



Agenda

Gateway Corridor Commission

October 13, 2016 - 3:30 PM

Woodbury City Hall, Birch Room
8301 Valley Creek Road
Woodbury, MN 55125

Note: There will be a DEIS Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting at 2:00 pm on October 13 at Woodbury City Hall (immediately preceding the Gateway Corridor Commission meeting).

<u>Item</u>	<u>Action Requested</u>
1. Introductions	Information
2. Consent Items	Approval
a. Summary of August 18, 2016, Meeting*	
b. Checks and Claims*	
3. Action on Draft Locally Preferred Alternative*	Approval
4. 2017 Work Plan Discussion*	Discussion
5. Communications Update*	Information
6. Draft Environmental Impact Statement Update*	Information
8. Other	Information
a. Meeting Dates Summary*	
b. Social Media and Website Update*	
c. Media Articles*	
8. Adjourn	Approval

*Attachments

**Gateway Corridor Commission
Draft August 18, 2016 Meeting Summary
Woodbury City Hall, Birch Room**

Members	Agency	Present
Rafael Ortega	Ramsey County	X
Lisa Weik	Washington County	X
Mary Giuliani Stephens	Woodbury	X
Dan Kyllo	West Lakeland Township	
Jane Prince	St Paul	X
Randy Nelson	Afton	X
Mike Pearson	Lake Elmo	
Paul Reinke	Oakdale	X
Bryan Smith	Maplewood	X
Amy Williams	Lakeland	X
ALTERNATE MEMBERS		
Victoria Reinhardt, Alternate	Ramsey County	
Richard Bend, Alternate	Afton	
Paul Rebholz, Alternate	Woodbury	
Anne Smith, Alternate	Lake Elmo	
Dave Schultz, Alternate	West Lakeland Township	X

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	Present
Scott Beauchamp	St Paul Chamber of Commerce	
Paris Dunning	East Side Area Business Association	X
Ed Schukle	Landfall Village	
Randy Kopesky	Lakeland Shores	
Bill Burns	Oakdale Area Chamber of Commerce	
Tim Ramberg	WI Gateway Coalition	
Doug Stang	3M	
Jason Lott	Woodbury Chamber of Commerce	
Lisa Palermo	Woodbury Chamber of Commerce	
Greg Watson	Woodbury Chamber of Commerce	X
Matt Kramer	St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce	
Scott Nelson	St. Croix County Highway Department	

Others	Agency	Present
Jan Luke	Washington County	
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County	X
Hally Turner	Washington County	
Sara Allen	Washington County	X
Andy Gitzlaff	Ramsey County	X
Tom Cook	Metropolitan State University	X
Will Schroeer	East Metro Strong	X

Brian McClung	MZA+Co	X
Linda Stanton	CAC	X
Bob Tatreau	Woodbury resident	X
Janelle Schmitz	City of Woodbury	X
Josh Straka	Congresswoman McCollum	X
Sonia Piper	MnDOT	X
Blake Slette	MnDOT	X

The Gateway Corridor Commission convened at 3:33 p.m. by Chair Weik.

Agenda Item #1. Introductions

Introductions were made by those present.

Agenda Item #2. Consent Items

Item 2a. Summary of June 23, 2016, Meeting:

Motion made by Mayor Williams to approve the June 23, 2016, meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Nelson. All were in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Item 2b. Checks and Claims: Motion made by Councilmember Smith to approve the checks and claims. The motion was seconded by Mayor Williams. All in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #3. East Metro Strong Vision

Mr. Schroeer provided an overview of East Metro Strong, a two year old public/private partnership between eastern counties, cities, large employers, and philanthropic groups. The organizational purpose of East Metro Strong is to work together in order to advance transit investment in the region. Transit investment is seen as not only a method for the efficiency of movement – but as foundation and draw for additional economic development in the East Metro. While the West Metro is commonly seen as attracting more development because of growth, Mr. Schroeer clarified that percentage-wise, the East Metro is actually projected to have larger rates of growth. Chair Weik noted that if this was inaccurately perceived locally, the perception must also be inaccurate at the state legislative level.

