



*Rush  
Line*

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March 29, 2018

# ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Agenda

- Welcome and introductions.
- Role of the environmental analysis phase Policy Advisory Committee.
- Election of chair and vice chair.
- Rush Line BRT Project overview.
- Project schedule.
- Environmental analysis phase consultant team, agency stakeholders and advisory committees.
- Environmental analysis phase key tasks.
- Public comment.
- Next Policy Advisory Committee meeting.

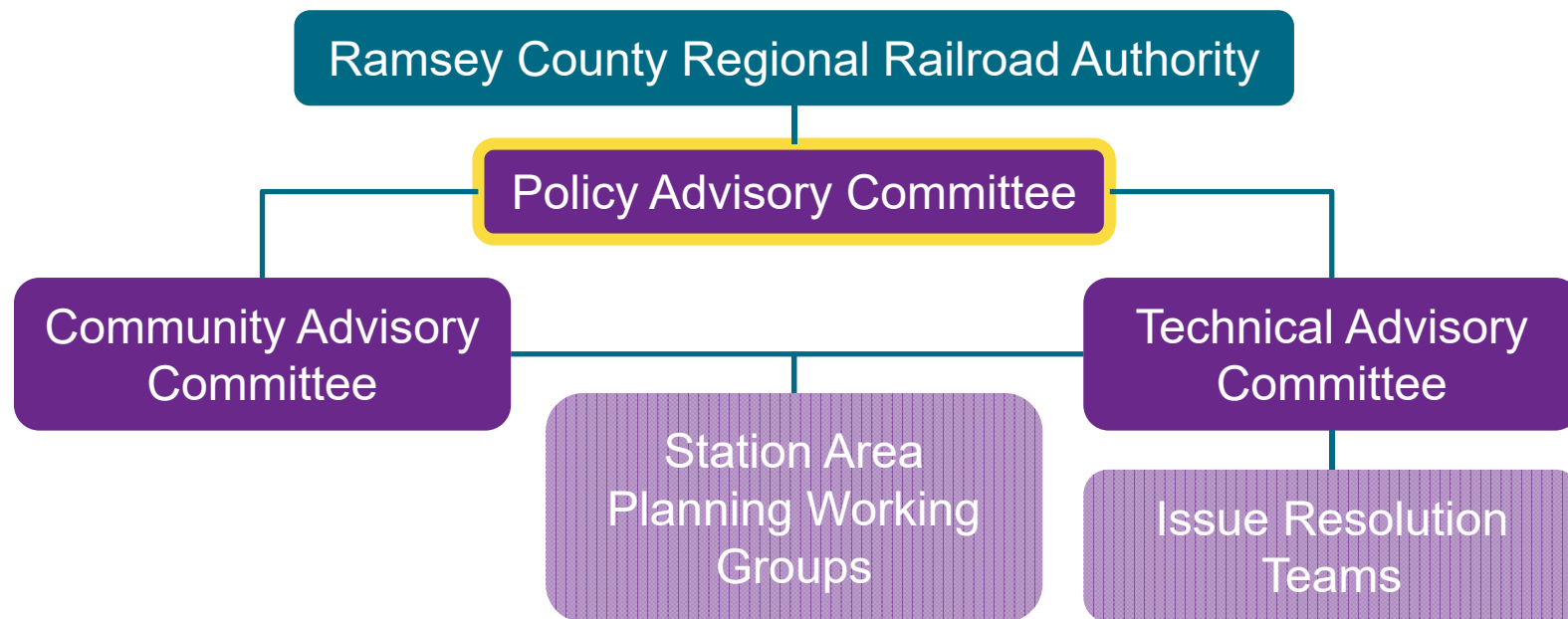
## Role of the Policy Advisory Committee

- Advise the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority on key elements of the Rush Line BRT Project during the environmental analysis phase.
- Identify project-related concerns or issues.
- Assist in the development of solutions, share ideas and expertise and listen and respect viewpoints of others.
- Make recommendations primarily on a consensus basis.
- Vote on key recommendations.
- Attend meetings held every other month.

# Environmental Analysis Phase Advisory Committees and Working Groups



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## Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- Role of chair:
  - Serve for the duration of the environmental analysis phase.
  - Set the agenda.
  - Preside at meetings.
- Role of vice chair:
  - Perform the duties of the chair in their absence.

## Pre-Project Development Study Process

- Examined 55 route segments and 7 types of bus and rail transit vehicles.

A diagram showing the four steps of the Pre-Project Development Study Process as a series of four overlapping arrows pointing to the right. The arrows are stacked vertically, with each subsequent arrow starting further to the right. The colors of the arrows are dark teal, light blue, yellow, and light yellow from top to bottom.

**Define Project Needs, Goals & Objectives**

**Develop Alternatives**

**Evaluate Alternatives**

**Select Alternative**

## Engagement During Previous Phase

- More than 5,200 people participated.
- Held 104 engagement activities:
  - Community events.
  - Workshops.
  - Business outreach.
  - Presentations.
  - Pop-up events.
  - Social media.
  - Online engagement forums.
- Targeted engagement to underrepresented populations.

## Established Purpose and Need

- Purpose:
  - Provide transit service that satisfies the long-term regional mobility needs for businesses and the traveling public and catalyzes sustainable development within the study area.
- Needs:
  - Sustainable growth and development.
  - People who rely on transit.
  - Sustainable travel options are limited.
  - Increasing demand for transit.





