Red Rock Corridor Commission Agenda
4:30 p.m. Thursday, May 26, 2016

Newport City Hall
596 7th Avenue
Newport, MN 55055

	Action Requested
1. Introductions	Information
2. Approval of Agenda	Approval
3. Consent Items* a. Checks and Claims b. Minutes from March 24, 2016 Commission Meeting	Approval
4. Implementation Plan Update*	Discussion
5. Legislative Update*	Information
6. Summer Engagement*	Discussion
7. Communications Update*	Information
8. Other a. Commissioner Reports b. Next Meeting June 23, 2016, 4:30pm Newport City Hall	Information
9. 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: May 16, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Checks and Claims

Included is the:

Johnson Group		
February Invoice		$3,845.00
March Invoice		$1,279.16
April Invoice		$995.83
Kimley Horn		
March Invoice		$69,741.02
	TOTAL	**$75,861.01**

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								Total Project Cost
	Email Marketing	Social Media	Media Relations	Awareness Campaign	Website Updates	Website Hosting	Contingency	Total Contract 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
								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
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								$0.00	$0.00
								$0.00	$0.00
Amount Billed to Date	$0.00	$600.00	$0.00	$1,299.99	$262.50	$0.00	$112.50	$2,274.99	$2,274.99
Percent Complete	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	18.6%	10.5%	0.0%	7.4%	9.1%	9.1%
Amount Remaining	$7,200.00	$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$5,700.01	$2,237.50	$180.00	$1,407.50	$22,725.01	**$22,725.01**

Red Rock Corridor Implementtaion Plan

Consultant Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Contract No. 9342
Expiration Date 10/31/2016
Business Unit
Object Code
Updated 4/18/2016

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 2/28/201	$1,843.31	$1,183.22	$8,100.61										$11,127.14	$0.00	$11,127.14
6633503 3/31/20	$14,182.08		$2,202.72	$6,955.56									$23,340.36	$80.51	$23,420.87
6710352 4/30/20	$7,792.39	$1,309.94	$10,571.09	$23,537.55								$55.37	$43,266.34	$400.25	$43,666.59
6787282 5/31/201	$5,982.93	$560.44	$3,032.82	$211.71								$389.64	$10,177.54	$67.86	$10,245.40
6880852 6/30/201	$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 7/31/201	$3,734.28		$13,590.87	$1,839.24	$2,686.78				$531.66				$22,382.83	$4,630.20	$27,013.03
7048838 8/31/201	$3,039.89		$4,122.00	$19,184.37	$2,606.21							$45.24	$28,997.71	$694.56	$29,692.27
7138466 9/30/201	$2,850.13		$3,885.98	$6,685.08	$5,684.66	$1,062.65							$20,168.50		$20,168.50
7205932 10/31/20	$3,584.87		$3,635.61	$6,569.14	$2,913.50	$16,798.16							$33,501.28		$33,501.28
7324195 11/30/20	$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 12/31/20	$5,509.93		$3,743.70	$181.51	$43.92	$354.40	$5,771.03						$15,604.49	$123.05	$15,727.54
7523604 1/31/201	$7,928.25		$5,305.26			$1,317.19	$11,144.82						$25,695.52	$472.10	$26,167.62
7607649 2/29/201	$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 3/31/201	$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
Amount Billed to Date	$80,329.53	$3,053.60	$63,882.29	$84,138.75	$18,985.71	$31,436.16	$64,949.68	$17,905.24	$898.73	$1,123.30	$15,142.35	$1,761.80	$383,607.14	$6,951.11	$390,558.25
Percent Complete	114.6%	100.0%	108.5%	105.7%	99.9%	89.7%	302.8%	62.8%	4.6%	6.6%	10.1%	4.4%	70.7%		
Amount Remaining	($10,212.66)	$0.00	($4,996.01)	($4,525.15)	$18.77	$3,619.44	($43,503.52)	$10,612.86	$18,700.79	$15,979.18	$134,857.65	$38,238.20	$158,789.55	**$508.89**	**$159,298.44**

Meeting Minutes

March 24, 2016
Newport City Hall
4:30 p.m.

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Marion Greene	Hennepin County RRA	
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	
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	

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

Others	Agency
Brian Smalkoski	Kimley Horn
Katie White	Met Council
Betsy Leach	District 1
Chelsey Armstrong	Kimley Horn
Carl Jensen	MN DOT

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 Commissioner Rettman to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Council member Peterson. All were in favor, **Approved**. Motion Carries.

Agenda Item #3: Consent Items
Motion was made by Councilmember Peterson to approve the check and claims and the meeting minutes from the January 26, 2016 Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slavik. All were in favor, **Approved.** Motion Carries.

Agenda Item #4 Implementation Plan Update
Ms. Leitner said staff and Kimley Horn is not looking for any recommendation today. They are looking for any questions anyone might have as well as feedback on the information that will be presented.