East Metro Strong supports expanding transit investment by leading and supporting stakeholders in the growing East Metro in vision creation, and working collaboratively to educate and advocate for towards the resulting vision. The vision is used as a resource to make a case for transitway development and funding, community comprehensive planning, and planning in and around future station areas. Mr. Schroeer described the visioning process and noted the unanimity of the conversation: people from all parts of the region wanted transportation choices, unique character and sense of place in their communities, and minimized sprawl. Visioning analysis performed by a consultant resulted in maps of population density, projected and targeted growth patterns, assets and opportunities, as illustration of where the market can reward places built as ‘transit ready’. The East Metro Strong board approved vision for growth resulted in 36% growth in asset areas, and 8% growth in non-asset areas.

Commissioner Weik commented on Greater MSP economic competitiveness data presented, showing Washington County behind other metro counties in the average number of jobs reachable within 30 minutes by public transit or walking. The Commissioner stated that the numbers from 2014 do not reflect more recent

departures of major corporations Hartford, Imation, and ECMC an education management company, and asked if there was a trend in the County's loss of corporate jobs. Mr. Schroeer explained a national employer trend showing movement to areas with transit accessibility, and higher walk scores. Regional competitiveness means providing more opportunities for transit and walkable accessibility in the East Metro.

Chair Weik opened the floor for questions.

Chair Weik noted that Mr. Schroeer had testified in the past to the state legislature on bonding requests, and was well informed on legislative agenda items. The Chair stated that it was helpful to have East Metro Strong, Mr. Schroeer, consultants, and national resources available to assist in planning processes.

Mr. Dunning asked Mr. Schroeer about integration of East Metro Strong information into the comprehensive planning process, and for advice on how to prepare for completion by the 2018 deadline. Mr. Schroeer detailed an exercise undertaken by the consultant to add up all current comprehensive planned growth in the East Metro, which showed an amount of single family detached development exceeding market demand.

Ms. Leitner reiterated that in addition to East Metro Strong, an additional resource for Gateway Gold Line BRT is the awarded 1.3 million dollar Federal Pilot Program TOD Grant, allowing targeted small area planning surrounding station areas throughout the corridor. The funding to be dispensed in the coming month. Chair Weik noted instrumental assistance from Representative Betty McCollum for the awarded grant.

Agenda Item #4. Communications Update

Mr. McClung provided a briefing on press activity covering information released during the PAC meeting earlier in the day, the Pioneer Press was present to cover the meeting and interviewed Mayor Guiliani Stephens and Chair Weik. A press release was issued immediately following the PAC meeting to encourage public involvement on new routing options under consideration in Oakdale and Woodbury. Lillie Suburban News, MPR, and the Woodbury Bulletin also provided coverage of the potential routing options.

Active engagement and assistance had been provided to the East End Working Group during discussion of new potential alignment options. An E-newsletter to be sent on Friday, August 19 to share information about the East End alignment discussion. The previous E-newsletter released on June 22 linked to an online questionnaire regarding the East End alignment, and garnered approximately 120 responses from businesses and residents. Mr. McClung noted a vast majority, roughly 75%, provided positive responses and expressed support for Gold Line BRT.

Mr. McClung reported a lot of government relation activity following the conclusion of the 2016 legislative session on May 23 that convened without the passage of a tax or bonding bill. The potential Special Session to resolve the outstanding bills had not been called at the time of the meeting. Thus, government relation efforts will likely largely focus on the 2017 legislative session, set to begin January 3. A case will be made for \$3 million dollars in planning funds for Gold Line BRT, a project which has bipartisan support in the legislature, and both DFL and Republican proposal authors.

Community outreach in the upcoming four months to focus on the east end alignment and Dayton's Bluff to ensure opportunities to hear from residents, businesses, and community organizations, both in-person and in a community meeting format.

Social media audiences have grown on Gold Line BRT Facebook and Twitter accounts, and Mr. McClung

encouraged everyone to follow and share social media posts. Between July 14 and August 10, over 1,400 people were reached on Facebook, demonstrating how valuable this channel is for sharing project updates. The top Tweet the project shared was about the Snelling A Line BRT, receiving 1,300 impressions.