## Established Project Goals

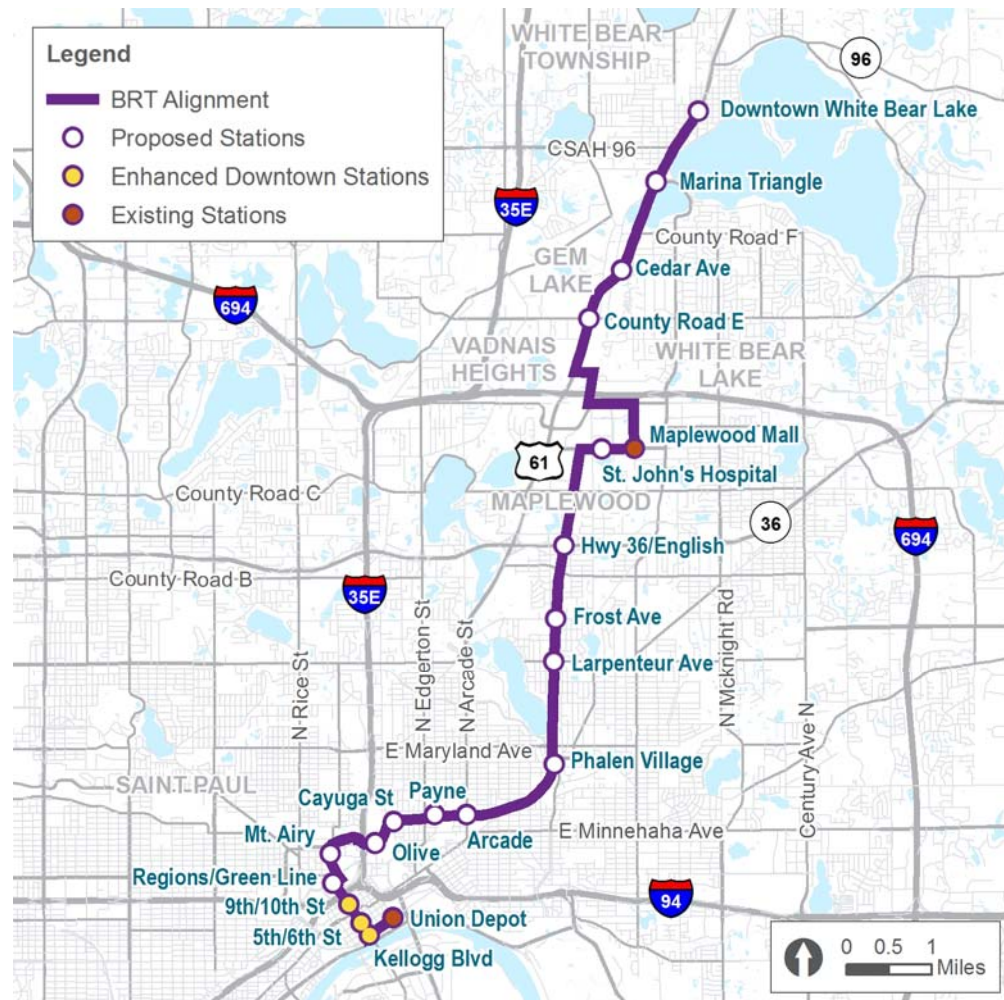
- Increase transit use.
- Develop an implementable project.
- Improve quality of life.
- Improve sustainable transportation options.
- Enhance regional connectivity.
- Support the local vision for sustainable development.

# Locally Preferred Alternative



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- Dedicated guideway BRT.
- Phalen Boulevard and Robert Street into downtown Saint Paul.
- Ramsey County Regional Railroad right-of-way (shared with Bruce Vento Trail).
- Highway 61 north of I-694 into White Bear Lake.
- Explore future connections to the north and other system improvements.



## Why the Locally Preferred Alternative was Selected

- Best meets the project's purpose and need.
- Cost-effective solution.
- Maximizes use of public right-of-way.
- Highest potential ridership.
- Shortest travel time.
- Greatest development potential.
- Serves the most jobs and equity populations.

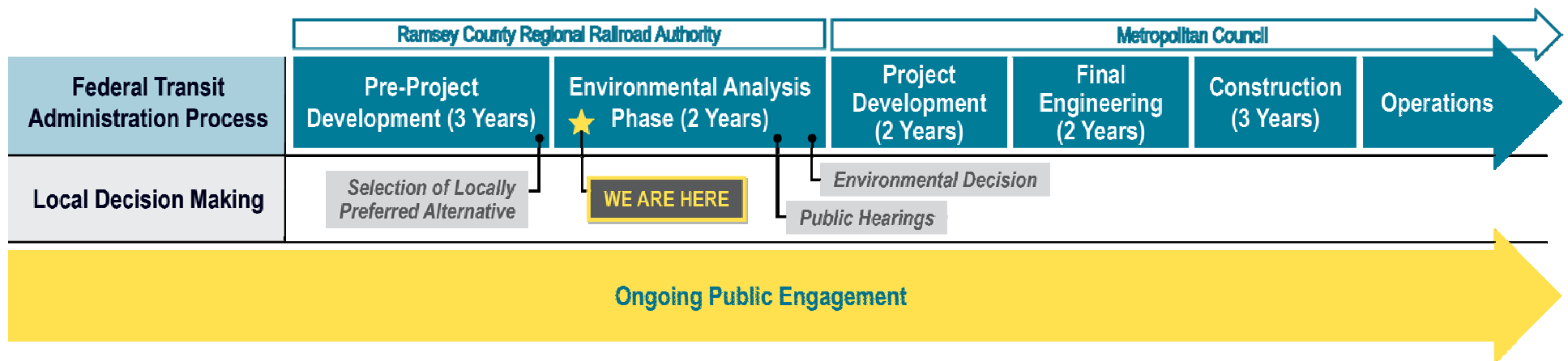
# Transitway Development Process



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## Agency Responsibilities and Coordination

- Federal Transit Administration is lead federal agency.
- Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority leads the project through the environmental analysis phase.
- Metropolitan Council / Metro Transit leads the project through project development, final engineering, construction and operations.
- MnDOT key partner for any state highway impacts.