Mr. Smalkoski briefly went through the agenda, goals, and work plan for the presentation. Alternative #2 is still being looked at as the final implementation route.

Ms. Armstrong went through each proposed station area and gave brief updates on each. Starting with Lower Afton, they are currently looking for an interim step in which two existing entrances and exits to be consolidated into a single entrance and exit. This will decrease headlights shining into residents' homes. An additional half bay of parking would be added to help with overflow parking. There is also an issue with safety for the pedestrian crossing, MnDOT has been looking into this and have assured the countdown timers are present and in working condition to allow for enough time for pedestrians to cross safely.

Commissioner Bigham and Council Member Rahm believe that it is a good idea for staff to look into a pedestrian bridge as traffic is very heavy on Highway 61.

Councilmember Peterson asked what the current parking capacity is. Ms. Leitner said it is just over 100.

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Councilmember Peterson asked how many additional parking spots will be added with the expansion of the parking lot. Mr. Smalkoski said they were not sure on the exact number. He described how the lot could be expanded and stated approximately an additional three spaces could be added to each row. The expansion would satisfy the current demand of additional parking spots needed.

Mayor Franke asked if there has been much done to try to divert people to the Newport station. Commissioner Bigham said there have been fliers, signs, and rider alerts to inform people of the site in Newport.

Ms. Armstrong described the plans for the Newport Transit Station. The City of Newport, Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), and Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (RRA) have been working together on development around this stop. There has been a lot of interest shown for this specific area. Work has been done with the HRA to ensure that the developers coming in are laying the groundwork for more transit-supportive opportunities and are not segmenting the property in a way that could hinder future development.

For St. Paul Park, Ms. Armstrong explained that the City of St. Paul Park currently owns two parcels at the intersection of St. Paul Park Rd. and Summit Ave. A local business owner currently has some property for sale located at intersection of Broadway Ave. and Summit Ave. Due to a railroad crossing, the team is determining the most effective way to connect the corridor with downtown St. Paul Park along Broadway Ave. Kimley Horn is recommending to move forward with the station on Broadway Ave. just east of Summit Ave. This will help to improve the pedestrian connections along Broadway Avenue and encourage development in that area.

Councilmember Peterson asked what was in the area currently. Mayor Franke stated what was currently in the area and pointed the buildings out on the power point.

Ms. Armstrong explained that with the City of Cottage Grove, there previously had not be any decisions made between Alternative 2a and 2b, the Cottage Grove alternatives. Kimley Horn has met and talked with staff, policy makers, and decision makers in Cottage Grove to discuss the two alternatives, and the importance of operating on either the east or west side. In terms of service, you will want to be on one side only. It is important to make sure stops are close to destinations and keep service as direct as possible. A major issue that was brought up by key stakeholders was to stay off Hadley Ave as that is a residential area and they feel there would be opposition for busses to be traveling on that street.

Commissioner Bigham said this issue has been now avoided as the City of Cottage Grove has stated to not make Hadley an option for the route.

Ms. Armstrong said as a result of Hadley not being an option and new investment in the east side Highway 61 and 80th St, they are recommend possible station locations on the east side of Highway 61 at 80th St.

Ms. Armstrong said that the 80th Street location in Cottage Grove is seeing reinvestment. Rainbow Foods and Home Depot used to occupy this space. HyVee will be opening in the former Rainbow Food site. The city is currently working on a sale for the former Home Depot site. Locating a station near these two businesses and other surrounding developments provides an opportunity to access to retail destinations and jobs in the area. The project team is still currently working with the City of Cottage Grove. However, it is important to place the station at a controlled intersection for pedestrian crossing safety.

For the proposed Jamaica Ave stop, there is a potential to realign the road just north of Jamaica Ave. near the school district program property. By realigning the road, it will create a location that would otherwise not be possible due to curvature in the road. Project staff are currently collaborating with the school district to determine a site for a park and ride. If there were to be a stop in the industrial area, it is not walkable and a shuttle would need to be provided.

Commissioner Bigham said there is going to be approximately 2000 jobs added within the industrial area in the next several years. It is important to have some type of feeder route or shuttle there. Commissioner Bigham clarified that the school district's program center includes community education, the alternative high school, and early education. Commissioner Bigham said she understands from staff discussions with the school district confirm the community education program will stay at the current location.

Councilmember Peterson stated there is also a senior center at that location.

Ms. Leitner said the school district is planning on keeping some of their programs there, but they are open to discussion. This is a large piece of property and the parking lot is underutilized. Long term this could be a development site with some shared uses. The future plan would be to move Metro Transit's park and ride parking lot from the west side of Hwy 61 to this space with joint parking with existing buildings.

For Langdon Village, Ms. Armstrong explained that project staff have been talking with City of Cottage Grove staff about connecting the frontage road to CSAH 19 south of this area.