Chair Weik noted the timeline of the project had been pushed back into spring 2017 as a result of the January 2016 Lake Elmo decision, and asked if current lawmakers had been updated about project status. Mr. McClung responded that funding from CTIB and the Federal government has kept the project on track, however, lawmakers have been kept informed about Gold Line in the event of a special session, and the Communication team continues to communicate regularly with key legislators. Ramsey and Washington County delegations to hold direct discussion on project updates. Mr. McClung reported positive feedback from key legislators on new potential routes in Oakdale and Woodbury. Chair Weik emphasized that the Commission continuing with work into the New Year on the formalization and passage of a new LPA, and submission of the DEIS document to the FTA.

Chair Weik opened the floor for questions. No questions.

Agenda Item #5. Draft Environmental Impact Statement Update

Ms. Leitner briefly summarized the work that had taken place, focusing mostly in the Dayton's Bluff and Eastern End of the corridor. A memo was distributed in the Commission packet with a summary of all DEIS activities to have taken place in the past several months. The project is shifting to a public engagement process and technical information process focused on the most promising route – from Helmo Ave. in Oakdale to Bielenberg Dr. in Woodbury. The project team working to ensure the routing option meets local goals and is federally competitive, and finalized in the DEIS. The FTA requested a robust DEIS document review schedule, which was to be sent immediate following the meeting. The speed of the process depends on FTA review from a technical and legal perspective.

Chair Weik noted the working relationship, with FTA region 5 and the D.C. contingent, was a good one. FTA has previously toured the former alignment, and Chair Weik asked if FTA staff would want to tour the new route option along Helmo and Bielenberg. Ms. Leitner responded that FTA staff visit quarterly; their next visit scheduled for November. The project team have offered to provide staff with a tour of the new route, or any other portion of the corridor that will assist in review of the DEIS document. FTA Pilot TOD grant will assist in refinement and identification of station areas, further discussion to be had regarding station names.

Chair Weik opened the floor for questions. No questions.

Agenda Item #6. Other

Item 6a. Meeting Dates Summary:

Ms. Leitner announced there would not be September PAC or Commission meetings, but PAC meetings were necessary in October, November and December. Further information to be provided on future Commission meetings for those months.

Item 6b. Social Media and Website Update:

Ms. Leitner referred to the update Mr. McClung provided earlier, stating that the Orange Line video on the Gold Line YouTube channel experienced an uptick in views, for a current count of 3,500.

Item 6c. Media Articles:

Ms. Leitner detailed the inclusion of Gold Line into a University of Minnesota study about transit, with

Washington County Workforce Development also providing information for the piece.

Chair Weik asked for additional comments.

CAC member Linda Stanton asked about the length of the new route option. Ms. Leitner explained the new route was 2-3 miles shorter than the previous LPA, from 9 to 12 miles.

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 PM

DRAFT



Agenda Item #2b

DATE: October 4, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Checks and Claims

DEIS Contract (Kimley Horn)

July, 2016	\$90,599.43
August, 2016	\$60,481.72

Contract Utilization = 87%

Communications Contract (MZA+Co)

July, 2016	\$6,150.00
August, 2016	\$9,878.62

Contract Utilization = 70%

Total **\$167,109.77**

Detailed invoices can be made available upon request.

Action Requested:

Approval



Agenda Item #3

DATE: October 5, 2016

TO: Gateway Corridor Commission

FROM: Staff

RE: Action on Draft Locally Preferred Alternative and Routes to Study in Environmental Document

Over the past few months, the Commission and corresponding technical, community, and policy groups have been working to determine a new preferred route through Oakdale and Woodbury. Prior to the Commission meeting, the PAC will be asked to make a draft recommendation based on TAC and CAC input for the locally preferred alternative (LPA). Staff will provide the Commission with an update on the PACs recommendation and the Commission will be asked to make a draft recommendation on the LPA and which alternative(s) to study in the environmental document.

