



Red Rock Corridor Commission Implementation Workshop Minutes/Notes Thursday, December 18, 2014

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Autumn Lehrke, Chair	Washington County RRA	X
Mike Slavik	Dakota County RRA	X
Janice Rettman	Ramsey County RRA	X
Linda Higgins	Hennepin County RRA	X
Barb Hollenbeck	City of Hastings	X
Jen Peterson, Vice-Chair	City of Cottage Grove	X
Keith Franke	City of St. Paul Park	
Steve Gallagher	City of Newport	X
John Kummer	Denmark Township	
Joseph Moore (alternate)	Denmark Township	X
Cam Gordon	City of Minneapolis	X
Amy Brendmoen	City of St. Paul	

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	
Marc Mogan	Prairie Island Indian Community	
Jess Greenwood	Goodhue County	

Staff	Agency	Present
Jan Lucke	Washington County RRA	
Andy Gitzlaff	Washington County RRA	X
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County RRA	
Joe Morneau	Dakota County RRA	X
Josh Olson	Ramsey County RRA	

Others	Agency
Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County RRA
Joseph Scala	Hennepin County
Emily Buss	SWC Bulletin
Will Schroeer	East Metro Strong
Karla Bigham	Washington County Commissioner-elect

Agenda Item #1: Introductions

Introductions were made by those present.

Agenda Item #2: Consent Items

- a. Checks and Claims
- b. Minutes from the October 2014 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Slavik noted corrections needed in the minutes including duplicates and misspellings for those in attendance. Commissioner Slavik moved approval for the Checks and Claims and Minutes as corrected from October 2014. Commissioner Gallagher seconded. There was no discussion. **All were in favor.** The motion carried.

Agenda Item #3: Draft 2015 Work Plan and Budget

Andy Gitzlaff provided the second reading of the work plan and budget. Highlights of the work plan for 2015 include overseeing and guiding the Implementation Plan, conducting public outreach, and facilitating a Locally Preferred Alternative process with the Metropolitan Council. Public involvement is a key component for the 2015 work plan. Additionally, the work plan involves contributing to studies conducted by others such as studies done by the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit.

The work plan will further communication efforts from the work done as part of the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU). The website is being updated. More details on the website are included in the packet for information on what communication efforts could be continued into 2015. The communications consultant will develop content for eNews and community newsletters as well as materials for awareness and public outreach. Prospective events needing materials include the Newport Transit Station grand opening in the spring.

The budget is on pages 3 and 4 of the meeting packet. The budget has gone up from 2014 due to the Implementation Plan. The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) awarded a grant to Washington County for the Implementation Plan. The money is available as of first of 2015. The local match was provided by the Red Rock Corridor Commission.

\$10,000 was included in the budget for administration and activities. Activities could include the Newport Transit Station grand opening event in the spring. Standard expenditures such as printing and insurance are in the budget. Advocacy for 2015 is also included and will use the Ramsey County state and federal lobbyist. \$30,000 was included for communications and \$5,000 for the website. There is the potential to keep Johnson Group on for another year as the communications consultant. However, that decision would be an approval item for the Commission at a later time.

\$360,000 of the budget came from the CTIB grant for the Implementation Plan. Dues are paid by the following counties splitting \$50,000 according to the percent listed: Ramsey County (37.5%), Dakota County (10%), Washington County (35%), and Hennepin County (17.5%). Fund balance at the end of the year is used to offset dues and this brings down the total commitment to \$90,000 in revenue for the \$450,000 budget.

Commissioner Rettman asked if there is a need to change anything in the budget to accept the grant from CTIB. Andy Gitzlaff responded that no change is needed. The budget was written assuming the grant would be awarded. Andy clarified that this meeting was the second reading of the budget and will be the final decision on the budget. "Draft" would be removed from throughout the document and the document would then be the final version.

Commissioner Gallagher moved approval of the 2015 Work Plan and Budget. Commissioner Peterson seconded. There was no discussion. **Roll call. All in favor.** The motion carried.

Agenda Item #4: Metro Transit's Service Improvement Plan

Andy noted that a different version of the presentation would be delivered than what was in the packet.