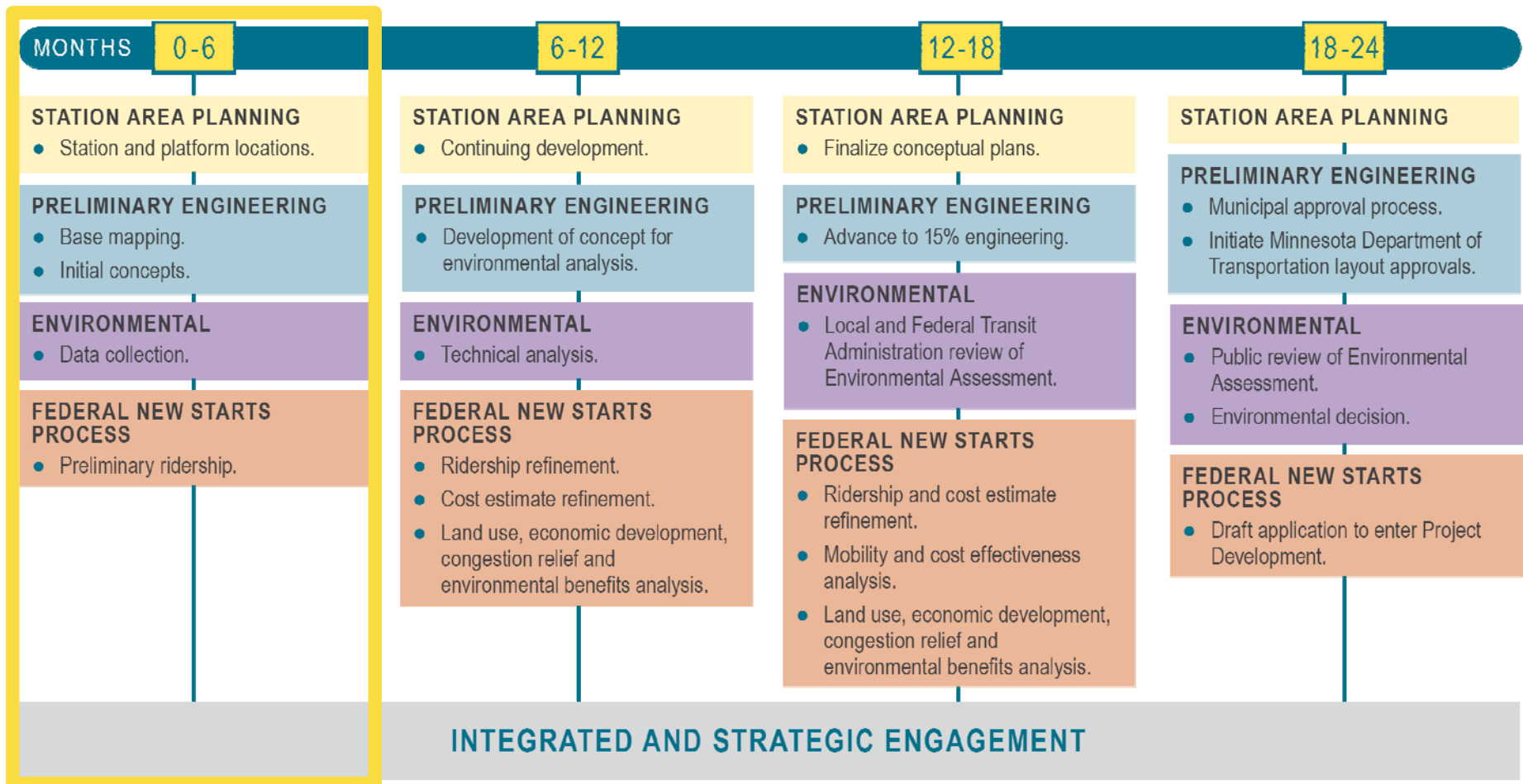
# Environmental Analysis Phase Schedule



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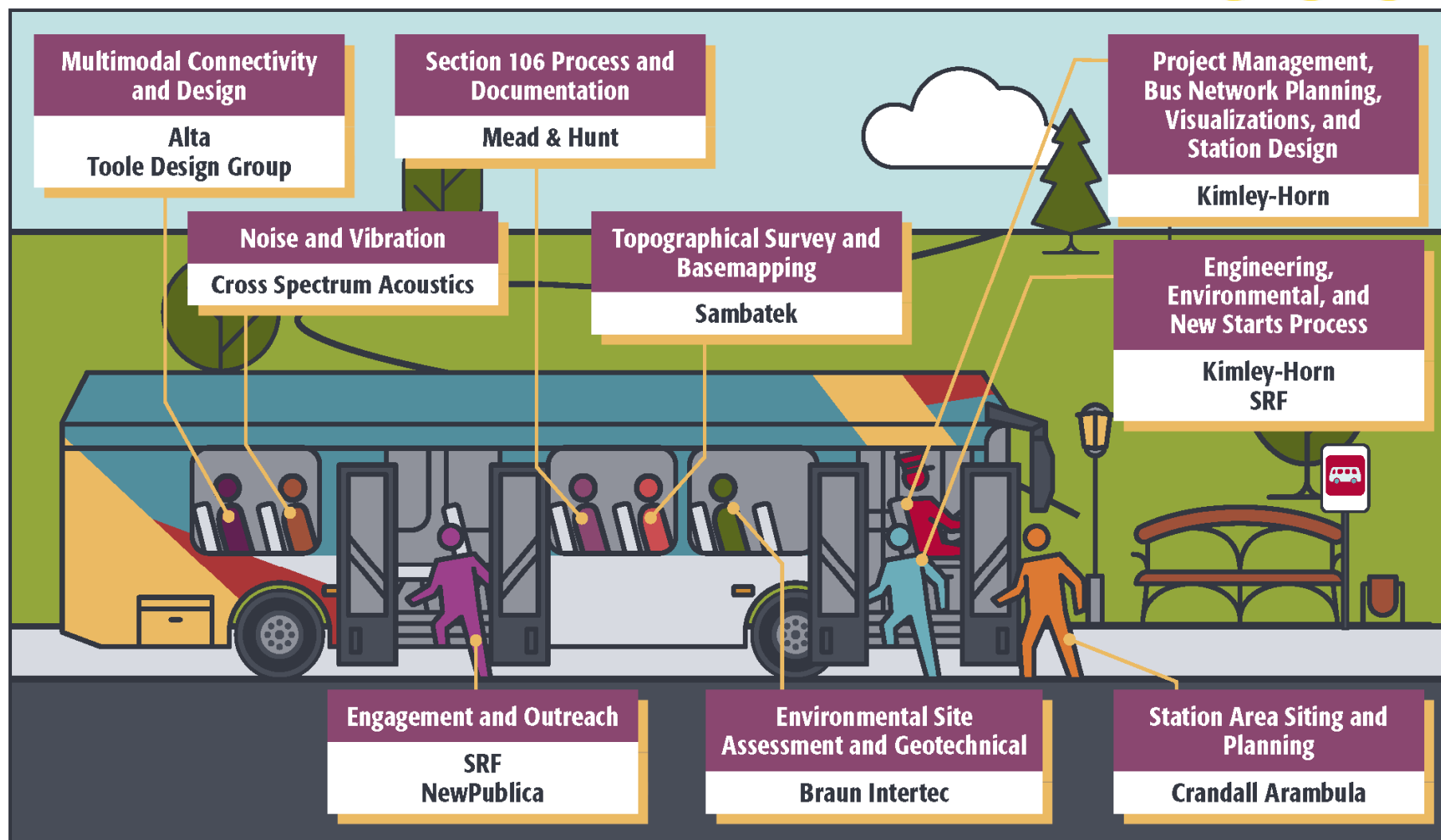
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# Environmental Analysis Phase Consultant Team



