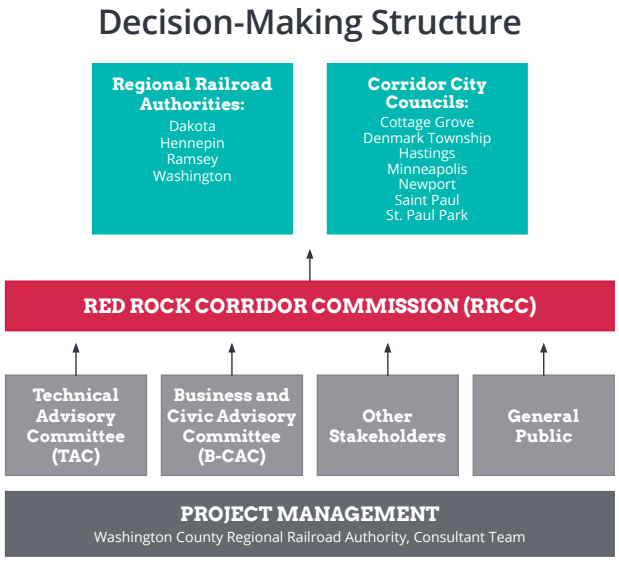
- Existing conditions, including location, land use, and zoning
- Recommendations, including suggested physical improvements, land use and zoning changes, and edits to the comprehensive plan

The supplement is intended to recognize current conditions at the station areas, land use guidance, zoning, and other factors related to opening day scenarios as well as future full buildout potential. Each community can use the supplement as a tool to be applied to upcoming comprehensive plan updates. **Station Area Planning Report**s were provided to Saint Paul, Newport, St. Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and Hastings.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The decision-making process for the Red Rock Implementation Plan followed the progression shown in **Figure 2-2**. This includes the project management team, the general public, established committees for this project (TAC and B-CAC), the RRCC, the Regional Railroad Authorities, and the city councils along the corridor.

Figure 2-2: Implementation Plan Decision-Making Process



Chapter 3: Stakeholder Engagement



3. Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Public Outreach Approach

Planning for the Implementation Plan involved outreach and coordination with the public. This outreach included the community members residing, working, and traveling in the corridor, businesses, civic organizations, and others interested in the project. City and county agencies were also engaged in the process to provide direction on the project and the engagement process.

A **Public Involvement Plan** (PIP) was developed to clarify the goals and objectives for public outreach. The PIP also described strategies for encouraging public input and outlined opportunities for early and ongoing involvement in the Implementation Plan. The PIP identified key stakeholders and defined the roles of decision-making and advisory bodies. Furthermore, it identified communication methods and outlined the anticipated sequencing and schedule of public engagement activities.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

The overall goals and objectives of the engagement process were to:

- Build community awareness for the transit corridor through an open, proactive process
- Clearly illustrate the relationship between land development, transportation infrastructure, and transit ridership
- Share information about bus rapid transit (BRT) with members of the general public and stakeholder groups
- Integrate and coordinate stakeholder and public involvement with technical tasks and timelines in a meaningful way

The intended outcome was that stakeholders will have actively participated in the project process so that there is local buy-in and stakeholder support for an overall implementable plan. The contents of the PIP and results from the public outreach are outlined in the following sections.

3.2 Outreach Strategies

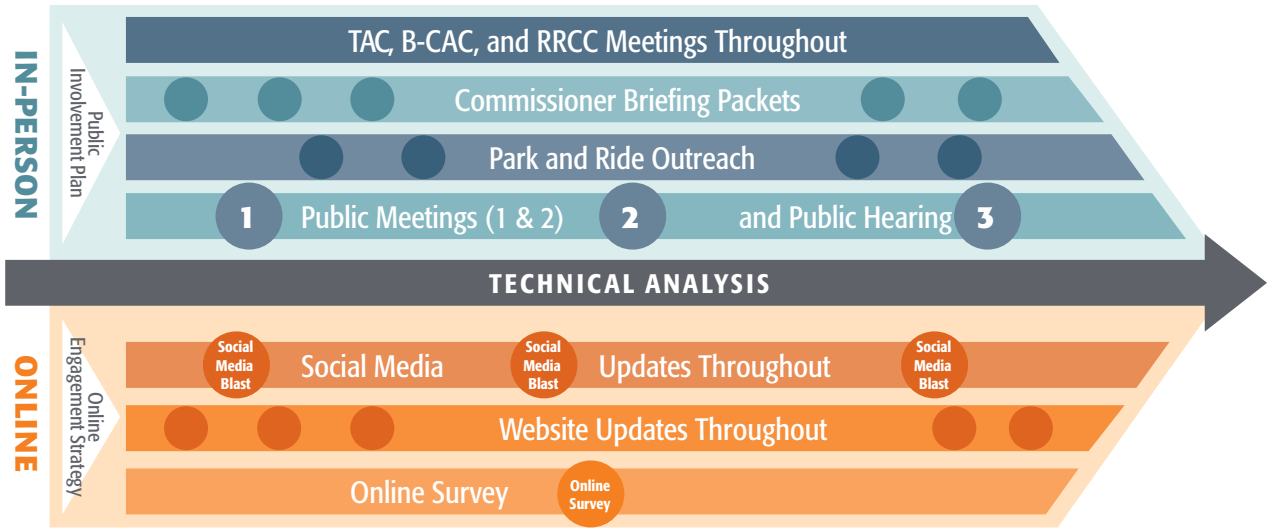
IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT

Open Houses

Two open houses were held along the corridor. The first open house was held in April 2015 and the second open house was held in January 2016.

The first open house had no formal presentation, allowing attendees to come and go as they wished. There were approximately 20 attendees that participated in open house activities and about 60 attended the grand opening for the Newport Transit Station that occurred immediately before to the open house. The meeting included four interactive stations at which participants could learn about the Implementation Plan process and provide comments and recommendations. Project and consultant staff were available to guide activities and answer questions.

Outreach Strategies and Process



Station Prioritization Activity at Open House #1



The second open house was similar to the first with engagement activities but also included a formal presentation. Attendees had an opportunity to talk directly with staff and elected officials or leave written comments.

Informational Boards at Open House #2



More information about the purpose of each open house is listed in **Table 3-1.**

Components of the Implementation Plan were made available to the public online prior to the second open house. See the appendix for a **Summary of Open House #1 and #2** and comments received.

Park-and-Ride Outreach

Outreach took place at the Cottage Grove and Lower Afton Park & Rides along the corridor. This outreach provided inputs on service needs and desires from those already riding transit in the corridor.

Project staff were available during the morning and afternoon commutes at these park-and-rides to engage travelers along Metro Transit Routes 361 and 365.

Informational boards and handouts were available for riders to learn about the Implementation Plan, and questionnaires were distributed to collect comments and recommendations. The questionnaire was also available online so that commuters could submit responses on their mobile device while traveling to and from work (see appendix for results of informational sheets).

In addition to the park-and-ride outreach, additional outreach took place at the following events:

- Strawberry Fest (Cottage Grove)
- Pioneer Day (Newport)
- Heritage Days Festival (St. Paul Park)
- Rivertown Days (Hastings)
- National Night Out at the Conway Recreation Center (Saint Paul)
- 2016 Spring Business Showcase (Cottage Grove)

Project staff were available at these events to collect input on transit service in the corridor and to provide project information, fact sheets, and brochures.

Targeted Meetings

Targeted meetings were held with each of the cities and counties along the corridor. These meetings were held at critical points in the development of the plan.

Table 3-1: Public Meetings

MEETING	PURPOSE
Spring 2015	
Open House #1	▪ Introduce the Implementation Plan ▪ Share project schedule ▪ Confirm plan goals, as a continuation from the results of the AAU ▪ Receive public feedback on key issues ▪ Seek input on station area planning
Winter 2016	
Open House #1	▪ Present technical analysis results from ridership, service plan, capital and operating cost, and station planning ▪ Seek input on draft plan components
Fall 2016	
Public Hearing	▪ Seek input on proposed recommendations for implementation

Red Line Tour

Project staff organized a tour of the Red Line for the RRCC and the cities and counties along the corridor to gain a greater understanding of BRT and to discuss how it will be integrated along the Red Rock Corridor. The Red Line provides context regarding how BRT has been implemented in the Twin Cities and a point of comparison for Red Rock Corridor design. A BRT

educational brochure was available during the tour to explain to attendees how BRT service operates and the amenities it provides.