The draft LPA will be released for public comment and a public hearing will be held on November 10 gather further input. The public comment period will be from October 13 to November 13. A final recommendation will be made at the December Commission meeting. The Cities of Oakdale and Woodbury and Washington County will need to pass resolutions of support before the Metropolitan Council will amend the Transportation Policy Plan.

Action

Approval of the draft Locally Preferred Alternative for public comment and the alternative(s) to study in the environmental document.



Agenda Item #4

DATE: October 4, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Gateway Corridor Commission 2017 Work Plan Discussion

Staff is beginning the process to update the work plan and budget for 2017 Gateway Corridor Commission activities. Below are the typical categories of work that are in each year's work plan. As the project transitions to the state for Project Development, staff would like input from the Commission on 2017 work plan items to include for budgeting purposes. The budget will be developed directly from the feedback the Commission provides on the work plan.

Typical Work Plan Categories:

- Collaboration/Partnerships
- Public Involvement
- Advocacy and Outreach
- Studies
- Capital Projects
- Management, Policy, and Administrative Activities

The 2016 work plan is attached to this memo for reference.

Action: Discussion on 2017 work plan in order to begin work plan and budget process

Gateway Corridor Commission

2016 Final Work Plan and Budget

1. Collaboration / Partnerships

The Gateway Corridor Commission “the Commission” will work with corridor municipalities, the Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB), the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Federal Agencies, the University of Minnesota and public-private partnerships such as East Metro Strong to promote the advancement of the Gateway Corridor. To accomplish this, the Commission will do the following:

1. Offer guidance, monitor progress and prepare formal comments on studies that are being conducted or that could have an impact on the activities in the Gateway corridor.
2. Work with CTIB, state and local agencies to identify regional priorities for the corridor.
3. Coordinate activities with the University of Minnesota through their Humphrey School of Public Affairs, the Center for Transportation Services (CTS) and the Transitways Impacts Research Program (TIRP).
4. Work with the public-private partnerships such as East Metro Strong to catalyze job growth and economic development opportunities within the Gateway Corridor
5. Work with the communities along the corridor to collaboratively plan for future transit improvements in the Gateway Corridor and the surrounding land uses within the station areas.

2. Public Involvement

The Commission’s public involvement activities will be developed to increase the awareness of the corridor, the Commission, the importance of investing in transit in the corridor and the need for regional equity. These activities will supplement the outreach work being performed by the DEIS consultant. Specific activities will include:

1. Utilize and implement recommendations from the Strategic Communication Plan.
2. Develop and grow a supporter base email distribution list.
3. Present to civic and community groups, businesses and chambers of commerce, and local agencies throughout the Corridor.
4. Distribute materials including press releases, newsletters, fact sheets, and other public information items.
5. Identify media recognition opportunities of Commission meetings and events though print, radio, and public access television.
6. Maintain / update the project website as new information about or affecting the corridor becomes available.

3. Advocacy and Outreach

The Commission will advocate for improved transit to serve the Corridor and the Twin Cities region. In addition to advocacy, the Commission will reach out to other interested parties who are also working towards improvements in the Gateway Corridor. Commission activities include:

1. Advocacy
 - a. Develop a legislative coordination strategy to inform local, state and federal elected officials of the need for transitway improvements in the Gateway Corridor and build bi-partisan support for the project.
 - b. Leverage the Gateway Corridor Project's inclusion on the Federal Permitting Dashboard to increase awareness of the importance of the project at the State and Federal level.
 - c. Promote increased transit funding to improve and expand the existing transit service in the Corridor.
 - d. Establish positions and specific requests on legislative initiatives that affect the Gateway Corridor.
2. Outreach
 - a. Identify and establish communication and action plan with the business community along the corridor.
 - b. Engage the various and diverse community and business groups along the corridor.
 - c. Coordinate with the western Wisconsin communities, Wisconsin DOT, and Wisconsin legislature on issues that impact the corridor in both states.
 - d. Coordinate initiatives with other joint powers coalitions, the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and other regional planning groups.