Adam Harrington, Metro Transit Director of Service Development, came to describe Metro Transit's Service Improvement Plan. The plan focuses on bus service to support and grow the regional transit system. In the region, buses carry 80% of passengers with rail carrying 20% of passengers. This service plan is for identifying and prioritizing improvement projects. Projects with the greatest priority will flow up to regional service improvement plan update for all regional service providers into one master plan. All service providers worked together to develop criteria and score the projects for possible inclusion in the plans.

Criteria are consistent with other plans. Stakeholder outreach to get sense of the bus investments needed went on throughout winter 2013-2014. The comment period finished at the end of November 2014. The comments are now being incorporated into the document. The plan is not exclusive of all needed projects in the area but is a framework to prioritize projects going forward. Over 4000 public responses have been received to inform the plan.

Adam Harrington discussed the framework to prioritize projects including connecting people with jobs. He mentioned there is a struggle between frequency and coverage demands. The plan was developed using Guiding Principles including; maximizing ridership growth, providing faster travel time, and improving transit equitably. The proposed projects were evaluated with productivity-based (50%), social equity-based (25%), and system connectivity criteria (25%).

Metro Transit screened about 160 projects based on these factors with 120 ranking high or medium on criteria just described. Adam Herrington emphasized the projects would not bring new coverage as it focuses on operations.

Commissioner Rettman asked if materials were available on the website. Adam Harrington responded that this specific presentation is not but most information is. Commissioner Rettman asked if Metro Transit was still taking comments on the Service Improvement Plan? Adam Harrington responded that while officially the comment period is closed, Metro Transit won't turn anybody away.

Commissioner Rettman stated that East-West transit lines are lacking in the region and asked for clarification on the status of Red Rock. Adam Harrington stated that Red Rock has been ranked as a medium. Commissioner Gordon wanted to know why Red Rock didn't score as high. Adam Harrington explained that there is not currently a strong market to downtown Saint Paul for all day service along the corridor. More details are included in the report. Commissioner Gordon asked if providing service to Minneapolis would help the corridor to score higher. Adam Harrington explained that the corridor was assessed with service from Hastings through Saint Paul to Minneapolis for the purposes of the report analysis.

Commissioner Gordon stated that the money for service improvement is discussed as a subsidy and wondered why that language was used. Commissioner Gordon thought the language skews it to be thought of negatively. Adam Harrington clarified that it is industry standard to use the word "subsidy".

Commissioner Gordon asked if lowering the fares could increase ridership. Commissioner Gordon stated that Minneapolis schools are paying for student and ridership has gone up drastically.

Commissioner Slavik asked if Route 376, the commuter bus to Hastings, was omitted from map since it wasn't a part of the district. Adam Herrington stated that extending service to Hastings would require the city to be in capital levy district. He stated there is a cost benefit trade off since Hasting riders already go to Fort Snelling and Cottage Grove. Commissioner Slavik stated that people are using the service without paying into it. He thinks there is demand and will still be if service was extended to Hastings. But he realizes that Hastings won't pay into the district without benefiting from the service.

Andy Gitzlaff stated that Red Rock being including in the plan meant that the corridor may be able seek further funding in the future. He mentioned that staff was excited to see that information from previous studies along the corridor included in the Service Improvement Plan.

Agenda Item #5: East Metro Strong Overview

Will Schroeer, Executive Director with East Metro Strong, introduced his organization to the Red Rock Corridor Commission. East Metro Strong is just over six months old. Last year McKnight Foundation provided funding for regional economic vitality outside of regular grant making. The aim was to create a place to advance transit and economic development through the three eastern metro area counties. The effort came from elected officials with an interest in taking responsibility for eastern growth. East Metro Strong is not competing with the West Metro. Will Schroeer explained that the entire region won't thrive without a strong east metro. He used the example that transit routes that extend into Minneapolis help that city thrive as well.

East Metro Strong's goal is to promote aggressive transit development and focused economic development. Members of the board included elected officials from cities and counties as well as businesses in the east metro and the Saint Paul Foundation. East Metro Strong is a remarkable example of a private-public partnership.