3.3 Communication Methods

Multiple methods were used to distribute information about the Implementation Plan and provide notice for upcoming meetings and other opportunities for input. The following section outlines the different communication methods used (more information on **Outreach Materials** is included in the appendix).

Outreach Toolkit

An outreach toolkit was developed for project management to provide information and share progress with interested parties. The package was updated throughout the duration of the project and consisted of two factsheets and two brochures.

Red Rock Corridor Project Website



Email Communication

Corridor stakeholders, those with specific interests in the future of transit along the Red Rock Corridor, were critical partners in this planning process. Contacts were collected at open houses and other events, and were documented in an email list. These stakeholders received plan updates and were invited to engage in meetings and online activities.

Flyer

A standard project flyer was developed in advance of open house dates. Flyers were distributed via email and provided to corridor communities and B-CAC members for posting locally.

Press Release

A standard press release was distributed through Washington County media contacts prior to each open house and to communicate key milestones in plan development, including announcement of the final plan.

Red Rock Corridor Facebook Page



Libraries

A draft and final document of the Implementation Plan is available on the Red Rock Corridor website as well as in the following libraries along the corridor:

- George Latimer Central Library
- Newport Public Library
- Park Grove Library
- Pleasant Hill

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Website

The Red Rock Corridor website contained updates on the planning process, ways to engage and provide feedback on plan development, and links to download draft and final plan content. Project materials and news updates were posted to the website as they became available. The project website is available here:

http://www.redrockcorridor.com

Social Media

Social media was used to provide notice for upcoming meetings and updates on the planning process. Existing Red Rock Corridor social media outlets were used, with primary focus on the Red Rock Corridor Facebook page and Red Rock YouTube channel. City and county social media along the corridor also shared project updates and information.

Chapter 4: Preferred Alternative



4. Preferred Alternative

4.1 Alternative Evaluation

Bus rapid transit (BRT) alignment alternatives were explored beyond the alternatives that were identified in the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU). The proposed alternatives were driven by assessing residential densities, employment densities, and activity centers along the corridor. St. Paul Park did not have a station in the rail-focused alternatives from the Commuter Rail Feasibility Study (2001) and the Alternatives Analysis (2007), so a station in St. Paul Park was added to all alternatives in order to serve all corridor cities.

The alternatives were eventually narrowed down into two alternatives: Alternative 1 and Alternative 2.

ALTERNATIVE 1: BRT WITH A HIGHWAY ORIENTATION

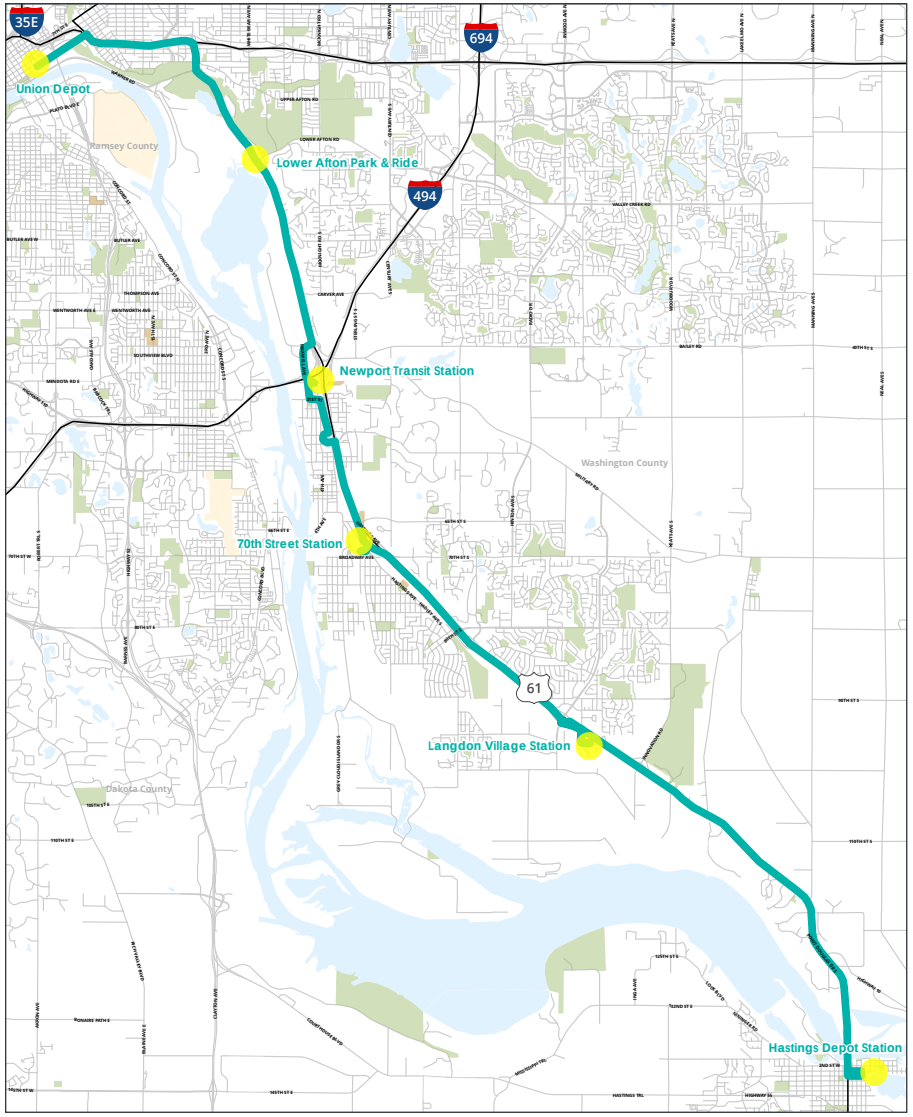
Alternative 1 includes a mainline BRT service along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hastings Depot. This alternative includes stations at Union Depot, Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, St. Paul Park Station, Langdon Village Station in Cottage Grove, and Hastings Depot (shown in **Figure 4-1**).

At the onset of the Implementation Plan, it was noted that stations along Highway 61 may miss some of the established development along the corridor. Thus, a second BRT alternative was introduced to focus more on the existing density in the corridor that would be more likely to support all-day transit service (Alignment 2).

ALTERNATIVE 2: BRT WITH A COMMUNITY ORIENTATION

Alternative 2 includes a mainline BRT service along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hasting Depot with deviations in Newport, St. Paul Park,

