Red Rock Corridor Timeline

1997 – Twin Cities Metropolitan Commuter Rail Feasibility Study
This study was conducted by the Minnesota Department of transportation (MnDOT) to determine if the Twin Cities metropolitan area could support commuter rail service. The study identified Red Rock as one of the six corridors proved to be viable for supporting commuter rail service.

1998 – Red Rock Corridor Commission formed
The Red Rock Corridor Commission, a joint powers board consisting of Counties, Cities and stakeholders, was formed to address the transportation needs of the corridor.

2000 – MnDOT Commuter Rail System Plan
This study superseded the previous rail feasibility study and identified the Red Rock Corridor as a high priority, and the second commuter rail corridor implemented in the metro following the Northstar commuter rail line.

2001 – Commuter Rail Feasibility Study
The Red Rock Corridor Commission undertook a Commuter Rail Feasibility Study that evaluated the challenges and opportunities of operating commuter rail service in the corridor. This study concluded that that the Red Rock Corridor Commuter Rail project was a viable transit option, and it should be advanced to the next phase in the project development process; specifically the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and environmental scoping process.

2007 – Alternatives Analysis
The Red Rock Corridor Commission conducted an AA in 2007 to evaluate transit alternatives that cost-effectively address the transportation needs of the corridor. The results of the AA study indicated that expanding bus service, increasing bus frequency and providing additional park-and-ride facilities are the first steps towards building a stronger transit base in the corridor. This stronger base is a key component in the phasing of corridor improvements prior to the implementation of commuter rail. The study also acknowledged that that the implementation of high speed rail in and through the Red Rock Corridor would benefit commuter rail in the corridor by reducing capital costs.

2009 – Commuter Bus Feasibility Study
In October 2008, the Red Rock Corridor Commission began the *Commuter Bus Feasibility Study* to evaluate options for adding/expanding bus service and park-and-ride facilities along the Red Rock Corridor. The purpose of the study explored how to connect Lower Afton Road in St Paul, Newport, Cottage Grove, Hastings, Prairie Island Indian Community and Red Wing to both downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis in a manner that supports the Commission's long-range vision for commuter rail service in the corridor. A service implementation plan was developed that addresses management and oversight, fare policy and funding, marketing and branding, procurement, facilities development, and implementation schedule.

2010 – Station Area and Site Master Planning Study
The Red Rock Corridor Commission conducted a station area and site master planning study for the southeast stations of the Red Rock Corridor. These stations included St. Paul (Lower Afton Road), Newport, Cottage Grove and Hastings. The work conducted for this study looked at how the development of station areas would serve express bus service in the interim and transition to commuter rail in the long-term.

2014 – Alternative Analysis Update
This Alternative Analysis Update (AAU) project builds upon the previous 2007 AA document by updating pertinent sections and providing new analysis of bus rapid transit (BRT) as an alternative. The study concluded that extending bus service to Dakota County, promoting more dense development around transit stations, working toward more all-day service options, further evaluation of a BRT alternative, and continued advocacy for mobility investments in rail capacity are important for building a stronger transit base in the corridor. The AAU positioned the Red Rock Corridor for the next steps, including identifying potential funding and paths toward implementation.

2016 – Implementation Plan
The Implementation Plan builds off the recommendations from the AAU to create financial, development, and service plans to lead towards the long-term goal of more transit service in the Corridor. Based on the ridership projections and cost-benefit analysis, a phased Implementation Plan is proposed to move forward with the development of BRT in the Red Rock Corridor. The project team is in the process of drafting this document and the study is expected to be completed in December 2016.