The board feels there is urgency around development around east metro transit lines. The east metro area is behind many other metro areas in transit development. East Metro Strong wants a east metro that offer choices for the people they want to come here and to compete with cities around the nation. Will Schroeer explained that Millenials, though not the only generation, are the fastest growing section of the work force. Right now, Denver is first in the nation for attracting Millenials partially due to transportation.

East Metro Strong is currently working to create a vision for transitway investments to support additional economic growth in the east metro. The organization also works to support others in implementing that vision. East Metro Strong is working with east metro corridor commissions in addition to educating the public and other stakeholders. East Metro Strong is helping to carry the message that good transit produces good economic development.

East Metro Strong's request of Red Rock Corridor Commission is to participate in a visioning process. The organization would like to hear from east metro stakeholders what they would like to see on the regional transit map and what values should be reflected going forward. The process has already been completed with the Gateway Corridor Commission and will take approximately two hours.

Commissioner Rettman stated that the Commission would be interested in the conversation. Will Schroeer will work Washington County staff to schedule that visioning conversation.

Agenda Item #6: Resolutions

- a. Commissioner Slavik read a resolution highlighting Commissioner Hollenbeck's service to the Red Rock Corridor Commission. Commissioner Hollenbeck is only the second member from Hastings to serve on the RRCC. Commissioner Slavik moved the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Barb Hollenbeck stated she is honored to have served these last eight years and will continue to be an advocate going forward for Red Rock and other corridors.
- b. Commissioner Peterson moved the same resolution for Steve Gallagher from Newport. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slavik. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Steve is excited to see the opening of Newport Transit Station.
- c. Commissioner Rettman thanked Autumn Lehrke and moved a resolution thanking Autumn Lehrke. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Autumn Lehrke expressed pleasure serving on the Commission for the last four years. She is proud of the Commission's work.

Agenda Item #7: Implementation Plan Update

Andy Gitzlaff stated that the CTIB grant money has been received and is available January 1. The RFP process is in motion with three proposals having been received. Staff has recommended bringing two firms forward for interviews: Kimley Horn and SRF. After interviewing the two teams, staff will bring a final recommendation to the Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) in January. There is great talent interested in working on the project and this is an important milestone for the Commission and the Corridor. The work will represent one voice to advance the corridor. The Implementation Plan process is to start in early 2015.

Agenda Item #8: Communication Update

- a. Status of the new website
Andy Gitzlaff stated that the new website is live though there have been some problems with analytics.
- b. Website and social media
Facebook is trending along with an ever increasing number of "likes." Staff is posting on Facebook regularly to give people reasons to come back to the page. For example, Metro Transit's Service improvement Plan was posted and drove comments from the area.

Commissioner Rettman encouraged continued support for engaging the corridor through social media.

Agenda Item #9: Legislative Update

Kevin Roggenbuck with Ramsey County RRA stated that the Minnesota Office of Management and Budget has announced a budget surplus of \$1 billion for 2016-2017 on top of the \$373 million for 2015. Governor Dayton doesn't see a general tax increase except for transportation. Included in the packet is the list of MN House of Representative Committee chairs for the upcoming legislative session that starts on January 6, 2015.

The Federal Omnibus bill funded the federal government until September 2015 in the amount of \$1.1 trillion. Everything was included except homeland security which will be covered under a different bill.

Agenda Item #10: Other

- a. Next meeting is January 22, 2015.
- b. The 2015 meeting schedule will be discussed at the January 2015 meeting.
Andy Gitzlaff clarified that with new RRCC members coming in at the January meeting, it would be a good time to look at time and location for the meetings for 2015. Andy Gitzlaff stated that

Commission members should also be thinking of stakeholders to engage in the Corridor's projects with the upcoming visioning conversation and Implementation Plan.

Commissioner Gordon asked about establishing a new chair and finding new members from the corridor communities. Andy Gitzlaff stated that historically the chair and vice chair are appointed at first meeting of the year. Members from the cities can change at any point.

Agenda Item #11: Adjourn

Commissioner Peterson moved to adjourn. Commissioner Slavik seconded. There was no discussion. **All in favor.** The motion carried.