Figure 4-1: Alternative 1



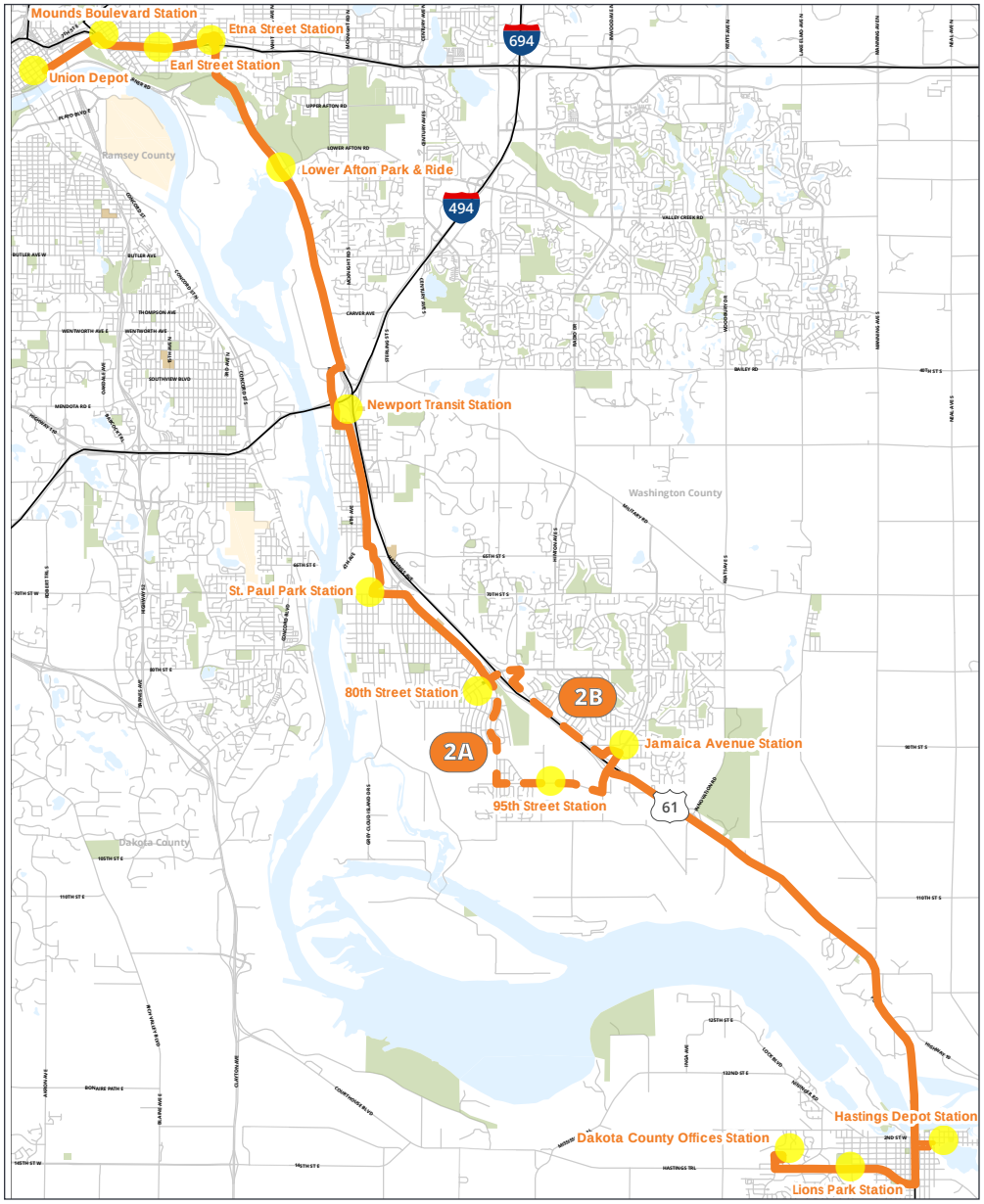
Cottage Grove, and Hastings (shown in **Figure 4-2**). The deviations aim to serve existing destinations and densities that are likely to support all-day, bi-directional transit service more than service focused on park-and-ride stations. This alternative includes stations within the METRO Gold Line (Gateway Corridor) at Union Depot, Mounds Boulevard Station, Earl Street Station, Etna Street Station, Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, St. Paul Park Station, 80th Street Station, 95th Street Station (Alternative 2A)/Jamaica Avenue Station (Alternative 2B), Hastings Depot, a station along Highway 55 in Hastings, and a station near the Dakota County Service Center in Hastings. The Alternative 2A and 2B variants were carried forward in order to assess the ridership differences between serving the industrial 95th Street Station area versus the retail-focused Jamaica Avenue Station area.

The two project alternatives were initially evaluated based on projected cost, ridership, and service.

Once a preferred alternative was identified, further analysis included three different stages of evaluation to produce an implementation strategy for the corridor: full build BRT alternative analysis, station-level evaluation, and corridor evaluation.

See the **Service Plan Technical Memorandum** for more information on Alternatives 1 and 2.

Figure 4-2: Alternative 2



4.2. Cost Estimation

This section provides a summary of the financial considerations for the alternatives, including a summary of capital costs and operations and maintenance (O&M).

CAPITAL COSTS

What is Included in Capital Costs?

Capital cost estimates include the one-time expenditure to build the system and typically include corridor improvements, stations, structures, signalization and communications systems, operations and maintenance

facilities, vehicles, and right-of-way (ROW) acquisition. Also included are "soft costs" for items such as engineering, construction services, insurance, and owner's costs, as well as contingencies for uncertainty in both the estimating process and the scope of the project.

Planning-Level Estimates

At this early study stage, there is not sufficient information to prepare detailed construction cost estimates for the alternatives under consideration. Rather, the capital cost estimates were developed using representative typical unit costs or allowances on a per-unit basis that is consistent with this level of review. Prior to implementation, the capital cost estimates will need to be refined based upon additional design development work.

Capital cost estimates were derived from the Arterial Transitway Corridor Study (ATCS) and the Highway Transitway Corridor Study (HTCS), with some unit costs updated to match known A Line costs. These unit costs were then categorized into FTA's Standard Cost Categories (SCC) for each station based on the designs produced in the station area planning process. Corridor-level costs by alternative, such as transit signal priority and shoulder improvements, were also categorized into FTA's SCC. Each alternative's total cost is the summation of the individual station costs and corridor improvement costs in that alternative.

Parameters

Capital cost parameters are necessary assumptions that are not related to the specific location or design features of the corridor or the alternatives under consideration. The Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan capital cost estimates are based upon the following parameters:

- Base Year: Year 2015 is used as the base year for definition of the unit prices and development of the capital cost estimates.
- Unit Prices: Base year unit prices for the various capital cost elements were developed using several references and resources that are similar to the proposed work, including the ATCS, HTCS, the A Line, the West Broadway Transit Study, and the Robert Street Corridor Study.
- Unallocated Contingency: An unallocated contingency of 25 percent is included in the capital cost estimates. This contingency is applied to the total estimated capital cost for each alternative, and is in addition to any specific estimating contingencies that are added to the various cost categories. This contingency is similar to those used for other projects in the region.
- Allocated Contingencies: Allocated contingencies are associated with individual cost estimate categories. These contingencies are intended to compensate for unforeseen items of work, quantity fluctuations, and variances in unit costs that develop as the project progresses through the various stages of design development. The level of allocated contingency applied to each cost category reflects the relative potential variability of those estimates. The allocated contingency assumptions to be included in the capital cost estimates are as follows:

Category 10, 20, 30, 40, 50	20%
Category 60	100%
Category 70	5%

This contingency is similar to those used for other projects in the region.

Summary of Capital Cost Estimates

A summary of capital costs for the alternatives is shown in **Table 4-1.**

Table 4-1: Summary of Capital Costs[3]

COST CATEGORY		ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2A	ALTERNATIVE 2B
10	Guideway & Track Elements	$3.7 M	$3.6 M	$3.6 M
20	Stations, Stops, Terminals, Intermodal	$1.4 M	$2.2 M	$2.2 M
30	Support Facilities: Yards, Shops, Admin. Buildings	$5.4 M	$7.2 M	$7.2 M
40	Sitework & Special Conditions	$1.5 M	$4.8 M	$5.7 M
50	Systems	$1.8 M	$3.5 M	$3.5 M
60	ROW, Land, Existing Improvements	$0.3 M	$0.1 M	-
70	Vehicles	$4.8 M	$6.4 M	$6.4 M
80	Professional Services	$3.3 M	$6.6 M	$6.8 M
90	Unallocated Contingency	$5.6 M	$8.6 M	$8.9 M
100	Finance Charges	-	-	-
	Total Capital Costs (2015$)	**$27.8 M**	**$43.0 M**	**$44.3 M**

[3]All cost estimates presented were calculated using 2015 dollars



OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) COSTS

What is Included in Operations and Maintenance?

O&M costs were calculated for each of the alternatives under consideration in the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan. Unit costs were multiplied by cost drivers in order to determine the total O&M cost. **Figure 4-3** depicts how the costs were calculated.