To aid in advocacy and outreach activities, the Commission will continue to utilize the services of a communication consultant in 2016. Some of the key items that the communications consultant will assist with would include:

- Strategic messaging and material development
- Assist in broadening social media reach and activities
- Website architecture and maintenance
- Media relations strategies and engagement
- Community engagement with a primary focus on the business community
- Legislative Coordination
- Updating of the Commission's strategic communication plan as necessary
- Supplement the outreach work being performed by the DEIS consultant specifically at key milestones including the publishing of the DEIS

4. Studies

Draft Environment Impact Statement (DEIS)

The Commission began the DEIS for the corridor in May 2013. The study is expected to be completed by early 2016. The purpose of the DEIS is to conduct a full and open evaluation of environmental issues and alternatives, and to inform decision-makers and the public of reasonable alternatives that could avoid or minimize adverse impacts and enhance the quality of the environment. The Commission reached a major milestone in 2014 with the identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and the completion of the scoping phase of the DEIS study. More detailed environmental analysis and engineering refinements will take place in 2016 along with additional public engagement and the initiation of station area planning work. The next milestone for 2016 is the publishing of the DEIS document.

Project Support Activities

Project Support Activities are needed in 2016 to maintain momentum into the Project Development Phase (PD) when the project will transition to the State as the Project Sponsor. The proposed work activities include completion of the DEIS, preparation of materials to support the project's request for entry into Project Development, additional federal and state permit coordination, station area

planning work and public engagement. This work will overlap to allow project support activities to wrap up as the PD engineering consultant is gearing up their work, allowing for a smooth transition between phases.

Station Area Planning

Gateway Corridor Gold Line BRT has received a grant from the Federal Transit Administration for transit-oriented development planning assistance. These funds will be used to assist the counties and cities along the corridor in more extensive station area planning in 2016.

5. Capital Projects

Project Development

Project Development (PD) is the next phase in the federal transitway development process. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and preliminary engineering are completed during this phase. Project sponsors must apply to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to enter the PD phase and must complete the PD phase within 2 years. A request to enter PD is expected to be submitted in spring 2016 and approved summer 2016. The PD phase will go from summer 2016 to summer 2017. The Gateway Corridor project will transition to the State as the project sponsor at the start of PD. The Commission will continue to provide a supporting role as a representative group of key project stakeholders.

6. Management, Policy, and Administrative Activities

Commission activities will include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Prepare and adopt a yearly Work Plan and Budget
2. Prepare annual financial statements
3. Contract with an independent auditor to perform the annual audit
4. Review insurance needs and procure appropriate insurance
5. Provide Commission and staff administration
6. Manage Commission expenses
7. Manage the consultants selected for any of the various work tasks undertaken by the Commission

Commission Priorities for 2016

- Oversee and guide the work of the DEIS consultant in the preparation of environmental document, station area planning and public engagement.
- Oversee and guide the work of the Commission's communication consultant in the execution of the Commission's strategic communication plan
- Support Washington County's request for state bond funding for project development in the 2016 State Legislative Session.
- Develop and implement a legislative coordination strategy to inform local, state and federal elected officials of the need for transitway improvements in the Gateway Corridor.
- Continue to actively engage the business community, community advocacy groups, and the various other stakeholders in the corridor.



Agenda Item #5

DATE: October 5, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Brian McClung, MZA+Co
RE: Gateway Corridor Communications and Government Relations Update

Since the Gateway Corridor Commission meeting in August, we have been actively engaged with our community outreach, government relations and communications activities.

Government Relations – Throughout the summer we continued to be in close contact with key legislators and staff to make the case for including \$3 million in planning funds for Gold Line BRT should there be a compromise bonding bill in a Special Session. On September 23, four months after the conclusion of the regular legislative session, Governor Dayton sent a letter to Speaker Daudt declaring that negotiations regarding a Special Session had met an impasse and he would not be calling legislators back this year.