Ms. Armstrong described that for the Hastings Depot, that it might make sense to move the trail that currently goes through the middle of the parking lot. However, project staff learned this trail has moved several times already. Kimley Horn will look into other alternatives for the alignment. An arts space development is going in on the north side of 2nd Street. There is also a large redevelopment happening west of Hwy 61. South of the site, the city currently owns a couple of sites currently used as storage. The city and project staff feel these sites could be beneficial to this station. Project staff are continuing to work with Hastings staff to make sure the recommendations that are made support additional development in this area moving forward.

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Hastings proposed stations #2 and #3 would serve more residential areas of Hastings and the Dakota County Service Center. Both of these proposed stations have performed well in the ridership model. Project staff is having continued conservations with Hastings staff to insure these two stations are located in proper areas.

Ms. Leitner said staff needs to know if these stations are generally in the right location so they are able to determine how much capital costs to include for each one. Land use details will not be included in the final Implementation Plan as each city will need to review each site through their individual comprehensive plans.

Mr. Smalkoski said when looking at phasing, they want to look at ridership that will gradually build over time and is able to respond to development trends as the Red Rock project will be funded incrementally using multiple sources.

Mr. Smalkoski said Phase 1a and 1b are not necessarily tied to Red Rock Corridor bus rapid transit (BRT) services but they do see local service as an option to help build ridership in the corridor and could be an early step to full BRT implementation.

Mr. Smalkoski said Phase 1a, based on a policy discussion, is an express bus service to Minneapolis with potential stops at Hastings Depot, Newport Transit Station, and Downtown Minneapolis.

Mr. Smalkoski said Phase 1b would be an all-day local service. This would include express and off-peak service. This route has been included in Metro Transit's Service Improvement Plan from Cottage Grove to Saint Paul. Kimley Horn is asking if the corridor should consider different stops or routes for the off-peak service.

Mr. Smalkoski said they have created some framework for BRT implementation to help guide decision making. They have assessed incremental costs and benefits of each station, and compared the corridor and individual stations to regional standards to determine the appropriate time for implementation. This will provide input to the phasing process and guidance for station-specific ridership goals and trends as to when each station should be implemented.

Ms. Leitner said all ridership information is for the Year 2040. Currently, there are no associated years as to when a specific phase would happen.

Mr. Smalkoski briefly covered the predictions of the daily boarding's by station for the Year 2040. The regional guidance for a corridor of this size says before a station should be implemented the ridership should meet 100 boardings per station per day. For this overview, all 3 Gateway Corridor stations were combined as most of the costs comes from connecting the two corridors and isn't station specific. All three stations would be implemented at once or not at all.

Commissioner Bigham asked if the Gateway Corridor stations were not included with the Red Rock stations would there be a loss of 310 boardings between those three

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stations. How would it be determined if there was a straight ride to Union Depot, how many riders would there be? Mr. Smalkoski said they did look into that option and there was a significant reduction in ridership making the trip straight to Union Depot.

Mr. Smalkoski said it is important to note the corridor operations and maintenance comparisons reflect 2015 costs but the forecasting is based off of 2040. They are currently looking at $11.00 per boarding for Red Rock. Once the figures are matched with 2040 forecasting, they are predicting the boarding fee will be greater than Red Line's current boarding fee of $14.00.

Commissioner Bigham said if there was anything changed within the corridor, for example a route, these figures would be looked at and the fee could possibly be reduce. Ms. Leitner said the main thing that will drive the ridership and fees would be the development in each corridor city.

Commissioner Slavik asked how much have the different stops been analyzed for development and how much is the assumption of development. Mr. Smalkoski said they are using the Metropolitan Council's 2040 regional model, which accounts growth in each area.

Mr. Smalkoski said they looked at how cost effective is it to add a station in a particular area. They are looking at costs to divert from Highway 61 comparing to the number of boardings that could be expected at a specific station. This analysis was done up to the Cottage Grove stations. The distance between Cottage Grove and Hastings adds a lot time and mileage to the busses to make that trip. The cost is approximately $3.25 per mile per bus in one direction for wear and tear on the vehicle. This is based on the eight miles between the Jamaica Ave. Station and the Hastings Depot. These costs would need to be accounted for by the Hastings stations and increases the amount, which decreases the cost effectiveness.

Mr. Smalkoski said another measure they researched was the Transit Market Index. This is a regional scale to help determine population density, intersection density, employment density, and automobile availably.

Ms. Leitner went through the station comparisons that showed daily boardings, operating and maintenance costs per boarding, annualized capital cost per boarding, and the Transit Market Index.

Mr. Smalkoski said there are several different funding options from federal, state, regional, and local sources to help finance this project. Mr. Smalkoski presented the different options and requirements for each. Sources for the Red Line and A Line were shown for a comparison.