Figure 4-3: O&M Cost Calculation



Cost Drivers

Cost drivers are the statistics that determine a significant proportion of the O&M cost of each individual cost category that make up the total O&M cost. The O&M cost drivers are primarily derived from the **Service Plan Technical Memo**, including statistics such as revenue hours, revenue miles, and the number of peak vehicles required in maximum service. The operating frequency (how often the service runs), travel time, and service span (the time span the service operates) of the proposed service(s) are used to generate each of these statistics. Costs are incremental, so they reflect costs that are additional to conditions prior to construction.

Cost Calculation

Unit costs are derived primarily from Metro Transit's Arterial Transitways Corridor Study[4]. Because the costs in this study were in 2010 dollars, the unit costs were inflated from 2010 to 2015 dollars.

Summary of O&M Costs

The total O&M cost for each alternative is shown in **Table 4-2**.

[4]*http://www.metrotransit.org/Data/Sites/1/media/pdfs/atcs/conceptdevelopment.pdf*

For more information on the cost estimation for capital and operating costs, see the **Cost Estimation Technical Memorandum.**

The O&M cost in this plan is higher than that presented in the AAU for several reasons. This plan used a more refined cost model than was used in previous studies.

Table 4-2: O&M Cost Summary (2015$)

COST CATEGORY	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2A	ALTERNATIVE 2B
BRT Service Cost	$5.6 M	$7.0 M	$7.1 M
Facility Maintenance and Fare Collection Cost	$0.5 M	$0.8 M	$0.8 M
Total O&M Cost (2015$)	**$6.1 M**	**$7.8 M**	**$7.9 M**

Additionally, this plan included operator recovery time in the calculations. Finally, the span of service and days of operation assumed in this plan are similar to other transitways in the region and are greater than those used in previous plans.

4.3 Ridership

A **Travel Demand Forecast Report** was produced to document the ridership demand for the Red Rock Corridor alternatives. The forecasts are based on socioeconomic and network assumptions for the year 2040, as developed by the Metropolitan Council.

MODELING METHODOLOGY

The forecast travel demand for the corridor was conducted using the Twin Cities Regional Travel Demand Model. For more information on the modeling methodology and assumptions see the **Ridership Forecasting Methodology Report.**

RIDERSHIP PROJECTIONS (2040)

Ridership results from the modeling are summarized in **Table 4-3.** Key ridership observations:

- About two-thirds of the trips are work trips.
- Even at peak hour, the standard BRT buses can accommodate all passengers.
- Nearly all of the transfer from bus or rail occur at the Union Depot and Mounds Boulevard Station.
- The park-and-ride station with the largest demand is at the Newport Transit Station, followed by the Lower Afton Park & Ride. These stations offer relatively quick access from freeways and the stations are closer to the Saint Paul Central Business District (CBD) than the other Red Rock Corridor stations. The remaining park-and-ride stations show a demand of 50 or fewer vehicles for BRT service.
- The park-and-ride attractiveness of the station in Hastings near the Dakota County Service Center in Hastings may be less attractive due to a relatively slow connection to the Hastings Depot, which drivers could access directly.
- The existing Routes 361, 364, and 365 show stable ridership, good travel times, accessibility. They also serve other geographic markets, including direct, one-seat trips to the University of Minnesota and the Minneapolis CBD.
- The analysis indicates that about 63/60 percent of the projected 2040 ridership is attributable to the increased local/express service, with most of the remainder of the transit demand attributable to population growth from 2010 to 2040.

Table 4-3: Ridership Results Summary

YEAR	ALTERNATIVE	DESCRIPTION	EXISTING EXPRESS ROUTES	BRT	TOTAL
2040	No Build	Existing Routes Only	1,650	-	1,650
2040	Alternative 1	BRT Along Hwy 61 to Hastings with a Highway Orientation	1,500	1,250	2,750
2040	Alternative 2A	BRT Along Hwy 61 to Hastings with a Community Orientation (via 95th Street)	1,600	2,150	3,750
2040	Alternative 2B	BRT Along Hwy 61 to Hastings with a Community Orientation (via Jamaica Avenue)	1,600	2,200	3,800

For more information on the ridership forecasts and modeling, see the **Ridership Forecasting Methodology Report**, the **Ridership Forecasting Validation Report**, and the **Travel Demand Forecasting Report**.

4.4 Full Build BRT Alternative Analysis

EVALUATION MEASURES

During the AAU process, a set of evaluation criteria were developed to reflect the goals and objectives for the project. However, because these evaluation measures were developed to compare different modes (BRT, express bus, and commuter rail) and were very broad, a series of new evaluation measures were utilized to compare ridership estimates, cost details, service characteristics, and station area socioeconomic data. The results for these twelve measures were presented to the public, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Business and Civic Advisory Committee (B-CAC), and the Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) to aid in the decision-making process (see **Table 4-4** for list of measures).

Each of the twelve measures provides a quantitative assessment of one component of each BRT Alternative. No overall "score" was developed, which would require the application of a series of weighting factors (or an implied equal weighting system). Alternative 2 met all of the measures except for capital and operating and maintenance costs when compared with Alternative 1 (see **Alternative Evaluation Technical Memorandum** for full results).

The evaluation criteria for the two alternatives is shown in **Table 4-5.**

ALTERNATIVE SELECTION PROCESS

The results of the alternative evaluation process were presented to the TAC, RRCC, B-CAC, and made available for public comment.

On January 28, 2016, the RRCC approved Alternative 2 as the recommended "full build" alternative for final analysis in the Implementation Plan. This decision was based on public input, the recommendation of the TAC, and the higher ridership and economic development potential.

Table 4-4: Evaluation Measures by Goal

MEASURE	AAU GOAL
BRT Boardings	Mobility
Boardings per Revenue	Mobility
Average Travel Time	Mobility
Capital Costs	Cost
Operations & Maintenance Cost	Cost
Operations & Maintenance Costs per Revenue Hour	Cost
Operations & Maintenance Costs per Boarding	Cost
Acreage Served	Development
2040 Population Served	Development
2040 Jobs Served	Development
New Transit Trips	Environment
Boardings from Households without Access to a Vehicle	Environment

Following RRCC's decision, meetings were held with Cottage Grove city staff, the city council, planning commission, and the Cottage Grove Economic Development Authority to discuss the options for locating BRT service on either the east (Alternative 2B) or west (Alternative 2A) side of Highway 61. While there was significant interest in providing transit service to the industrial park on the west side of Highway 61, the businesses in this area are fairly spread out and would likely require shuttle for employees to get from the station to their employer. By comparison, the proposed station on the east side of Highway 61 is walkable to residences and businesses. The decision was made by the RRCC to move forward with Alternative 2B.



*Table 4-5: Comparison of Alternatives**

Alternative 1	MEASURES:	Alternative 2
$27,800,000	Capital Costs	**$43,000,000**
$6,100,000	O&M Costs	**$7,800,000**
1,250 *(plus 1,500 on Express Routes)*	BRT Riders per Day	**2,150** *(plus 1,600 on Express Routes)*
900	Boardings from New Transit Riders	**1,600**
750	Acreage Served *(Excluding downtown Saint Paul)*	**2,100**
1,900	2040 Population Served *(Excluding downtown Saint Paul)*	**11,600**
700	2040 Jobs Served *(Excluding downtown Saint Paul)*	**3,200**

**Due to the similarities between Alternative 2A and 2B, characteristics for Alternative 2A are shown to simplify the comparison*

4.5 Preferred Alternative

SERVICE PLAN

Description

The preferred alternative includes mainline BRT service along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hasting Depot with deviations from Highway 61 in Newport, St. Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and in Hastings. The portions of this alternative off of Highway 61 aim to serve existing destinations and densities that are more likely to support all-day, bi-directional transit service than park-and-rides. The end-to-end travel time to cover the 26.8-mile distance is assumed to be approximately 66 minutes with 124 daily trips.

Figure 4-4 shows the proposed preferred alternative route.