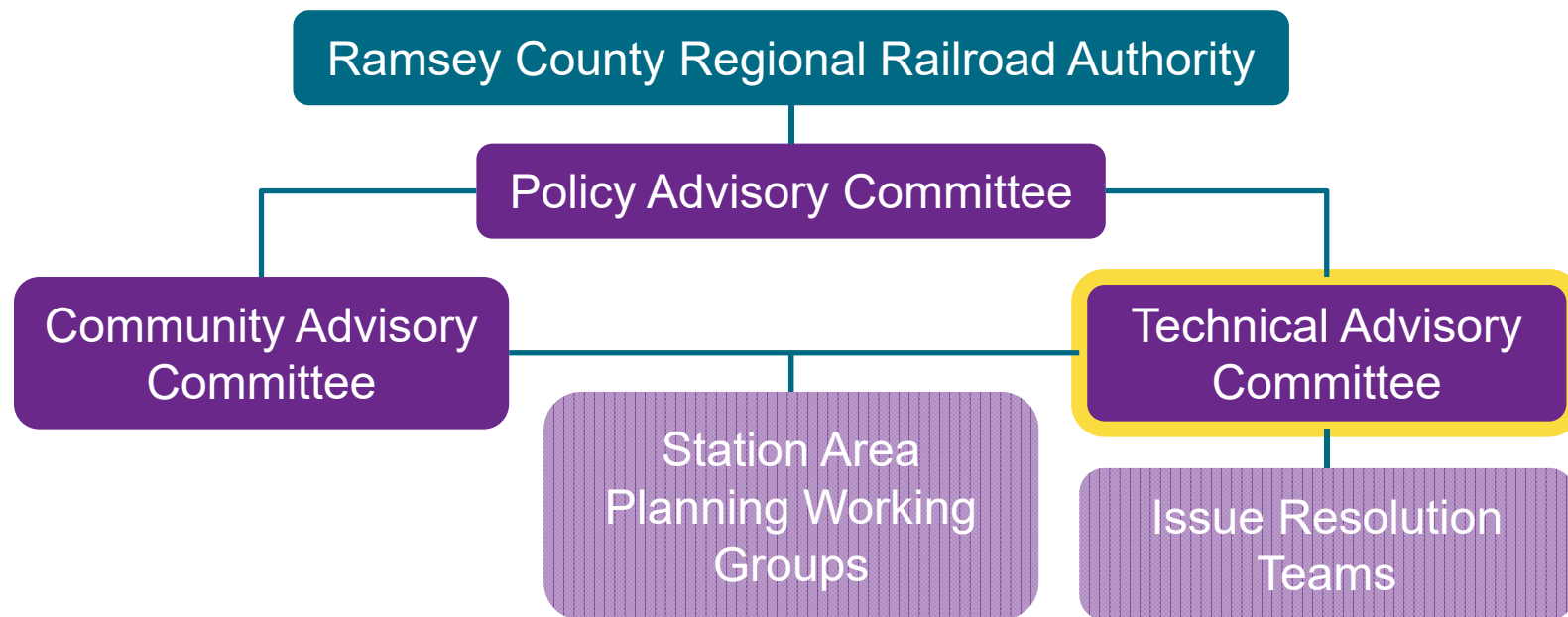
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# Environmental Analysis Phase Advisory Committees and Working Groups



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## Technical Advisory Committee

- Serve as technical advisors to Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority.
- Serve as the liaison to their respective agencies and Policy Advisory Committee members.
- Provide technical recommendations to the Policy Advisory Committee.
- All Technical Advisory Committee members are public sector staff.

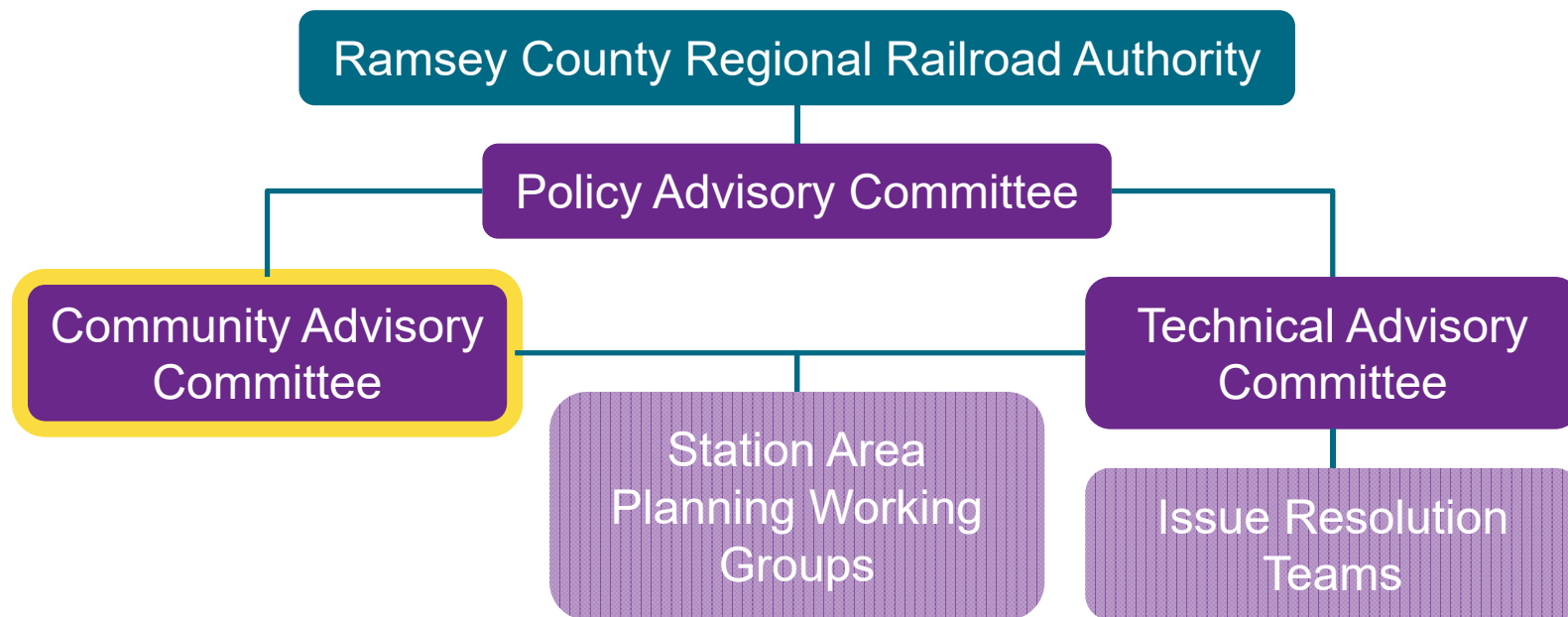
# Environmental Analysis Phase Advisory Committees and Working Groups