Mr. Smalkoski said the next steps are to finalize the implementation phases.

Agenda Item #5: Communications Update

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Ms. Leitner said articles are included in the packet for the commission to read at their leisure. Staff put together a short video to provide a high-level overview of the bus rapid transit (BRT) route.

Agenda Item #6: Other

Item 6a. Commissioner Bigham suggested keeping the April meeting at the same time and location for now.

Item 6b. Commissioner Bigham had nothing to report. Commission Slavik said they are working through the by-laws for high speed rail and found that since adding a new member the by-laws and the joint powers agreement were not in agreement. A subcommittee was formed to make sure they are aligned. Commissioner Rettman said Amtrak announced although the ridership is down nationwide, ridership is up 5% in our region.

Agenda Item #7 Adjourn

Motion made by Commissioner Slavik to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Frank. All were in favor**,** Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

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RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

DATE: May 17, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Implementation Plan Update

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 staged approach for implementation of the plan.

The Implementation Plan will determine short- and long-term strategies for implementing BRT and to tie those strategies to funding needs. It is expected that the plan will be completed by summer 2016.

Meetings and Events

Meeting/Event	Date
Newport Station Area Planning Meeting #3	March 30, 2016
St. Paul Park Station Area Planning Meeting #3	March 31, 2016
Hastings Station Area Planning Meeting #3	March 31, 2016
Cottage Grove Station Area Planning Meeting #3	April 6, 2016
Red Rock Corridor Counties Meeting	April 6, 2016
Cottage Grove Business Showcase	April 16, 2016
Red Rock Corridor Mini-TAC	April 18, 2016
Cottage Grove Board Workshop	April 20, 2016
Cottage Grove Business Lunch and Learn	April 22, 2016
Red Rock Corridor BCAC	May 2, 2016
Lower Afton Park and Ride Meeting	May 6, 2016
South Washington County Schools Program Center/Jamaica Station Meeting	May 9, 2016
Red Rock Corridor TAC	May 16, 2016

Implementation Plan Analysis
Kimley Horn presented information on station area planning, evaluation, and financial planning at the March Red Rock Corridor Commission meeting. Since the March meeting, the project team has been working to refine details for the station area plans, phasing evaluation, and financial planning. These results will be presented to the commission at the May meeting.

Additional conversations for the proposed Cottage Grove stations and Lower Afton have been held since the last commission meeting. For the Cottage Grove stations, project staff was on hand at the Cottage Grove Business Showcase to discuss route options and station locations. More people preferred the route running down East Pt. Douglas to the option on the west side of Hwy 61. This information was included in a workshop with the Cottage Grove City Council on April 20, 2016. The Cottage Grove City Council supported city and project staff recommendations to stay on the east side of Hwy 61. As a result, further Implementation Plan analysis and the final report will include proposed station locations near 80th Street and Jamaica along East Pt. Douglas.

For Lower Afton, project staff met with representatives from Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metro Transit, the City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County to discuss possible solutions for safety concerns at the current location at Hwy 61 and Lower Afton Rd. A number of options including a installing a pedestrian bridge, improving the signals, relocating the park and ride, changing the bus operations, and building "J" turns (like U-turns but would be for buses only) were discussed by the group. These options were discussed at the May 16 Red Rock Corridor TAC meeting. Follow up discussions have not yet been scheduled.

A discussion on all station planning activities will take place at the Commission meeting along with draft BRT phases and the trigger points to start implementing BRT service and amenities. The Commission's input at the May meeting will be used to draft the final Implementation Plan document.

Next Steps
The Implementation Plan is anticipated to be completed in summer 2016. Additional time has been dedicated to the project to finalize proposed station locations with the cities and to wait for the conclusion of the 2016 legislative session for details on the proposed Route 367 (express bus service from Hastings to Minneapolis). The additional time does not include any additional costs. The final Implementation Plan will include a schedule for phasing, ridership forecasts, service plans, capital and operating costs, and station area plans.

Action
Discussion

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

DATE: May 20, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Legislative Update

Background:
John Kaul, lobbyist for Washington County, will provide an update of the 2016 legislative session.

Action:
Information

RED ROCK
SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

DATE: May 16, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Summer Engagement

Background:
Red Rock Corridor Commission members and staff need to prepare for possible summer engagement opportunities. Last summer, staff and Commission members participated in multiple city events in order to gather input on station locations and the BRT route and there was also a Red Line BRT tour. Below is a summary of two summer engagement approaches for Commission discussion.