Stations

The proposed stations for the preferred alignment include:

- Union Depot
- Mounds Boulevard Station: located on Mounds Boulevard at the end of Conway Street
- Earl Street Station: located at the intersection of Hudson Road and Earl Street
- Etna Street Station: located at the intersection of Hudson Road and Etna Street
- Lower Afton Park & Ride: located the intersection of Highway 61 and Lower Afton Road
- Newport Transit Station: located on Red Rock Crossing east of Maxwell Avenue
- St. Paul Park Station: located on Broadway Avenue east of Summit Avenue
- 80th Street Station: located on East Point Douglas Road south of 80th Street
- Jamaica Avenue Station: located on East Point Douglas Road west of Inwood Avenue
- Hastings Depot
- Hastings #2: located along Highway 55 between Westview Avenue and Vermillion Street (Highway 61)
- Hastings #3: located in proximity to the Dakota County Services Center

Travel Time

The assumed end-to-end travel time for the preferred alternative is **66 minutes**. This was calculated by measuring the distance between stations and calculating the travel time between them based on an average speed for the segment. Additionally, station delay was estimated based on the upstream station, station type, and configuration. On-street stations were assumed to introduce 20 seconds of delay and off-street, park-and-ride stations were assumed to add two minutes of delay. Station delay was not included in the total time for Union Depot and Hastings Depot because this time is part of the layover and riders would not be on the bus during this time.

Weekday Service

- Frequency
  - 15 minutes (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
  - 30 minutes (5:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.; 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.)
- Service Hours
  - 19 Hours

Weekend Service

- Frequency
  - 30 minutes (7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.)

- Service Hours
  - 17 Hours

Connecting Transit Service

The additional stations on the east side of Saint Paul provide greater opportunities for bus connections to BRT in the Red Rock Corridor. The METRO Gold Line (Gateway Corridor) would provide connections at the Etna Street Station, Earl Street Station, Mounds Boulevard Station, and Union Depot. Additional connections would also be provided with the Route 70 at Earl Street Station and the Route 63 at the Mounds Boulevard Station.

4.6 Corridor Evaluation

Although a preferred alternative was selected, the results from a station-level evaluation showed that the preferred alternative would likely not be competitive with other national transit projects for limited federal funds.

This determination led to an evaluation process to look at corridor-wide performance measures for interim year build scenarios in order to identify a phased implementation plan that could leverage funds from a variety of sources and establish target ridership thresholds to ensure the projects is competitive with other regional and national transitway projects.

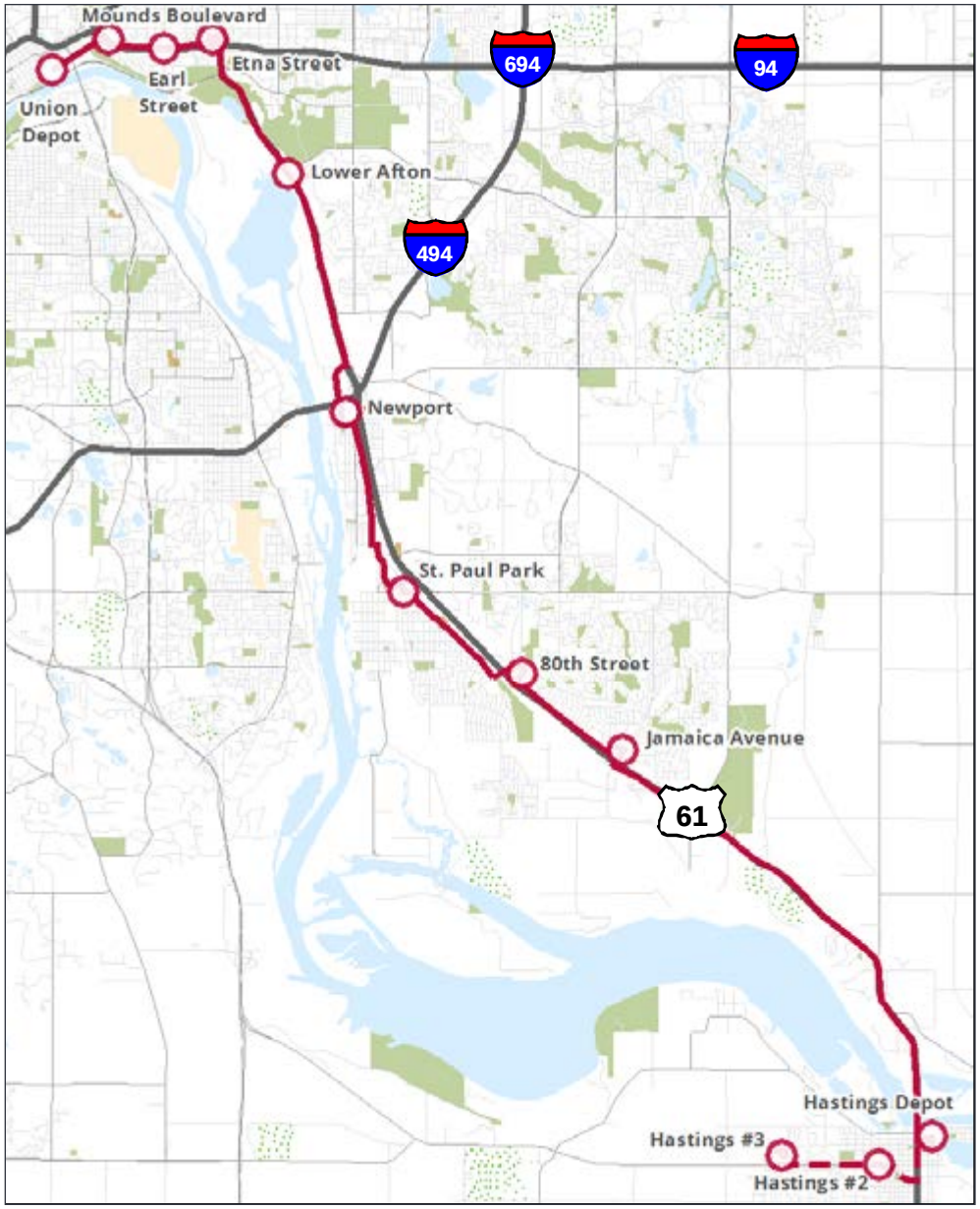
CORRIDOR EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

While station-level ridership will guide whether or not a service is competitive for federal sources, ultimately Metro Transit and the region uses route-level evaluations to determine the productivity and viability of a route. This measure is a function of the total number of riders and the number of hours the bus is in operation (called passengers per in-service hour or PPISH, **Figure 4-5**).

Figure 4-5: PPISH Calculation

$$\text{PPISH} = \frac{\text{Daily Boardings}}{\text{Daily In - Service Hours}}$$

Figure 4-4: Preferred Alternative Route





The key to meeting the regional standard for PPISH, which varies by route type, is to create transit routes that maximize ridership while minimizing costs. This creates routes that are as efficient as possible while still achieving other goals, such as increasing travel options and improving accessibility.

As shown in **Table 4-6**, Metro Transit has established PPISH averages by route type in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (2040 TPP), and the critical threshold for the Red Rock Corridor is 20 for Local Bus, 25 for Arterial BRT, and 20 for Commuter Express Bus.