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## Community Advisory Committee

- Members to be identified through application process.
  - Release application on March 30.
  - Begin review of applications on April 20 by subcommittee of Policy Advisory Committee.
- Serve as liaison between project and community.
- Advise on engagement techniques, issues of concern and typically under-represented communities.
- Input will be shared with Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee.

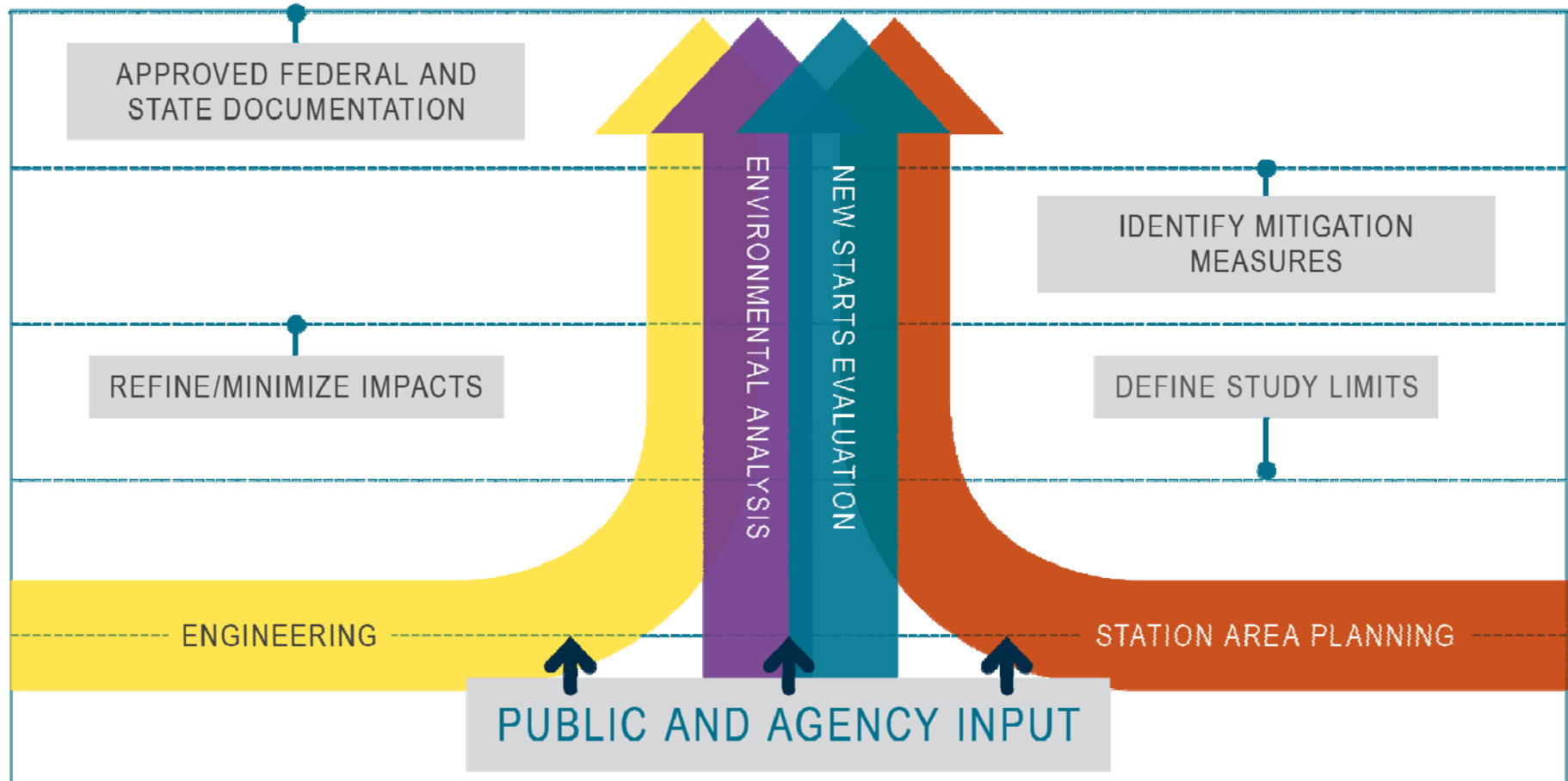
# Environmental Analysis Phase Overview



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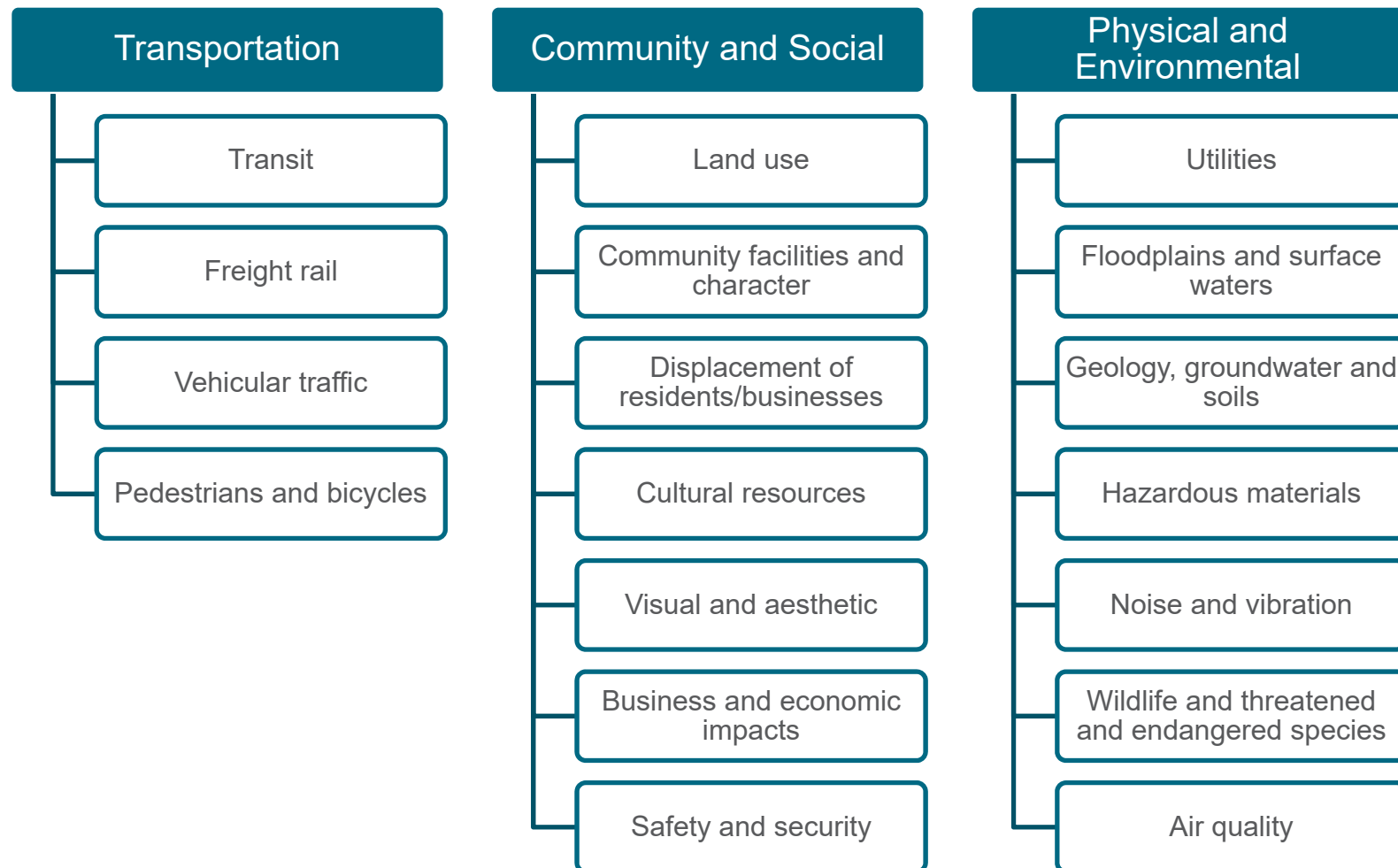
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## Environmental Analysis