City Events
Last summer, the Commission had a lot of success at summer festivals because we had a specific "ask" of the public to help guide decision making for the Implementation Plan. We were able to educate stakeholders while also collecting input. Since the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan is due to be completed by summer 2016, possible engagement opportunities would focus on education of the proposed route and bus rapid transit and there would not be a direct opportunity for stakeholders to provide input at this time. Possible events include:

Event	City	Date
Strawberry Fest	Cottage Grove	6/17/16 - 6/18/16
Rivertown Days	Hastings	7/15/16 - 7/17/16
Pioneer Day	Newport	8/14/16
Heritage Days	St. Paul Park	8/18/16 - 8/21/16

Tour of the A Line BRT
The A Line BRT (arterial BRT along Snelling Avenue and Ford Parkway in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Roseville) begins service on June 11. The tour would be similar to the one offered for the Red Line in September 2015. The focus of the tour would be on BRT stations, operations, and anticipated development. Over the coming months staff could work to coordinate speakers, tour route, and travel accommodations. Possible attendees include:

- Red Rock Corridor Commission Members
- Red Rock Corridor Cities' Planning Commissions members
- Red Rock Corridor Cities' Economic Development Authority members
- Red Rock Corridor Technical Advisory Committee members
- Red Rock Corridor Business and Civic Advisory Committee members

- Chambers of Commerce

A tour could be combined with additional presentations and informational opportunities in line with the interests of the commission members. Combining the tour with additional learning opportunities would result in a longer event, potentially a half-day, for interested individuals. The tour would likely be held in conjunction with a commission meeting.

Staff Recommendation:
Because the Commission does not have a direct "ask" from stakeholders at this time, staff recommends that efforts be put into a robust tour and learning opportunities around the A Line. Commission members will be asked for their input on this recommendation at the May meeting.

Action:
Discussion

DATE: May 16, 2016

TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Communications Update

Website
There have been 1969 website views in the last 30 days.

Facebook
The Facebook page is up to 323 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. March 28, 2016 – Finance and Commerce
2. April 8, 2016 – Finance and Commerce
3. April 12, 2016 – South Washington County Bulletin
4. May 9, 2016 – Woodbury Bulletin
5. May 12, 2016 – Star Tribune
6. May 13 – Mass Transit Mag

Action:
Information

FINANCE & COMMERCE



The 30-mile Red Rock Corridor line would run between Hastings and Union Depot in downtown St. Paul. Planners for the line recommend implementing the route in phases. Submitted map: Red Rock Corridor Commission

Red Rock commission looks at phased approach

By: Janice Bitters March 28, 2016 4:14 pm 0

Transportation planners for the Red Rock Corridor are preparing for phased implementation of the 30-mile route and strong transit-oriented development along the bus rapid transit line from Hastings to Union Depot in downtown St. Paul.

The Red Rock Corridor Commission heard a project update Thursday — its first meeting since the line's preferred route was finalized by the commission in January, when planners opted for a more expensive route option that would garner higher ridership.

Planners at Cary, North Carolina-based Kimley Horn told the 11-member commission the $43.7 million line would likely see some near-term interim solutions before final park-and-rides and other developments are cemented along the corridor.

"We want to build in some flexibility to respond to some development trends, and we see this as having to be funded incrementally using multiple sources," Brian Smalkoski, a Kimley-Horn transportation planner, told the commission Thursday.

Planners from Kimley-Horn outlined development plans and opportunities around the 12 station areas in the route, which includes stops in St. Paul, Newport, Cottage Grove and Hastings. The route largely follows Highway 61, but deviates at St. Paul Park and in Cottage Grove to offer easier access to neighborhoods.

The commission will vote on the recommendations in May, once planners know whether a transportation bill or other transit measures will be passed in the current legislative session, said Lyssa Leitner, project manager for the Red Rock Corridor.

If the Kimley-Horn recommendations are approved, early stages of the project would offer more traditional express

bus service between Hastings and St. Paul — an effort to get people in the corridor accustomed to riding transit.

"We want to look at phasing that will allow ridership to gradually build over time," Smalkoski said.

As the route gains ridership, later phases would implement bus rapid transit elements to the corridor, including enhanced stations and more frequent service. Eventually BRT buses would run along the route every 15 to 30 minutes.

Station areas likely to see changes sooner rather than later include the busy intersection at Lower Afton Road and Highway 61, the Newport Transit Station and a Cottage Grove stop near a growing industrial park at Jamaica Avenue and Highway 61.

The planned station at Lower Afton Road would add to ridership at an already busy intersection and over-capacity park-and-ride in the southwest quadrant. Overflow parking spills onto city streets today, prompting planners to recommend expanding and reconfiguring the surface lot to add more than 20 spaces.

The measure would be an interim step to ease parking congestion, Chelsey Armstrong, another transportation planner for Kimley-Horn, told the commission.

Newport city and county officials have worked closely to create an area ripe for transit-oriented development near an existing transit hub at the southwest corner of Interstate 494 and Highway 61, where the Red Rock Line is planned to stop.