Table 4-6: PPISH Guidelines Published in the 2040 TPP

ROUTE TYPE	ROUTE AVERAGE
Core Local Bus	≥20
Supporting Local Bus	≥15
Suburban Local Bus	≥10
Arterial BRT	≥25
Highway BRT	≥25
Light Rail	≥70
Commuter Express Bus	Peak ≥ 20; Off-peak ≥ 10
Commuter Rail	≥70
General Dial-a-Ride	≥2

OPTIONS EVALUATED

Since service will be phased in, several transit options with varying frequencies, stations, and corridor lengths were proposed and evaluated. These options included:

- **Route 367**
  - A proposed express route serving Hastings Depot, Newport Transit Station, and downtown Minneapolis
- **Route 363**
  - A local bus route acting as a precursor to BRT Implementation via Newport and St. Paul Park that terminates at the Cottage Grove Park & Ride
- **Route 363 Extended**
  - Route 363 with an extension to the Hastings Depot
- **Interim Option 1: BRT Service to Cottage Grove**
  - BRT service between Union Depot and the Cottage Grove Park & Ride via the Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, St. Paul Park Station, and 80th Street Station, Jamaica Avenue Station, and the Cottage Grove Park & Ride
- **Interim Option 2: Add Gateway to Base BRT Service**
  - In addition to the BRT stations from Interim Option 1, Interim Option 2 also serves the three Gateway stations
- **Interim Option 3: BRT Service to Hastings Depot with Gateway Station**
  - In addition to the base BRT stations from Interim Option 1, Interim Option 3 serves the three Gateway stations and the Hastings Depot
- **Full Build BRT Service**
  - The Full Build BRT Service option is the preferred alternative discussed previously that stops at all proposed stations

The results of the corridor evaluation compared three interim BRT options to the full build BRT and the existing Red Line BRT. The results shown in **Figure 4-6** illustrate that forecasts predict that the options for the Red Rock Corridor will perform significantly worse than other BRT corridors in the region.

While Interim Option 2 had the highest PPISH, this optimized version of the Full Build BRT Alternative 2 did not meet regional minimums. Ridership for this option would need to increase by 33 percent to meet the 25 PPISH regional threshold. **Table 4-7** summarizes the PPISH standard for each option and the percent increase in ridership needed to meet that threshold.

For more information on the corridor-level evaluation, see **Alternative Evaluation Technical Memorandum**.

Figure 4-6: Interim Option PPISH Comparison to Regional Statistics

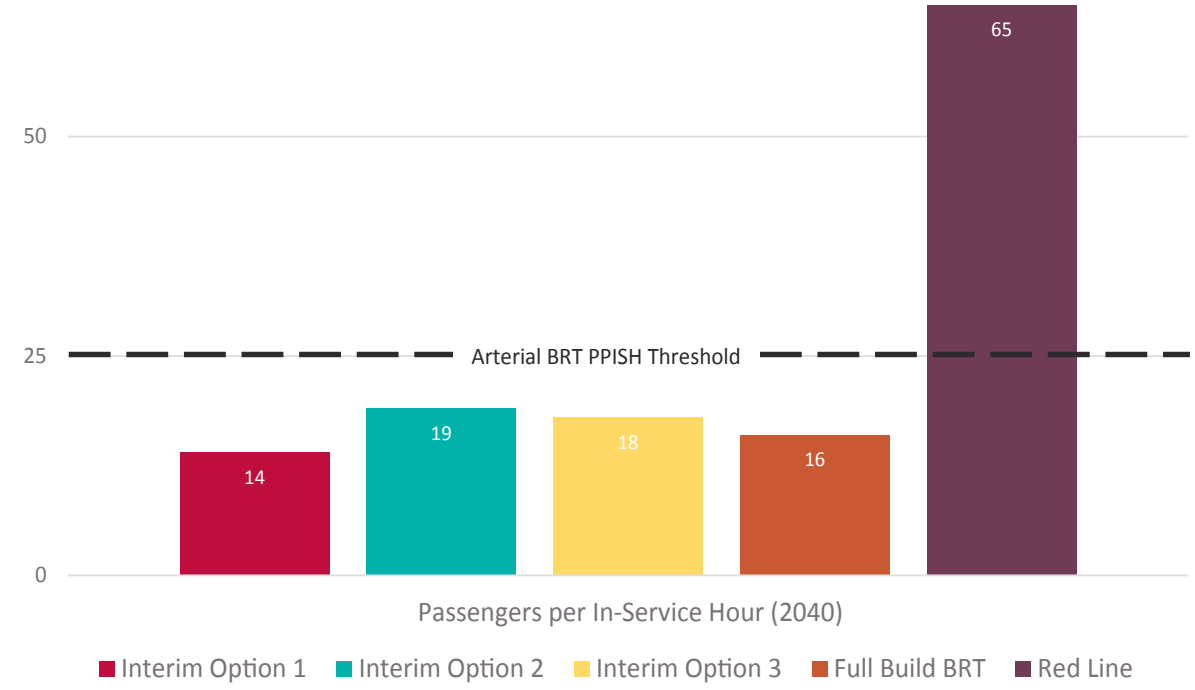


Table 4-7: PPISH Results for Alternatives Evaluated

YEAR	ROUTE	PROPOSED ROUTE RIDERSHIP	PPISH	TARGET PPISH GOAL	RIDERSHIP INCREASE NEEDED TO MEET TARGET PPISH
2024	Route 367	100	12	Peak ≥ 20; Off-peak ≥ 10	70%
2024	Route 363	540	14	10 - 20	-
2040	Interim Option 1 BRT	1,250*	14	25	85%
2040	Interim Option 2 BRT	1,800*	19	25	33%
2040	Interim Option 3 BRT	2,000*	18	25	43%
2040	Full Build BRT Service	2,200	16	25	54%

**Estimated from ridership model sensitivity tests*



Chapter 5: Financial Plan

5. Financial Plan

5.1 Financial Plan Overview

The financial plan documents and evaluates the potential revenue sources available to implement (plan, design, and construct) and operate a bus rapid transit (BRT) system within the Red Rock Corridor. The plan recognizes that a discussion of funding and financing options early in project planning helps decision makers understand the financial feasibility—and potential administrative burdens—of advancing a major transit capital investment into environmental review, design, and construction.

The financial plan establishes the planning-level capital and operating costs estimated and needed for the preferred alternative. Potential funding resources that are available include local, regional, state, and federal agencies. An exploration of alternative projected-related funding sources, such as value capture options and other fees and revenues that might be secured to support the capital and operating needs of the Red Rock Corridor BRT project, is detailed in the **Financial Plan Memorandum**.

The financial plan presents an evaluation of each funding option's feasibility to support a BRT investment in the corridor, as well as a recommendation of promising sources for further investigation should the project advance into later planning and design phases. Finally, the plan concludes with suggested next steps for Red Rock Corridor stakeholders to implement the project, including a consideration of options for phasing its implementation over time.

5.2 Summary of Funding Options

The list below summarizes the federal, state, regional, local, and project-specific funding options for the proposed Red Rock Corridor BRT project. Funding options are divided into five categories: local funding, regional funding, state funding, federal funding, and system generating revenues.

FEDERAL

There are a number of transit funding opportunities provided by the federal government. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) administers formula grant programs for transit projects requiring capital funds for construction activities. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), through MnDOT and Metropolitan Council, also administers capital funding that may be used for transit through a regionally competitive process.

Finally, discretionary funding from FTA and the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) may be available to cover up to 80 percent of the costs of a BRT investment in the Red Rock Corridor. These discretionary programs include:

- Capital Investment Grant program (FTA Section 5309) (Small Starts)
- Bus and Bus Facilities Program Competitive Grants (FTA Section 5339 b and c)
- Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Urbanized Federal Formula Funds (FTA Section 5307)
- Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Funds (FTA Section 5339 a)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
- Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)

STATE

In Minnesota, the state legislature is charged with biennial transit revenues appropriations from the state's general fund, and for setting the percentage of the state's Motor Vehicles Sale Tax Revenues (MVST) dedicated to transit. The state also has a revolving loan fund and dedicates a limited amount of Trunk Highway Fund user fee revenues for transit. The state funding sources include:

- Motor Vehicle State Tax (MVST)
- Public Transit Assistance (General Fund)
- Special Legislative Appropriations
- Transportation Revolving Loan Fund
- MnDOT Trunk Highway Funds and Bonds

REGIONAL

Transportation and transit projects in the Twin Cities metropolitan area receive funding from two regional entities, the Metropolitan Council and the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB). The following regional funding sources include:

- Regional Transit Capital Bonds (Metropolitan Council)
- Counties Transit Improvement Board Revenues

LOCAL

The Red Rock Corridor BRT will serve three counties in the Twin Cities metropolitan area: Washington, Dakota, and Ramsey. While each county is served by a Regional Railroad Authority (RRA), which helps to identify and develop potential transit corridors and has the ability to raise property tax levies to fund these activities, they also have different funding sources and procedures

for funding public transportation. The following local funding sources include:

- County/City General Funds
- County/City Highway Funds
- Wheelage Taxes
- Washington County Regional Railroad Authority Levy
- Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority Levy
- Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority Levy
- General Obligation Bonds

PROJECT RELATED FUNDING

The funding sources listed below include an array of funding strategies that might be used to capture the new and increased value of existing land and properties generated as a result of a major transit capital investment; and can be generated as part of the operation of the project.

