



AGENDA

Rush Line Corridor Task Force Meeting

November 29, 2018

4:30 p.m.

Maplewood Community Center Conference Room A/B

2100 White Bear Ave, Maplewood

	<u>Item:</u>	<u>Action Requested:</u>
<i>Chair Victoria Reinhardt</i>	1. Call to Order/Introductions	
<i>Chair Victoria Reinhardt</i>	2. Approval of the Agenda	Approval
<i>Chair Victoria Reinhardt</i>	3. Summary of May 31, 2018 Meeting*	Approval
<i>Dawn Spanhake and Yingling Fan, University of Minnesota</i>	4. University of Minnesota – Transitway Impact Research Program Findings	Information
<i>Frank Alarcon, Ramsey County Public Works</i>	5. Legislative Update	Information
<i>Andy Gitzlaff, Ramsey County Public Works</i>	6. Draft 2019 Workplan and Budget	Information
<i>Andy Gitzlaff, Ramsey County Public Works</i>	7. Rush Line BRT Project Update* a. Review Connecting Bus Service Plan	Information
<i>Andy Gitzlaff, Ramsey County Public Works</i>	8. 2019 Meeting Schedule	Information

**attachments*

For questions related to this material, please contact Andy Gitzlaff at 651-266-2772 or andrew.gitzlaff@co.ramsey.mn.us.



Draft Meeting Summary

Rush Line Corridor Task Force Meeting

May 31, 2018, Maplewood Community Center, Banquet Rooms A and B, 2100 White Bear Avenue, Maplewood, at 4:30 pm

MEMBERS:

Ben Montzka, Chisago County Commissioner	Mara Bain, Forest Lake Councilmember
Jo Emerson, White Bear Lake Mayor	John Mikrot, Pine County Commissioner
Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner	Amy Brendmoen, Saint Paul Councilmember
Fran Miron, Washington County Commissioner	Bob Kermes, White Bear Township Board
Linda Nanko-Yeager, Wyoming Councilmember	Tony Olivolo, Stacy Councilmember

OTHERS:

Andy Gitzlaff, RCRRRA	Mike Rogers, RCRRRA
Frank Alarcon, RCRRRA	Emily Jorgensen, Washington County

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Victoria Reinhardt called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. Introductions were made by the Task Force members and attendees.

2. Approval of the Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was requested. Commissioner Ben Montzka moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tony Olivolo. The motion passes.

3. Summary of January 25, 2017 Meeting

A motion to approve the meeting minutes was requested. Commissioner Fran Miron moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner John Mikrot. The motion passes.

4. Insurance Renewal

Mr. Andy Gitzlaff explained that every year, the Rush Line Corridor Task Force must renew its liability insurance.

A motion to approve renewal of the Rush Line Corridor Task Force's insurance with the League of Minnesota Cities and not to waive statutory liability insurance was requested. Commissioner Fran Miron moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner John Mikrot. The motion passes.

5. 2018 State Legislative Recap

Mr. Gitzlaff reported the 2018 legislative session concluded earlier in May and that the most significant successful legislation related to transportation was the \$1.5 billion bonding bill, which the governor signed. The bonding bill, which will fund public works projects throughout the state, includes \$825 million in general obligation bonds. The remaining funds will come from other sources. The bonding bill includes no money for transit projects, but does include \$4 million for the Lake Links Trail Project.

Chair Victoria Reinhardt added that \$4 million does not cover the full cost of the Lake Links Trail Project, but that it will cover the portion of the project whose routing has been determined.

Chair Victoria Reinhardt stated that due to an unfortunate lack of bipartisanship at the legislature this year, the governor had to veto numerous bills, including the enormous "omnibus prime" bill that included many policy changes and funding commitments, many of which enjoyed bipartisan support.

6. Support for Bruce Vento Trail Extension Funding

Mr. Gitzlaff provided a printout of a presentation by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation as an informational item about the Bruce Vento Trail Extension project.

Chair Reinhardt stated that it makes sense for the Rush Line Corridor Task Force to support this project, since a portion of the Rush Line BRT Project will be co-located with the Bruce Vento Trail.

Mr. Gitzlaff stated that Ramsey County Parks and Recreation is looking to assemble a broad coalition of project support and that the project is consistent with Rush Line Corridor Task Force's support for multimodal transportation options. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the project will help to fill a trail gap south of downtown Hugo.