Strategic Communications – We issued a press release on August 18 regarding the new possible routes in Oakdale and Woodbury. We received excellent coverage from that press release including:

- Saint Paul Pioneer Press: [New Gold Line alternative route takes a turn south in Woodbury](#)
- Star Tribune: [Gold Line busway may end up in Woodbury](#)
- Woodbury Bulletin: [New Gold Line may end at Woodbury Village](#)
- KSTP-TV: [New Route Proposed for Gold Line in East Metro](#)
- Lake Elmo-Oakdale Review: [New bus rapid transit route considered for Oakdale, Woodbury](#)

We sent out e-newsletters on August 25, September 9 and September 28. We have been seeking input on the east end alignments and sharing information about outreach opportunities, including the Oct. 5 Open House in Oakdale.

On September 1, Governor Dayton came to Woodbury for a community roundtable discussion with local officials, business leaders and residents at Woodbury City Hall about Gold Line BRT.

Governor Dayton said regarding transit that he believes "we have to have an expanded metro system if we're going to have a viable region economically and socially." He said he would include \$3 million for Gold Line BRT planning in his next budget. The Governor's visit and commitment to support Gold Line BRT resulted in positive news coverage:

- Woodbury Bulletin: [Gov. Dayton to give \\$3 million boost for Gold Line bus project](#)
- KSTP-TV: [Dayton to Weigh In on Proposed Gold Line Project](#)

We've also met with the editor of the Woodbury Bulletin and have a meeting scheduled with the Pioneer Press editorial board.

Community Outreach – We have had some good community outreach activities over the last several weeks, including the Open House in Oakdale on October 5 and a meeting with the Woodbury Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee on September 22. We continue to reach out to organizations, businesses and non-profits in the community.

Social Media – We have done significant work to build new audiences on social media and have had good success in this area. Since beginning our new @GoldLineBRT twitter account on March 25, we have tweeted 134 times. We now have 139 followers.

Our recent top tweet earned 937 impressions – it was a tweet sharing information about the Open House in Oakdale (a good sign that people are sharing the info!)

In the last four weeks we had 12.3K tweet impressions, in September we had 16.6K tweet impressions (and a top tweet about Gov. Dayton's support for Gold Line that earned earned 1,702 impressions) and in August we had 14.9K tweet impressions.

Facebook also continues to be a very strong outreach tool for us. We reached 3,189 people on Facebook between Sept. 7 and Oct. 4.

DATE: October 5, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Jeanne Witzig, Kimley-Horn
RE: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Update

Key Work Activities/Progress from mid-August to mid-October 2016

▪ Meetings

- *Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)* – The PAC met on August 18, 2016. The meeting focused on findings from the East End and Dayton’s Bluff working groups.
- *Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)* – The TAC met on September 21, 2016. The meeting focused on the east end alignment. The TAC made a recommendation on the alignment/alternative to advance for further evaluation in the environmental document along with the draft LPA.
- *Community Advisory Committee (CAC)* – The CAC met on September 27, 2016. The meeting focused on findings from the East End and Dayton’s Bluff working group meetings, and upcoming project decision/schedule. The CAC provided input on the alignment/alternative to advance for further evaluation in the environmental document along with the draft LPA.
- *Project Management Team (PMT)* – The PMT met on September 8, 2016 to review coordination and working group activities, discuss level of environmental review and action items relative to refinements of the capital and operating costs.
- *East End Working Group* – The working group met on August 31, 2016. The meetings focused on the working groups recommendation on the alignment to advance for further evaluation.
- *On Site Meeting with FTA* – An onsite meeting was held with Mark Assam, FTA Region 5 on September 8. Key items discussed included: potential changes to the project definition since Scoping, environmental class of action, and preliminary impact findings, along with overall schedule.
- *Meetings with MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit (CRU)*– Meetings were held on August 31 and September 14 to review overall 106 process, approach, and schedule.

