

RED ROCK

C O R R I D O R



Newsletter 4, Summer 2007

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC INPUT

RED ROCK CORRIDOR OPEN HOUSES

- August 21, 4:00 to 7:00pm at St. Anthony Park Library
- August 22, 4:00 to 7:00pm at Hastings City Hall
- August 23, 4:00 to 7:00pm at Cottage Grove City Hall
- September 11, 4:00 to 7:00pm at Red Wing Public Library

See back cover for details.

www.redrockcorridor.com



Residents and business owners learned about the Red Rock Corridor at previous project open house meetings.

RED ROCK CORRIDOR

The Red Rock Corridor runs along Highway 61 and Interstate 94 from Hastings through St. Paul, connecting to downtown Minneapolis. Long-term plans for implementing commuter rail in the Corridor are underway, as well as short-term plans for improving transit services and building a strong base for transit use.

WHAT IS COMMUTER RAIL?

Commuter rail is passenger train service that operates during peak travel times on existing freight railroad tracks. Trains typically run inbound to the city center in the morning and outbound to suburban areas in the evening. The Northstar Corridor, which is currently under construction, running from downtown Minneapolis to Big Lake, will be the first commuter rail corridor in the Twin Cities.



THE NEED FOR TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

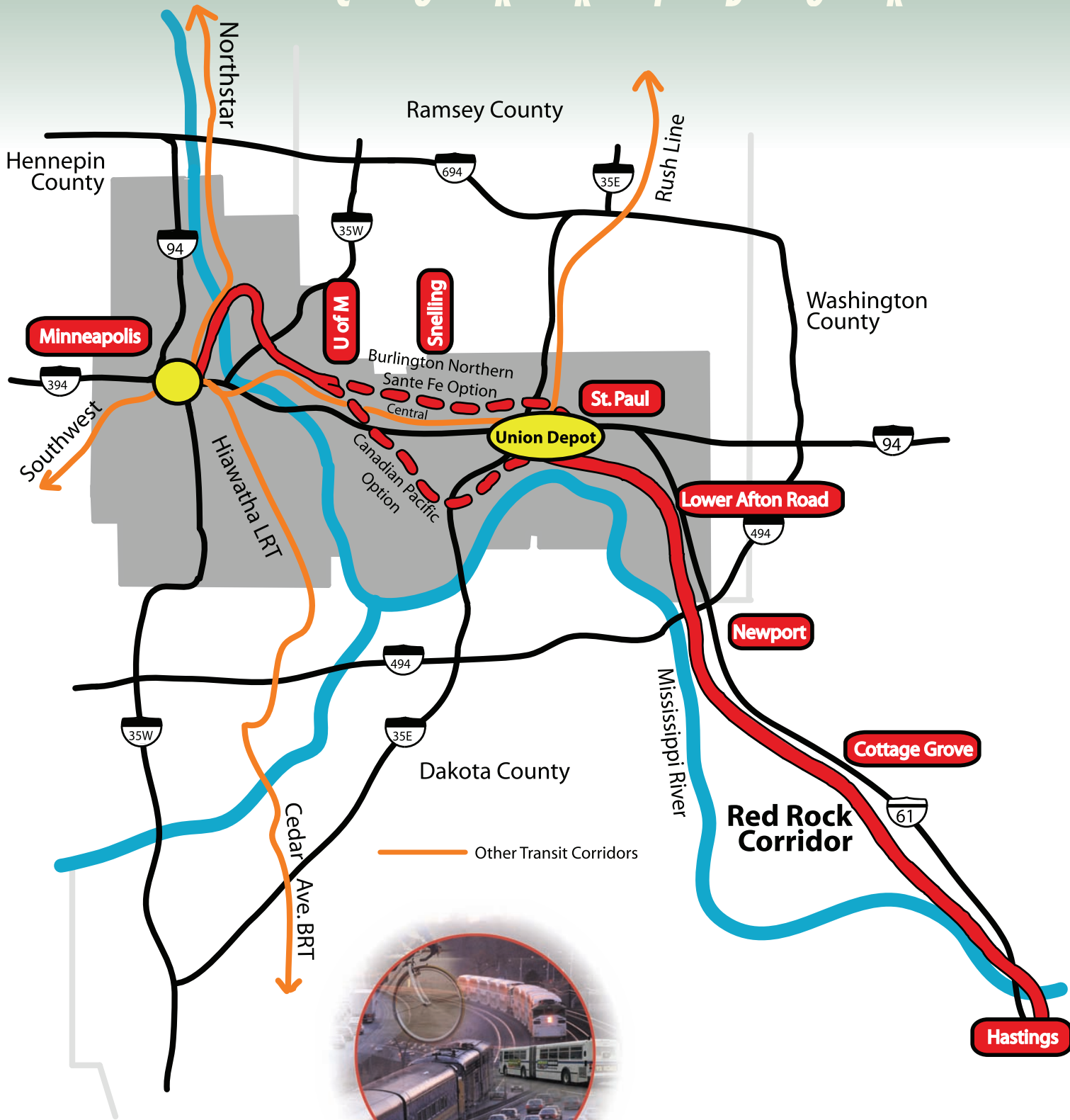
The Red Rock Corridor Commission is nearing the completion of a transit alternatives study in the increasingly congested Red Rock Corridor. The study shows that as traffic continues to grow, so too will the demand for mass transit services.