Mr. Gitzlaff directed task force members' attention to the draft letter of support in the meeting packet. Chair Reinhardt added that letters of support are part of the solicitation process and that it will help the project's chances of receiving funding if it has the explicit support of the Rush Line Corridor Task Force.

A motion to approve a letter of support was requested. Commissioner Montzka moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Miron. The motion passes.

Commissioner Miron states that avoiding encroachment to rail service is not mentioned in the letter. Chair Reinhardt states that a statement can be added to the letter affirming the task force's support for continued rail service.

7. Rush Line BRT Project Update

Mr. Gitzlaff briefly summarized what occurred as part of the Pre-Project Development Study for the Rush Line Corridor, which was completed in 2017 and led to the Locally Preferred Alternative. Mr. Gitzlaff then described the Locally Preferred Alternative and provided an update on the Rush Line BRT Project's activities in the first five months of 2018. In January, the Rush Line BRT Project initiated its environmental analysis phase, which consists of environmental review, preliminary engineering, station area planning and ongoing public engagement.

Mr. Gitzlaff shared the schedule and committee structure for the environmental analysis phase, and described the project's approach to public engagement.

Chair Reinhardt added that public engagement is a key focus of the Rush Line BRT Project. Chair Reinhardt stated that just ten years ago, open houses accounted for most of the public engagement in public projects, but now, many more methods are used and more people are being invited to provide input.

Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the communities residing along the Rush Line BRT Project's route are very diverse and that the project is collecting public input on such project elements as station locations, guideway alignment, environmental impacts, pedestrian crossings and safety. He described an upcoming biking and walking event on June 16, which will occur on the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way, where the Rush Line BRT guideway would be co-located with the Bruce Vento Trail.

Mr. Gitzlaff informed task force members that if there are public events in their communities at which it would be appropriate to collect public input about the Rush Line BRT Project, they should let him know and he can arrange to have literature about the project available. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that at the next meeting of the Rush Line Corridor Task Force, the Task Force can

have a more in-depth conversation about the connecting bus service farther up the Rush Line Corridor (Hugo and Forest Lake) being evaluated as a part of the Rush Line BRT project

8. Next Meeting

Chair Reinhardt suggested canceling the next scheduled meeting of the Rush Line Corridor Task Force, on July 26, holding the Task Force's next meeting on September 27 at 4:30pm, and also canceling the Task Force's scheduled October meeting.

Commissioner Miron moved Chair Reinhardt's motion for approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Montzka. The motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rush Line Corridor Task Force Members
FROM: Staff
DATE: November 26, 2018
RE: Presentation on the Transitway Impact Research Program Findings

Dawn Spanhake from the Center for Transportation Studies and Professor Yingling Fan from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs; both housed at the University of Minnesota, will provide an overview of the Transitway Impact Research Program (TIRP) and highlight findings from the following TIRP studies:

- Specific Strategies for Achieving Transit-Oriented Economic Development: Applying National Lessons to the Twin Cities
- Multimodal Connections with Transitways: Ridership, Access Mode and Route Choice Implications
- Value of Transitways to Regional Economies: National and Twin Cities Perspectives

Launched in 2006, the TIRP researches the economic, travel, and community impacts of transitway corridors in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The program is supported by a mix of state, regional, and local jurisdictional partners including Ramsey and Washington Counties.

The program serves as a national model of interjurisdictional collaboration between government and academia for transitway research, education, and outreach. Information created through the program helps improve planning and decision making for transitway expansion. The program uses various methods from modeling to surveys, and is unique in its breadth, scope, and ability to provide real-time analysis of the changes experienced in a region introducing high quality transit service. The results are used to help educate legislators, agency leaders and staff, and the University research community about current issues, innovations, and trends pertaining to transitways.

