



WHAT IS THE RUSH LINE CORRIDOR?

The Rush Line Corridor begins at Minnesota's Union Depot in downtown St. Paul and generally follows Highway 61 and Interstate 35E/35 north for 80 miles to Hinckley. Traffic forecasts show that, by 2020, congestion on I-35E/I-35 will increase by 25 percent south of I-694; by 65 percent between White Bear Lake and Hugo; and by 50 percent north of Hugo.

TASK FORCE

A joint powers organization was created in 1999 for the corridor. The 24-member Task Force includes the regional railroad authorities of Anoka, Chisago, Pine, Ramsey and Washington counties; and 19 cities and towns along the corridor. Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt is the Task Force chair.

COMMUTER BUS SERVICE

In October, the Rush Line Corridor Task Force selected an express commuter bus service scenario and voted to request capital and operating funding from the state Legislature in the 2008 session. The selected scenario, coach bus service from the North Branch area to downtown St. Paul, would have stops in Forest Lake and the White Bear Lake area, as well as several stops in St. Paul, including Minnesota's Union Depot, and possibly the Capitol complex and Lafayette Park area. Additionally, Metro Transit has announced plans to institute commuter bus service between the Forest Lake park-and-ride and downtown Minneapolis in January 2008 in the wake of the I-35W bridge collapse.

STATE FUNDING REQUEST

The Task Force is seeking \$700,475 in state operational funding in 2008 to launch the bus service, as well as \$1 million in state bonding for bus facility improvements, such as park and rides.



ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

A separate study of longer-term transit options in the corridor, including the potential for commuter rail service, is also under way. That study is expected to conclude in 2009. The yearlong process is the first step in securing Federal Transit Administration New Starts funding for transit improvements. For more information, visit the Corridor's new Web site, www.rushline.org.

PREVIOUS TRANSIT STUDY

A study of potential transit improvements in the corridor was completed in September 2001. Short-term improvements were recommended to improve mobility in the corridor. Longer-term improvements, including commuter rail

and a busway, were also analyzed and recommended for implementation at a later time.

The Rush Line Corridor has received federal and state funds to implement study recommendations. Funds have gone to the Maplewood Mall Transit Center (partially funded), to purchase two vanpool vans, to a park-and-ride lot at the new CSAH 17 and I-35 interchange, and to a Transit Center in Forest Lake.

CONTACT

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