- Commute times from Hastings to St. Paul are projected to increase from 47 minutes in 2005 to 62 minutes in 2030.
- Population in the Corridor is projected to grow nearly 30% from 2000 to 2030, with the highest levels of growth in Cottage Grove, Hastings and Newport.
- Employment in downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis is expected to grow by nearly 85,000 positions by 2030.
- Demand for commuter bus service is expected to continue to grow.
- Transit improvements in the Corridor would help commuters avoid congestion, save energy, reduce travel time, and improve their quality of life.

BUILDING MOMENTUM

RED ROCK

C O R R I D O R



THE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY

The Alternatives Analysis Study evaluated several transit options for cost-effectively addressing transportation problems in the Corridor, including building commuter rail, expanding express bus service, and increasing the frequency of current bus service.

STUDY RESULTS

The preliminary results of the Alternatives Analysis Study reveal that expanding bus service, increasing bus frequency and providing more park and ride facilities are the first steps toward building a stronger transit base in the Corridor. This stronger base is a key component in the phasing of Corridor improvements prior to the construction of commuter rail.

STUDY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- Minnesota's Union Depot in downtown St. Paul will serve as a major transit hub.
- Capital costs for commuter rail are projected to be \$350 million in today's dollars between Hastings and St. Paul. Annual operating costs are projected at \$6.7 million.
- Average daily commuter rail ridership from Hastings to Minnesota's Union Depot is projected to be 1,600 in 2030, a number Commission members hope to increase through interim transit improvements.
- Increasing frequency of service on regular and express bus routes significantly increases projected bus ridership.

A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WILL BUILD A STRONG TRANSIT BASE

The Commission is seeking public input on the project's next steps which may include:

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

- Conduct a bus feasibility study to evaluate the costs and benefits of additional bus service.
- Work with municipalities so that land use planning accommodates future transit improvements.
- Pursue additional park and ride facilities.
- Pursue state and federal funding.
- Evaluate extending the Corridor to Red Wing and the Prairie Island Indian Community.
- Advocate for High Speed Rail service from Chicago to the Twin Cities.

INTERMEDIATE STRATEGIES

- Reevaluate commuter rail ridership and cost data after Northstar Corridor Commuter Rail is in operation.
- Conduct environmental and engineering work for commuter rail service.
- Complete the implementation of recommendations from the bus feasibility study.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

- Open service for High Speed Rail.
- Construct Red Rock Corridor Commuter Rail.

"Hastings is working hard to ensure the City is transit-friendly now and in the future. We need all our citizens to engage in the planning process so that transit is integrated into the City's 2030 vision."

Paul Hicks
Mayor, City of Hastings

RED ROCK CORRIDOR COMMISSION MEMBERS

Myra Peterson, Chair
Commissioner
Washington County
Regional Railroad Authority

Joe Harris, Vice-Chair
Commissioner
Dakota County
Regional Railroad Authority

Jim McDonough
Commissioner
Ramsey County
Regional Railroad Authority

Mark Stenglein
Commissioner
Hennepin County
Regional Railroad Authority

Paul Hicks
Mayor
City of Hastings

Jim Keller
Town Board Member
Denmark Township

Sandy Shiely
Mayor
City of Cottage Grove

John Hunziker
Mayor
City of St. Paul Park

Emily White
Council Member
City of Newport

Lee Helgen
Council Member
City of St. Paul

Cam Gordon
Council Member
City of Minneapolis

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Ron Allen
Commissioner
Goodhue County

Bob Kastner
City of Red Wing

Marc Mogan, Tribal Engineer
Prairie Island Indian Community
Canadian Pacific Railway

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RED ROCK CORRIDOR

THE RED ROCK CORRIDOR COMMISSION INVITES YOU TO AN OPEN HOUSE

RIDING THE BUS TO AN OPEN HOUSE?

Contact Metro Transit's
Trip Planner:
www.metrotransit.org
or 612-373-3333.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS & LEARN ABOUT:

- Commuter rail and bus transit alternatives
- The need for transit improvements in the Corridor
- High Speed Rail from Chicago to the Twin Cities

OPEN HOUSE DATES & LOCATIONS

- **August 21**, 4:00 to 7:00pm
St. Anthony Park Library
2245 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108
- **August 22**, 4:00 to 7:00pm
Hastings City Hall
101 4th Street East, Hastings, MN 55033
- **August 23**, 4:00 to 7:00pm
Cottage Grove City Hall
7516 80th St. S., Cottage Grove, MN 55016
- **September 11**, 4:00 to 7:00pm
Red Wing Public Library
225 East Avenue, Red Wing, MN 55066

*A presentation will be given at 6:00pm
at each location.*

*"Rail is a part of our future and
is essential to maintaining the
vitality of our communities.
Attend an open house and tell us
what you think about the vision
for the Corridor."*

Myra Peterson
Red Rock Corridor Commission Chair



Washington County RRA
11660 Myeron Road North
Stillwater, MN 55082