More information about the TIRP program and research findings can be found here:

<http://www.cts.umn.edu/research/featured/transitways/research>

RUSH LINE CORRIDOR TASK FORCE DRAFT 2019 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

NOTE: INDICATES CHANGES FROM 2018 APPROVED WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

WORK PLAN

The 2019 Rush Line Corridor Task Force (Task Force) Work Plan will include the following items:

1. GENERAL ACTIVITIES

The Task Force will work with corridor counties, municipalities, transit agencies, the Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to continue the advancement of the Rush Line Corridor. To accomplish this, the Task Force will do the following:

- a. Coordinate corridor studies with MnDOT, Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, and others.
- b. Monitor progress and offer guidance on studies that impact the Rush Line Corridor.
- c. Offer formal comments.
- d. Continue to educate public officials along the Rush Line Corridor on corridor and regional transit and transportation developments.
- e. Local government coordination including the encouragement of the adoption of the Rush Line Corridor Joint Powers Agreement and ex-officio membership, to increase attendance at Task Force meetings, and to increase information sharing amongst corridor communities.
- f. Seek input on all forms of transportation, including transit and trails, at Task Force meetings.

2. RUSH LINE BRT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The Rush Line Corridor has undergone extensive technical analysis, community engagement, and inter-agency coordination at both the staff and policymaker level through the Pre-Project Development study led by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority on behalf of the Task Force. The Pre-Project Development study has resulted in the selection of a locally preferred alternative that best meets the needs of the communities along the corridor.

The locally preferred alternative is defined as bus rapid transit within a dedicated guideway generally along Robert Street, Phalen Boulevard, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way and Trunk Highway 61 from Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul to downtown White Bear Lake. It would be co-located with the Bruce Vento Trail through the portion of the route that utilizes the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way. A connector bus from White Bear Lake to Forest Lake and other bus service improvements will continue to be explored.

The current phase of the Rush Line BRT Project will include environmental analysis under the Federal and State environmental review processes to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts while maximizing mobility, accessibility and surrounding economic development opportunities. The public will continue to be engaged throughout the environmental review process and subsequent design, engineering and construction phases to ensure that the project is reflective of the needs of the diverse communities within the Rush Line Corridor. The next phase of the project began in early 2018 and will take approximately two years to complete. Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will continue to be the lead agency for the environmental phase and funding will be provided by Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. The Technical and Policy Advisory Committees will continue to meet through the duration of the next phase. Membership in these committees will reflect the geography of the 13-mile Rush Line BRT Project, and thus will differ somewhat from the committees that operated during the PPD Phase.

The Task Force will:

1. Receive project updates from the project team and will be provide input at key project milestones.
2. Continue to engage the various affected interests along the Rush Line Corridor.

3. ROUTE 275

The Task Force will continue to coordinate with the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit to monitor the performance of route 275.

4. CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS AND PROJECTS

Local Government/Agency Coordination:

The Task Force will coordinate with corridor counties, municipalities, transit agencies, MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council to identify potential capital improvement projects along the Corridor including supporting communities' implementation of land use tools to preserve land for the identified capital projects.

Rush Line Corridor Transit Service:

Encourage Metro Transit, the Metropolitan Council, Chisago-Isanti Heartland Express, Arrowhead Transit and others to provide additional bus service in the Rush Line Corridor as demand warrants. This includes, but not limited to, improved bus service along I-35E to the northern portion of the Rush Line Corridor, circulator bus service, the planned route 54 extension and other improvements along the East 7th Street and White Bear Avenue corridor.

Metropolitan Council Highway BRT Study

Coordinate with the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit on any additional analysis in the Rush Line Corridor related to the findings of the 2014 Highway Transitway Corridor Study including the incorporation of its analysis into the Pre-Project Development Study.

Funding:

Work with task force members to identify corridor improvements eligible for state and federal funding and seek funding for their completion. Assist local governments in the preparation of grants for Corridor improvements. Work with funding recipients to ensure the timely expenditure of funds on corridor projects.

Corridor Preservation:

The Task Force will work with corridor communities to preserve the former and existing freight railroad corridor and adjoining properties for future transportation uses. The Task Force is committed to the co-existence of the rail corridor with other transportation modes, including multi-use trails and bus transit.

I-35E MnPASS expansion

MnDOT added new MnPASS express lanes on both directions of I-35E between Cayuga Street and Little Canada Road in 2015. The MnPASS lanes were extended north to County Road J (northbound) and Highway 96 (southbound) in 2017. This is the first MnPASS investment in the East Metro area and an essential link for people commuting between downtown St. Paul and the suburbs to the north. The Task Force will continue to work with MnDOT to promote the implementation of the service.

5. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Task Force will continue to provide information to the public on the corridor. It will work with Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority to coordinate outreach efforts with the Rush Line BRT Project to increase corridor awareness and to maintain consistent messaging.

6. ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATIVE COORDINATION

The Task Force will continue to develop policy positions and advocate for improved transit to serve the Rush Line Corridor and the Twin Cities region. Task force activities include:

- a. Informing legislators of the need for transitway improvements in the Rush Line Corridor
- b. Advocating for increased transit capital and operating funding to improve and expand the existing transit service in the corridor
- c. Coordinating legislative initiatives with other transitway corridors
- d. Establishing positions on legislative initiatives that affect the Rush Line Corridor
- e. Coordinate legislative initiatives with corridor regional railroad authorities, counties, and municipalities for the advancement of the Rush Line Corridor.

7. MANAGEMENT, POLICY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Commission activities will include:

- a. Prepare and adopt the annual Work Plan and Budget
- b. Prepare the annual financial report
- c. Review insurance needs and procure appropriate insurance
- d. Provide Task Force and staff administration
- e. Manage Task Force expenses

- f. Manage the consultant(s) selected by the Task Force for completion of various work tasks

2019 Budget

Revenues/Sources of Funding

General corridor funding for administrative functions and staffing committees and corridor advocacy is provided through “in-kind” contributions of staff time to the task force. Funding for insurance is provided through regional railroad authority and county member contributions.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rush Line Corridor Task Force Members
FROM: Staff
DATE: January 25, 2018
RE: Rush Line BRT Project Update

Environmental Analysis Phase

The next phase of the project, the Environmental Analysis Phase, is now underway. The Environmental Analysis Phase is expected to take two years (early 2018 to early 2020) to complete and will include the following key tasks:

- Environmental analysis.
- Preliminary engineering.
- Station Area planning.
- Community engagement.

Please see the flyer in the packet for more information about the Project and the environmental analysis phase.

Similar to the last phase, advisory committees are being formed to assist in the decision making process. At the Task Force meeting, RCRRA staff will provide an update on the project and solicit input from the Task Force members.

Action Requested:
Information



B R T

Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit

The Rush Line BRT Project is a proposed 14-mile transit route with stations between Union Depot in Saint Paul and downtown White Bear Lake. The Rush Line BRT will:

- Run seven days a week from early in the morning to late at night.
- Arrive every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes other times.
- Provide fast and reliable transit service.
- Have stations with amenities like shelter, light, heat, fare payment machines and real-time departure signs.
- Conveniently connect to METRO Green Line, local and intercity buses and Amtrak® service at Union Depot.
- Connect people to jobs, education, healthcare and recreation destinations.
- Support economic development.
- Serve more than 97,000 people who are diverse in income, race, ethnicity, age, ability and languages spoken. More than 18 percent of these households do not have access to a vehicle.
- Connect to 106,000 jobs within a ten-minute walk of the 20 planned stations.



Photo Credit: Los Angeles Metro

Orange Line BRT, Los Angeles, CA



The Rush Line BRT Project includes further exploration of connector bus service north to Forest Lake, along with other transit system improvements.

Public Input

The Rush Line BRT Project seeks public input on:

- Where should station platforms be placed to best serve transit users and the surrounding neighborhood?
- How are cultural, historic and natural resources maintained within the project area?
- How will communities along the route benefit from this investment?
- How will BRT operate alongside people walking, rolling, biking and driving?
- What kind of development and pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections do we want to see at and near stations?



Health Line BRT, Cleveland, OH

Environmental Analysis

The project is currently in the two-year environmental analysis phase (as shown below). This phase will advance the project's design while seeking to increase the potential benefits of the project and minimize potential social and environmental impacts along the route. Emphasis will be placed on increasing access to and from the BRT stations and thoughtfully planning for new development near stations.

The environmental analysis will follow state and federal processes and result in a document that explains why the project is needed, the alternatives that were considered, the project's impacts to the natural and built environments, and mitigation strategies for those impacts.



Health Line BRT, Cleveland, OH

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROCESS



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rush Line Corridor Task Force Members
FROM: Staff
DATE: November 26, 2018
RE: 2019 Meeting Dates

In 2019, the Rush Line Corridor Task Force will continue to meet every four months on the following dates:

March 28, 2019

July 25, 2019

November 21, 2019 (one week earlier due to Thanksgiving)

Meetings will continue to be held at the Maplewood Community Center in Room C at 3:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Action Requested: Information