- Federal and state environmental review.
  - Federal class of action is an environmental assessment.
  - Environmental assessment worksheet under state review requirements.
- Based on 15% engineering.
- Evaluate impacts to transportation, community and social, and physical and environmental resources.
- Environmental decision.
  - Federal: Anticipated Finding of No Significant Impact.
  - State: Anticipated Negative Declaration.

## Environmental Analysis



## Station Area Planning

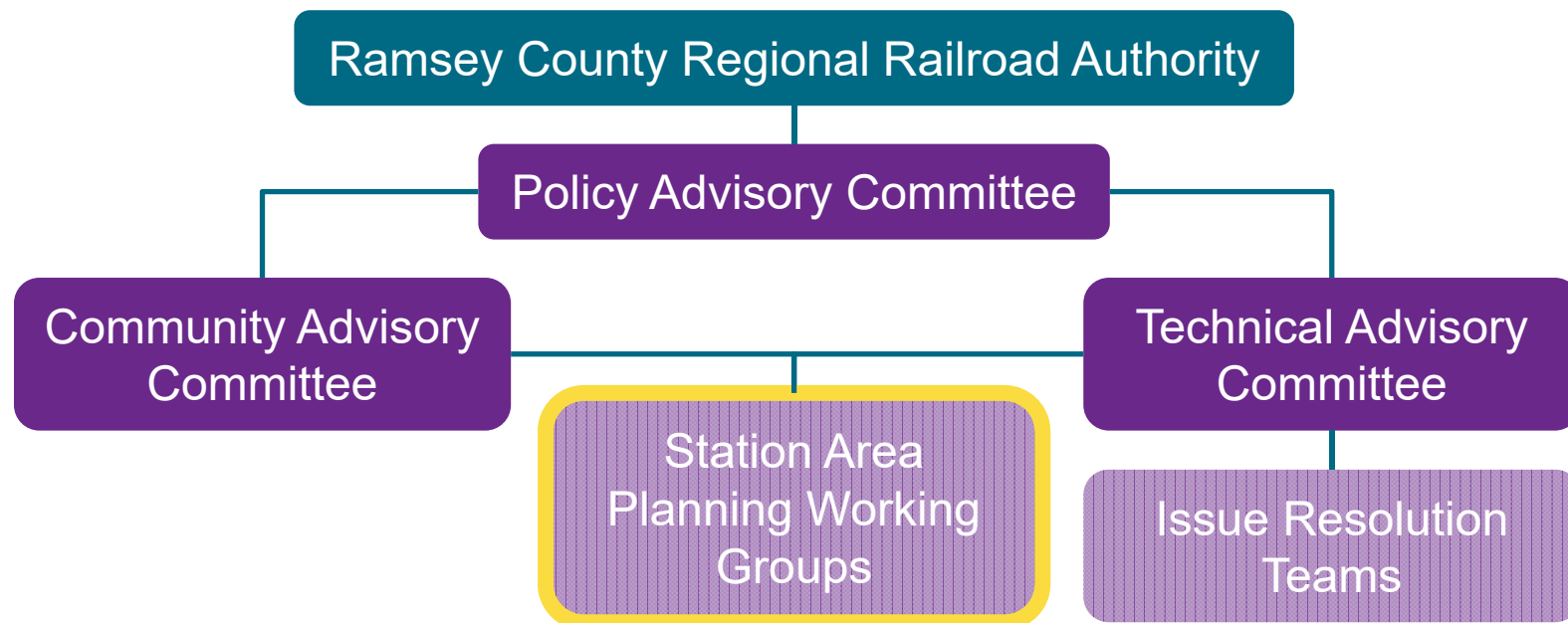
- Station area visioning and station-specific strategies.
- Market assessment.
- Housing, employment and education gap assessment.
- Circulation and infrastructure plans.
- Conceptual station area plans.
- Health impacts evaluation.