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Special Assessment Districts
- Joint Development
- Developer Contributions
- Fare Revenue
- Advertising
- Naming Rights

A more detailed description of the funding options and system-generated revenues and how they are allocated are explained in the **Financial Plan Memorandum.**

5.3 Evaluation of Funding Sources

Each of the revenue sources listed in this section for a Red Rock Corridor BRT investment have been evaluated according to its ability to fund capital, operation and maintenance, and project development expenses. The evaluation criteria is presented below.

Revenue Potential: The relative amount of revenue a funding source may yield for the Red Rock Corridor BRT project

Stability: The annual predictability of a funding source

Competitiveness: This measure only applies to funding sources that are distributed at the regional, state, or federal level through a competitive process

The likelihood of each of these revenue sources funding a Red Rock Corridor BRT investment has been evaluated according to the following:

Uses (✓ or X)
Ability to fund capital costs
Ability to fund operations and maintenance costs
Ability to fund project development expenses

Evaluation (○ through ●)
Revenue potential
Stability/predictability
Competitiveness

The evaluation criteria are explained in **Table 5-1**, and a summary of the evaluation of each of the funding sources can be found in **Table 5-2**.



Table 5-1: Revenue Potential Evaluation Measures

EVALUATION MEASURE	DEFINITION	SYMBOL	CRITERIA
Revenue Potential	The relative amount of revenue a funding source may yield for the Red Rock Corridor project.	●	50% or more of total project capital costs
		◕	25-50% percent of costs
		◑	10-25% percent of costs
		◔	Less than 10% of costs
		○	No revenue potential
Stability	The annual predictability of a funding source.	●	Generally stable and predictable
		◕	Can be volatile but is generally predicable source
		◑	Predictable, but commonly dedicated to other sources
		◔	It is not certain the source will be available in the future
		○	Relatively unpredictable
Competitiveness	This measure only applies to funding sources that are distributed at the regional, state, or federal level through a competitive process.	●	Red Rock Corridor is a strong candidate to receive competitive funding
		◕	Relatively competitive
		◑	Portions of the project may be competitive
		◔	May be competitive, but demand for source is extremely high
		○	Not eligible or competitive for funding

Table 5-2: Funding Evaluation Summary

Potential Funding Sources	Uses			Evaluation		
	Capital	O&M	Project Development	Revenue Potential	Stability/ Predictability	Competitive-ness
Federal						
Section 5309 (Small Starts)	✓	X	X	●	●	○
Section 5339 (b and c) Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Grants	✓	X	X	◑	●	◔
TIGER Grant	✓	X	X	◑	◔	◔
Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds	✓	X	✓	○	●	-
Section 5339 (a) Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants	✓	X	X	◑	●	-
CMAQ and STBGP (Regional) Solicitation)	✓	✓	X	◑	●	◑
State						
Public Transit Assistance Funds	✓	✓	X	◔	◔	◔
Special Legislative Appropriations	✓	X	X	◑	○	-
Motor Vehicle Sales Tax	✓	✓	X	◔	◕	-
Transportation Revolving Loan Fund	✓	X	X	○	◑	-
MnDOT Trunk Highway Funds and Bonds	✓	X	X	◔	○	-
Regional						
Regional Transit Capital Bonds	✓	X	X	◔	◕	-
CTIB Revenues	✓	✓	✓	◕	●	◕



Table 5-2: Funding Evaluation Summary (continued)

Potential Funding Sources	Uses			Evaluation		
	Capital	O&M	Project Development	Revenue Potential	Stability/ Predictability	Competitive-ness
Local						
WCRRA Property Tax Levy	✓	✓	✓	○	●	-
Washington County G.O. Bond	✓	X	X	◔	◔	-
Washington County Wheelage Tax	✓	X	X	○	●	-
DCRRA Property Tax Levy	✓	✓	✓	◔	●	-
Dakota County Wheelage Tax	X	X	X	○	●	-
RCRRA Property Tax Levy	✓	✓	✓	◑	●	-
Ramsey County Wheelage Tax	✓	X	X	○	●	-
Project Related Funding						
TIF	✓	X	X	◔	◔	-
Special Assessment Districts	✓	X	X	◔	◔	-
Joint Development	✓	✓	X	◔	◔	-
Developer Contributions	✓	✓	✓	◔	◔	-
Fare Revenues	X	✓	X	◔	◕	-
Sponsorships/Naming Rights/Advertising	✓	✓	✓	◔	◕	-

5.4 Financial Plan Conclusions

Based on the evaluation of the funding sources, the following observations can be made about available revenue sources' ability to support the capital costs of a new BRT line in the Red Rock Corridor:

- **Seek multiple sources to fund the Red Rock Corridor prioritized investment.** The funding available from the evaluated programs and their various matching requirements indicates that multiple sources would likely be needed to construct and operate the BRT project. Most state and local programs place a high priority on leveraging federal and other sources of funding. At the same time, the current evaluation standards for federal formula transit funds are highly competitive for new transit lines or place priority on meeting the needs of the existing transit system. In addition, flexible Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding administered by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is competitive and limited to only small grant awards. Value capture strategies could be pursued in the corridor but cannot be counted on to contribute a significant level of funding towards the project. Therefore, funding from a variety of programs and sources will need to be pursued to fund the recommendation in this plan.
- **Invest in a series of small improvements to implement the project over time in order to efficiently leverage funds from multiple sources.** The *Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan Study* Team has identified distinct steps to advance transit improvements between Hastings and Saint Paul. This includes an initial investment in local bus service, which would closely follow the preferred alignment for BRT service terminating at the current Cottage Grove park-and-ride. Another potential phase is peak-period express bus service between Hastings and Saint Paul, serving existing transit and park-and-ride facilities at Hastings Depot, the Newport Transit Station, and Union Depot. Later phases could expand service to off-peak periods and to more communities in the corridor, as well as investments in capital improvements to the Lower Afton park-and-ride, relocation of the Cottage Grove park-and-ride, and other passenger facilities.

  The advantage of this approach is that improved, low-capital service in the peak would not need to await lengthy project development nor the complex financial planning necessary to develop a $44 million capital package. Existing Regional Railroad Authority (RRA) resources, Public Transit Assistance or Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues from the State of Minnesota, and operating funding through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program and capital funding for buses from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program via Metropolitan Council's Regional Solicitation process might support such service. Such service might also begin to build stronger travel demand in the corridor, and this demand might make future capital investments more competitive for federal or other discretionary funding. Subsequent capital improvements of $7 million or less may qualify for funding through the Regional Solicitation process.

  However, while the Red Rock Corridor BRT project is included as a Phase 1 Transitway Improvement Project in Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) Program of Projects (PoP) Investment Strategy, there is no guarantee that the project would be an attractive CTIB investment when it is ready for capital funding. CTIB is charged with maximizing opportunities to bring federal funding into Minnesota for expansion of the regional transit system. As previously noted, the Red Rock Corridor BRT project may not be competitive for federal discretionary funding and would therefore be less likely to be competitive in the CTIB grant process.
- **Consider local opportunities to help fund small investments towards full BRT build out**. Red Rock Corridor counties have opportunities to help fund small investments though they vary by community. Local taxes could be a source for the 10 percent local match typically required to secure other funding opportunities. For example, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) raised its property tax rate to support the cost of renovating and operating the Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul. If the local partners believe that improved transit in the Red Rock Corridor is a priority investment, they could consider generating funding to support its implementation and operation. Currently, CTIB is programed to fund 30 percent of the capital cost of the Red Rock Corridor, which means local match will be required to secure CTIB funding. Some of the match might be derived from other sources such as through the Regional Solicitation, the establishment of a tax increment financing (TIF) district, or other federal grants (like the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program).
- **Reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as project needs arise**. Funding sources and evaluation measures for available funding change over time. As ridership for near-term phases such as regular route and express bus increases to meet regional performance standards, availability of and competitiveness for project funding could be reevaluated.