County-owned property in the area has been set aside for development, and Minneapolis-based developer MWF Properties has been working with the city to propose 42 units of workforce housing near the station, said Deb Hill, city administrator.

This is going to be mixed-use, transit-oriented development," she said. "It will develop because the site is good."

The Jamaica Avenue Station, which would sit along East Point Douglas Road, just north of Jamaica Avenue, is planned to straddle commercial and industrial areas. To the northeast, fast food and retail sit in commercial nodes.

But an industrial park southwest of the planned station also needs strong access, said Karla Bigham, chair of Red Rock Corridor Commission. Employers in the industrial park are expanding and have said they want greater access to employees, she told Kimley-Horn planners.

"The whole reason to have a stop down in that area is to serve that … industrial park," she said. "To me, it would be extremely important to have a shuttle service ready to go almost on day one."

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THE DOLAN COMPANY

FINANCE & COMMERCE



A proposal to create a TIF district around the existing Newport Transit Station at 250 Red Rock Crossing is making its way through the Legislature this session. The bill aims to help spur transit-oriented development. Staff photo: Bill Klotz

Density sought with Newport TIF bill

By: Janice Bitters April 8, 2016 3:50 pm 0

The city of Newport wants to spur high-density, mixed-use development around its transit station, and a bill to extend the city's tax increment financing options aims to help.

City and Washington County officials have worked closely to create an area ripe for transit-oriented development near the existing transit hub at the southwest corner of Interstate 494 and Highway 61.

But the area, which officials describe as "underutilized," will likely need infrastructure and utility improvements to encourage new apartments and commercial space as the county buys property and readies parcels for private developers, said Deb Hill, the city's administrator.

That's where TIF money comes in.

"When you have those things figured out, that's a big headache that goes away from the developer," Hill said.

A bill that outlines a large rectangular swath of land known as the Newport Red Rock Crossing Project Area would extend the city's timeline to create one or more TIF districts to 2026.

Municipalities generally have three years to implement TIF districts once a building is demolished in an area.

The Knox Lumber building, which once sat on the large parcel where the city's new transit station sits today, started that countdown. The city would face a 2017 deadline to implement TIF on that land without the bill.

Sen. Katie Sieben, DFL-Cottage Grove, the bill's chief author, said she's working on the legislation to support the city and county's long-term vision.

The outlined project area is bounded by Interstate 494, Highway 61 and the Mississippi River and would stop at 15th Street to the south. The Senate proposal, SF 2382, was laid over by the Taxes Committee on Thursday.

A companion bill HF 2765, is being carried by Rep. Dan Schoen, DFL-Cottage Grove.

The station, at 250 Red Rock Crossing, will be served in coming years by the planned Red Rock Line, a 30-mile bus rapid transit route from Hastings to St. Paul.

The planned route, which will be implemented in phases, is a catalyst for the bill, said Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham.

As officials aim for a future that includes as much as 60,000 square feet of commercial space and more than 400

As officials aim for a future that includes as much as 60,000 square feet of commercial space and more than 400 housing units, the impact of transit-oriented development in Newport will extend across the corridor, Bigham said.

"It would be huge," she said. "Any time you have a strong transit component … it will be very beneficial to the county as a whole."

County-owned property around the transit station, where Knox Lumber once sat, is ready for development, Hill said.

Other properties could benefit from TIF because it would allow the city to help install utilities and stormwater infrastructure in the ground, which has high bedrock, Hill said.

Development plans have started to pop up in the area. Minneapolis-based developer MWF Properties has been working with the city to propose 42 units of workforce housing near the station, said Project Manager Chris Stokka.

The plans are in preliminary stages and need to be heard by the city's Planning Commission and City Council, but MWF was drawn to the Newport location because of the transit station, Stokka said.

Area property owners have known for years of the city's transit-oriented development vision, said Melissa Taphorn, deputy executive director of community development at the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Property acquisitions will happen voluntarily over time, she said.

Though the county won't use eminent domain, the housing authority will approach property owners if a developer seeks to build on a specific parcel, Taphorn said.

"There's a lot of underutilized land," she said. "If [a developer] were interested in anything in that project area, we would talk with them and work them."

RELATED CONTENT:

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South Washington County Bulletin