***Throughout process work closely with Rush Line  
BRT Project communities***

# Environmental Analysis Phase Advisory Committees



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## Station Area Planning Working Groups

- Based on geography:
  - White Bear Lake.
  - Vadnais Heights and Gem Lake.
  - Maplewood.
  - Saint Paul.
- 10 to 15 participants including city staff, elected officials, residents, advisory committee members, and other key stakeholders as determined through coordination with cities.
- Three meetings in first six months:
  - Issue identification.
  - Review draft concepts.
  - Review final concept.

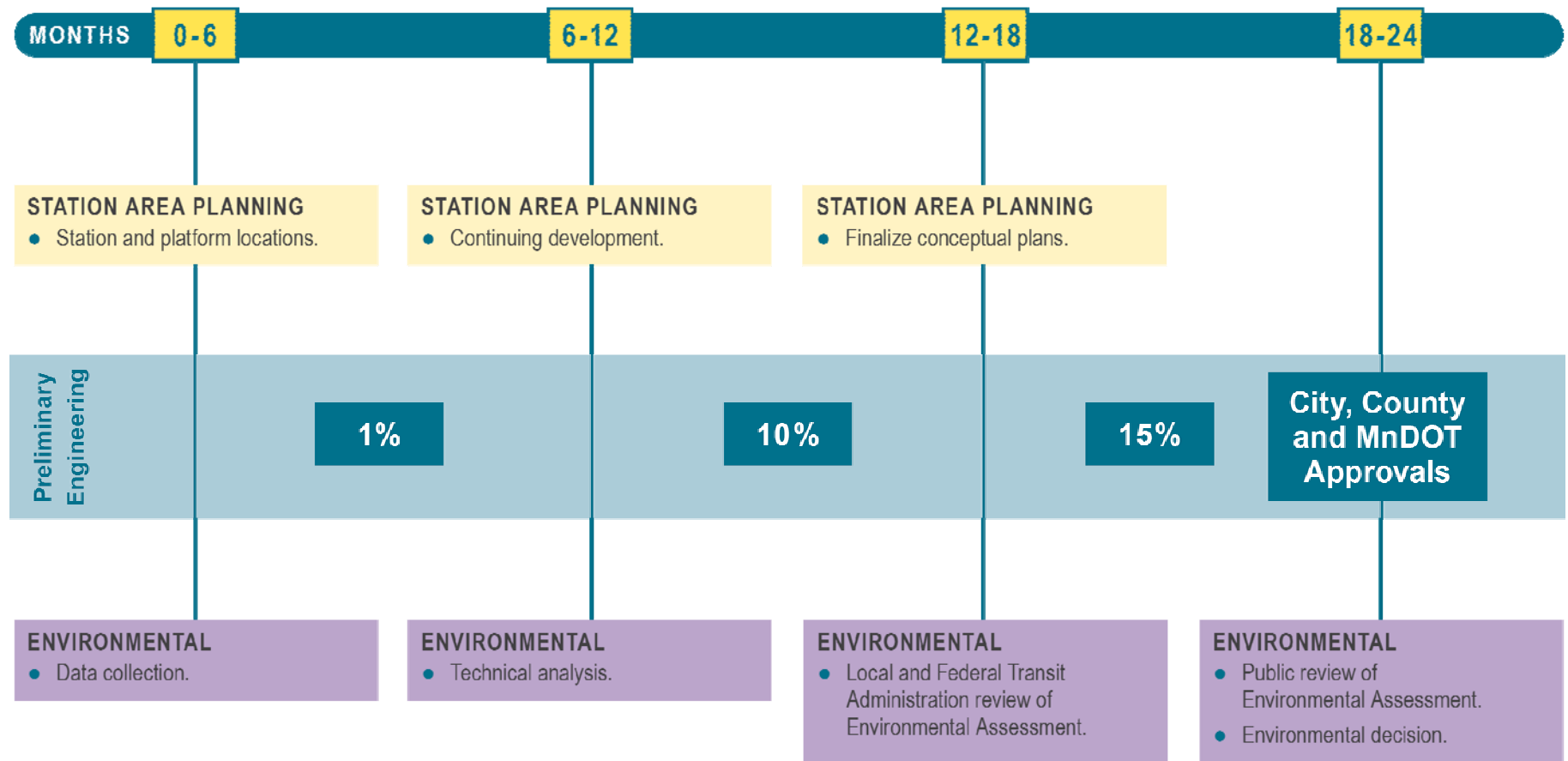
# Engineering



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## Technical Issues

- Use of Highway 61 for dedicated transit.
- Guideway and station placement and design.
- Impacts of mixed-traffic operations.
- Bridges and structures.
- Coordination with other street improvement projects.
- Co-location of guideway and Bruce Vento Trail.
- Examination of requests for alignment and station placement modifications and pedestrian enhancements.