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Chapter 6: Phasing Plan



6. Phasing Plan

6.1 Phasing Plan Development

Based on discussions with stakeholders and public input received during project development, it was determined that all-day transit service is desired in the Red Rock Corridor to key regional destinations as well as between station areas throughout the corridor. However, based on the current ridership projections and cost-effectiveness of the project, a phased Implementation Plan is proposed to move forward with the development of BRT in the Red Rock Corridor.

The following two phases are recommended for the project:

- Phase I: Near-term (2016 – 2020)
- Phase II: Long-term (2020 – 2040)

6.2. Phase I: Near-Term (2016 –2020)

The first phase towards full BRT implementation is to increase local and express bus service. This includes:

- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and increase local and express bus service
- Work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment density within station areas
- Work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout most of the day between Saint Paul and Cottage Grove (Route 363)[2]
- Work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option

[5]In July 2016, a Regional Solicitation Application was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for Route 363. If the grant application is successful, the service would be implemented for a three-year term starting in 2020.

ADDITIONAL EXPRESS SERVICE

The existing Routes 361, 364, and 365 along the Red Rock Corridor offer competitive travel times (compared to driving in a vehicle) to downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota or downtown Saint Paul.

Working with Metro Transit to maintain existing express service in the corridor would be a low cost initial step towards building ridership in the corridor.

ADDITIONAL LOCAL SERVICE

In April 2015, the Metropolitan Council approved Metro Transit's 2015-2030 Service Improvement Plan (SIP), which is an unfunded list of service improvements that are prioritized for implementation based on available resources. The SIP identified Route 363 as a new route within the Highway 61 corridor that would serve many of the same stations as the preferred alternative. Route 363 would provide 30-minute, bi-directional service between Cottage Grove and downtown Saint Paul[6] throughout most of the day.

Route 363

The proposed Route 363 is a local bus route acting as a precursor to BRT implementation in this corridor. This route would serve Union Depot in Saint Paul, the Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, 80th Street, Jamaica Avenue, and the Cottage Grove Park & Ride.

[6]The 2015 Service Improvement Plan document indicates that this route would only serve park-and-rides and would continue to Minneapolis. For the Red Rock BRT Implementation Plan, it was assumed that Route 363 would also serve local destinations in Cottage Grove and St. Paul Park and would only serve Saint Paul.

Figure 6-1: Route 363 Terminating at the Cottage Grove Park & Ride



With assumed 30-minute headways, the route would operate between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. for a total of 58 trips (29 trips in each direction). See **Figure 6-1** for route map.

While Route 363 will provide additional bus service to the Red Rock Corridor, it will also build stronger travel demand in the corridor. Increased demand may make future capital investments for BRT service more competitive for federal or other discretionary funding.



As Route 363 is implemented, the next step towards full BRT implementation would be to work with Metro Transit and City of Hastings to determine when express bus service (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option.

CORRIDOR CITIES

This phase also includes working with the cities and counties within the Red Rock Corridor to update their comprehensive plans. The plans should give consideration to increasing population density and employment within station areas to support all-day transit service.

Outside of adjusting the route length and stops, a key component of increasing efficiency is through station area development, which will likely increase ridership. Achieving transit-supportive densities within station areas is a gradual process that includes land-use planning and the promotion of density in comprehensive plans and zoning code. These policy changes will be necessary to create a competitive BRT alignment in the Red Rock Corridor.

The success of transit is dependent upon coordinated land use planning along the corridor, specifically in the station areas.

6.3 Phase II: Long-Term (2020 - 2040)

If Route 363 is implemented, the second phase towards full BRT implementation would be based on how Route 363 performs. The next steps in this phase include:

- Implement the corridor city and county comprehensive plans with a focus on development within and around station areas
- Update forecasted ridership based on comprehensive plan updates
- If Route 363 is implemented, monitor ridership; work with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day
- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and/or increase express bus service between the Red Rock Corridor cities and downtown Minneapolis (such as Route 367)
- Replace Route 363 with an Interim BRT service when it reaches an estimated 25 passengers per in-service hour
- Continue to invest in station area development

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

By 2020, comprehensive plan updates would be complete and focus would shift towards implementing the proposed improvements and encouraging development around and in station areas.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

If Route 363 is implemented, the next steps in this phase include further evaluation of BRT and monitoring of ridership to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day. During this phase, ridership forecasts should also be updated based on comprehensive plan updates.

The timing of design and construction of BRT infrastructure will depend on additional evaluation. One key threshold will be when Route 363 reaches 25 Passengers per In-Service Hour (PPISH). At this point, Route 363 could be replaced with an interim BRT option and likely meet regional efficiency standards. A key focus of implementing BRT will be to improve regional mobility. Final service plans will prioritize efficient and convenient connections to regional transit service at Union Depot, including connecting service to Minneapolis.



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Chapter 7: Recommendations & Next Steps

7. Recommendations and Next Steps

7.1 Recommendations

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Based on the current ridership projections and cost-effectiveness of the project, a phased Implementation Plan is proposed to move forward with the development of BRT in the Red Rock Corridor.

The phases and associated recommendations identified for the project include:

Phase I: Near-term (2016-2020)

The first phase towards full BRT implementation is to increase local and express bus service. This includes:

- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and increase local and express bus service
- Work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment density within station areas
- Work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout most of the day between Saint Paul and Cottage Grove (Route 363)[2]
- Work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option

Phase II: Long-term (2020- 2040)

If Route 363 is implemented, the second phase towards full BRT implementation would be based on how Route 363 performs. The next steps in this phase include:

- Implement the corridor city and county comprehensive plans with a focus on development within and around station areas
- Update forecasted ridership based on comprehensive plan updates
- If Route 363 is implemented, monitor ridership; work with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day
- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and/or increase express bus service between the Red Rock Corridor cities and downtown Minneapolis (such as Route 367)
- Replace Route 363 with an Interim BRT service when it reaches an estimated 25 passengers per in-service hour
- Continue to invest in station area development

FUNDING CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evaluation of the funding sources, the following conclusions can be made about available revenue sources' ability to support the capital costs of a new BRT line in the Red Rock Corridor:

- Seek multiple sources to fund the Red Rock Corridor prioritized investments
- Invest in a series of small improvements to implement the project over time in order to efficiently leverage funds from multiple sources
- Consider local opportunities to help fund small investments towards full BRT build out
- Reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as project needs arise

7.2 Next Steps

In conjunction with the actions and improvements in each of the phases, there are other broad and ongoing strategies that should be pursued. They are:

- Advocate for integrated multimodal investments including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements that support mobility throughout the Red Rock Corridor
- Advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. This includes advocating for sustainable federal, regional, and local funding sources.
- Continue to monitor transit needs and performance in the corridor to determine the timing for implementation of additional transit services, alternative modes, or capital improvements

[7]In July 2016, a Regional Solicitation Application was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for Route 363. If the grant application is successful, the service would be implemented for a three-year term starting in 2020.



Chapter 8: Appendix

8. Appendix

All the documents below can be found at:
www.redrockcorridor.com/corridor/implementation-plan/

Project Management Plan

Previously Completed Work

Stakeholder Engagement

- Public Involvement Plan
- Open House #1 Summary
- Open House #2 Summary
- Outreach Materials

Ridership Forecasting Methodology Report

Ridership Forecasting Validation Report

Travel Demand Forecasting Report

Service Plan Technical Memo

Cost Estimation Technical Memo

Alternative Evaluation Technical Memo

Financial Plan