Lunch and Learn about Red Rock Corridor

By **swcnews** on Apr 12, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

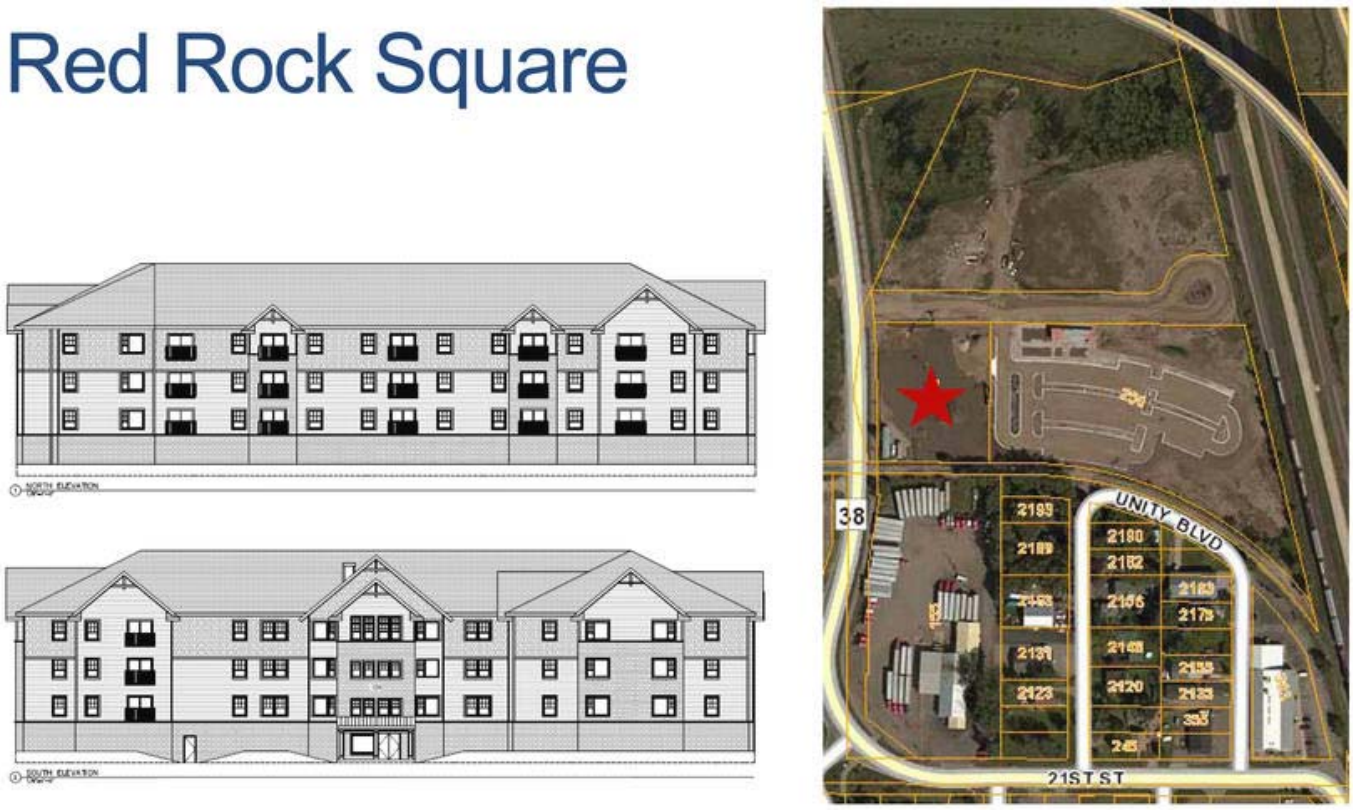
The Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce is holding a lunch and learn program about the Red Rock Corridor from noon to 1:30 p.m. Friday, April 22, at Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway. Lunch will be provided by Carbone's Pizzeria. The program is open to all.

Reservations are required by Thursday, April 14. For details and to reserve space, email ccostello@cottage-grove.org (mailto:ccostello@cottage-grove.org) or call 651-458-2824.

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Woodbury Bulletin



New plans emerge for Newport's Red Rock Crossing development

By **Michelle Leonard** on May 9, 2016 at 1:24 p.m.

Newport will likely look much different in a decade, thanks to a redevelopment plan moving through the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Known as Red Rock Crossing, the redevelopment plan covers property to the west of U.S. Highway 61, south of Interstate 494. Broken into four phases, the project is expected to evolve over the next decade, according to HRA Executive Director Barbara Dacy.

The plan calls for new apartments and townhomes, new retail space and a

potential business and office park. The implementation of the Red Rock Crossing plan will start early next year, when construction of the new 42-unit Red Rock Square apartment complex gets underway.

The Red Rock Crossing development is nothing new to Washington County. The original Red Rock Crossing redevelopment plan dates back to June, 2012, when it was approved by the county HRA and the City of Newport. In the time since, the HRA has acquired several parcels of land, developed a marketing plan, and, earlier this year, updated the project's market study.

At a May 3 workshop with the Washington County Board of Commissioners, HRA Deputy Executive Director Melissa Taphorn said the updated market study confirmed findings of the one from 2012—that Newport has a need for affordable, market rate and senior housing.

Scheduled to be open in 2018, the Red Rock Square project signals the beginning of redevelopment in the area.

"For Newport, this is the very first significant multifamily housing project in 30 years," Taphorn said. "This is really only capturing 3 percent of the demand for that type of housing in that market."