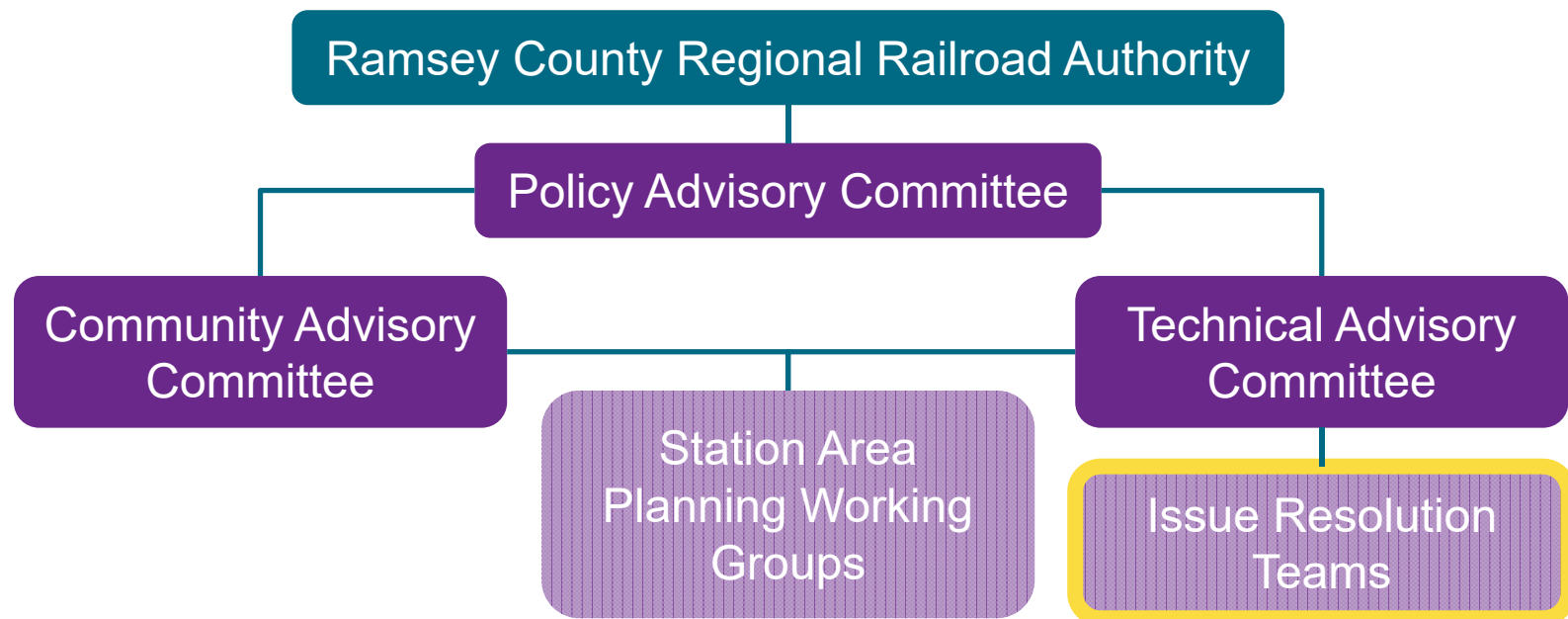
## Technical Issues

- Coordination with station area planning.
- Use of guideway by other bus routes.
- Park-and-ride sizing and locations.
- Connecting bus service.
- Use of railroad right-of-way between I-694 and Buerkle Road.

# Environmental Analysis Phase Advisory Committees



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## Issue Resolution Teams

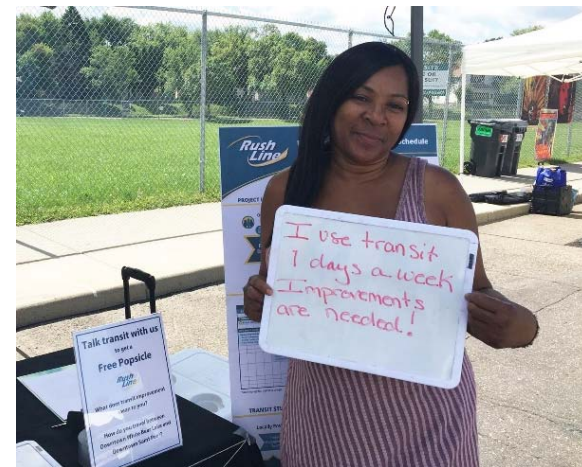
- Formed to effectively address key technical issues.
- Focused and frequent meetings over next six months.
- Agency involvement in technical analysis and recommendations.

## Communications and Public Engagement

- Building on engagement efforts during pre-project development process.
- Goal of ensuring that the concerns and issues of those with a stake in the corridor are identified and addressed.
- Ramsey County's public engagement goal:
  - "Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty through proactive leadership and inclusive initiatives that engage all communities in decisions about our future."

## Communications and Public Engagement

- Diverse corridor with regard to race, ethnicity, income and languages spoken.
  - Latino, Hmong, Karen and Somali communities in the corridor.
- Provide project information to under-represented communities and use their input to inform project decisions.
  - Station locations.
  - Guideway alignment.
  - Environmental impacts.
  - Health impacts.
  - Trail alignment and features.
  - Pedestrian safety.





# Communications and Public Engagement

- In-person methods:
  - Pop-up meetings.
  - Focus groups.
  - Targeted events.
    - Trail rides/walks.
    - Site visits/tours.
  - Updates/briefings.
  - Public forums.
- Online methods:
  - Email.
  - Web.
  - Social media.
  - Surveys.
  - Interactive mapping.



## Communications and Public Engagement

- Communications and Public Engagement Plan.
  - Plan describes goals, strategies, decision-making process and schedule.
  - Plan will be updated periodically to include schedules, strategies and outreach audiences for supporting key decisions and sharing milestones.



## Public Comment

- When commenting, please:
  - Be respectful.
  - Be brief. Limit comments to three minutes to give others an opportunity to speak.
- Public comments will be included in the Policy Advisory Committee meeting summary.
- The Chair reserves the right to limit an individual's comments if they become redundant, disrespectful or are not relevant to the Rush Line BRT Project.

## Next Steps

- Policy Advisory Committee meeting:
  - Thursday, May 24.
  - 3-5 p.m.
  - Maplewood Community Center.



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**Thank you!**

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