Red Rock Square will be built by a private developer, MWF Properties, and will be located directly west of the transit station. It is the first project, in the first area identified for redevelopment through the Red Rock Crossing plan.

Area 1/Phase 1 is bordered by County Road 38 to the west, and I-494/Highway 61 to the north and east. Plans for the area include the Red Rock Square apartments, as well as 50,000 square feet for business and the existing transit station.

Also bordered to the west by County Road 38, Area 2/Phase 2 abuts Area 1 to the south. Area 2 tentatively includes 200 apartment units, 62 senior living units and 10,000 square feet of retail space.

Area 3/Phase 3 is south of 21st Street. Development in that area would include 19 townhomes, and 7,000 square feet for restaurant space. It is envisioned that this area will transition Newport from the high density of apartments to the lower density of single-family residences south of the project area.

The final section, Area 4/Phase 4, is on the west side of County Road 38, north of 21st Street. While that area is not expected to be developed for "quite some time," Dacy said, the land is listed as "potential for a business park/office" development.

The retail and business development will likely come after the construction of more housing, Dacy said.

"For retail development, there needs to be more rooftops before that comes in," she said.

The HRA's role, Taphorn said, has been to help remove barriers to the redevelopment, by buying properties and helping to relocate property owners and doing soil cleanup and remediation when necessary. Additionally, the HRA is working on getting financing for the project, by implementing tools like HRA levy, tax increment financing and grants.

Commissioner Karla Bigham, who represents Newport on the county board, is pleased with the redevelopment plans.

"I'm born and raised in Newport," she noted. "This is very near and dear to my heart."

Michelle Leonard

Michelle Leonard joined the Woodbury Bulletin staff in November, 2014, after 14 years covering news for the Bulletin's sister publication, the Farmington Rosemount Independent Town Pages. Michelle earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Mass Communications: News-Editorial from Mankato State University in 1991. She is an active member of the American Legion Auxiliary Clifford Larson Unit 189 of Farmington, and served as the 2014-15 Third District President to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Michelle is also the volunteer coordinator for the Minnesota Newspaper Museum which is open annually during the Minnesota State Fair. She has earned Minnesota



Newspaper Association awards in Investigative Reporting, Local News Coverage, Feature Photography and Column Writing.

MLeonard@woodburybulletin.com
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EAST METRO

Affordable housing project coming to Newport's transit station

Red Rock Square units would seed development around Newport's new transit station.

By Kevin Giles (http://www.startribune.com/kevin-giles/10644901/) Star Tribune

MAY 12, 2016 — 8:36PM

A 42-unit affordable housing complex will be built next to Newport's new transit station, the first step in an ambitious plan to revive a blighted area of the Washington County city.

The developer of Red Rock Square, a $10 million project, plans to break ground in the spring of 2017, said Melissa Taphorn, deputy executive director for the county's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA).

"It will bring housing and jobs to Newport, but also build on the transit center to increase ridership and help bring along the Red Rock Corridor bus rapid transit line," said Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham, who was raised in Cottage Grove but "born and baptized" in Newport.

The route will link Union Depot in St. Paul with Hastings, and include stops at Lower Afton Road, Cottage Grove, Langdon Village and Hastings. Currently Metro Transit buses serve the Newport station, which sits just southwest of where Interstate 494 crosses Hwy. 61.

The three-story apartment complex will be built on the west side of the transit station, which opened in December 2014. MWF Properties, the developer for Red Rock Square, will finance most of the construction privately, aside from publicly funded loans to carry 4 percent of the $10 million cost, Taphorn said.

The full HRA plan, known as Red Rock Crossing, envisions development in four stages around the transit station. A recent market study, Taphorn said, showed that the area could support 500 to 650 family housing units — affordable, market rate and senior — along with 60,000 to 80,000 square feet of office space, and 50,000 to 100,000 square feet of industrial uses.

The redevelopment zone has several existing buildings, some of which are considered "substandard," Taphorn said. The HRA will continue buying property as it becomes available south of the transit center to make room for new development, she said.

The Red Rock transit line is expected to open in 2021 or 2022. The Red Rock Corridor Commission, which Bigham chairs, has asked the Legislature for $1 million for environmental planning, one of many steps toward full transit operation.

Bigham said Red Rock Crossing would give Newport, a city of about 3,400 residents, an economic jolt that was expected but that never happened when the nearby Wakota Bridge was built over the Mississippi River.

"I'm looking forward to the progress of this development," she said.

kgiles@startribune.com 651-925-5037 StribGiles

Affordable housing project coming to Newport's transit station

MN: Affordable Housing Project Coming to Newport's Transit Station

Kevin Giles On May 13, 2016

Source: *McClatchy*



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May 13--A 42-unit affordable housing complex will be built next to Newport's new transit station, the first step in an ambitious plan to revive a blighted area of the Washington County city.

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