- *City of St. Paul Fire Marshall*– A meeting was held on August 17, 2016 with the St. Paul Fire Marshall to discuss proposed design elements on Hudson Road in St. Paul.
- *City of Oakdale Council Briefing* – A Council briefing was held on September 13, 2016. Key items discussed included the findings from the East End Working Group and recommendation.
- *Open House* – An open house was held on October 5, 2016 to review the alignments/stations considered east of I-694.
- **Other Project Activities**
 - Prepared DRAFT East End Technical Memo for review by the TAC.
 - Initiated work on the Dayton’s Bluff Decision Making Document.
 - Continued to refine the capital and operating cost estimates to reflect comments provided at the January 2016 Cost Workshop.
 - Advanced the technical analysis for the environmental document.
 - Advanced Section 106 activities, focusing on the Dayton’s Bluff Local Historic District area and the new area of potential effect associated with the proposed alignment/stations in Oakdale and Woodbury.
 - Advanced the refinement of the concept plans for the environmental document.
 - Coordination with reviewing agencies.
 - Initiated work on corridor video.
 - Weekly coordination with KHA/SRF project team and Washington County. Respond to individual requests for project information, as needed.

Upcoming Activities

- Advance the preparation of the environmental document, including responding to local comments on draft documents.
- Finalize the concept plans to support the environmental analysis.
- Prepare corridor video.
- Initiate work on preliminary Land Use and Economic Development evaluation (preliminary New Starts rankings)
- Prepare for LPA Public Hearing in November.
- Prepare supporting background information for LPA decisions by the TAC and PAC in November and December, respectively.
- Continued Section 106 survey form and report activities and coordination with MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit (CRU).
- Prepare for and attend upcoming meetings with Washington County staff, PMT, TAC, PAC, GCC, CAC, and FTA.



Agenda Item #7

DATE: October 5, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Other Items

Items 7a. Engagement and Meeting Dates Summary

Included below is a summary of the upcoming Commission and DEIS Study meetings. The engagement meetings that have taken place and are upcoming are attached to this memo.

Month	Meeting	Date	Planned Start Time
November	Commission (if needed)	November 10	4:00pm
November	PAC and Public Hearing	November 10	Open house 5:30pm Public Hearing 6:30pm
December	PAC	December 8	2:00pm
December	Commission	December 8	3:30pm

Item 7b. Social Media Updates

Facebook

The Gateway Corridor Facebook page was launched on Monday, February 20, 2012. The page currently has 595 'Likes'. There have no instances during the reporting period where comments have been removed in line with the Commission's social media policy.

YouTube

The "views" of the Gateway Corridor videos ranges from 8-3,780.

Twitter

The Gateway Corridor Twitter account (@GoldLineBRT) was launched in March 2016. The account currently has 139 followers.

Item 7c. Media Articles

Attached are media articles about the Gateway Corridor from the last month.

Action Requested: Information.



The Gateway project team has been arranging outreach meetings to stakeholders along the corridor. These stakeholders range from local community city councils, council districts, business chambers, individual businesses, community groups and others. Included below is a summary of the Commission's outreach activities in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

Upcoming Outreach

Stakeholder	Status
3M Bicycle Users Group	October 19, 2016
Public Hearing	November 10, 2016

Previous Outreach

Stakeholder	Status
Open House	October 5, 2016
Woodbury Big Truck Event	September 24, 2016
Oakdale Touch a Truck	September 13, 2016
King of Kings Church Men's Group	September 13, 2016
Oakdale City Council Workshop	September 13, 2016
Woodbury Commercial and Residential Property Meetings	September 12, 2016
St. Paul Youth Services	July 7, 2016
Woodbury Rotary Club	July 14, 2016
Oakdale Planning Commission	May 5, 2016
East Metro Equity Roundtable	April 13, 2016
District 1 Community Council	March 21, 2016
Oakdale Ridership Meeting	March 9, 2016
Ramsey Co/St. Paul Community Health Services Advisory Committee	March 2, 2016
Oakdale Environmental Meeting	February 24, 2016
Oak Meadows Senior Living	February 4, 2016
Oakdale Community Meetings	January 21 and 28, 2016
Living Healthy Washington County	January 20, 2016
Lake Elmo City Council	January 5, 2016
Woodbury City Council	December 9, 2015
Oakdale Neighborhood Meetings	December 7, 8, 17, 2015
Senate Bonding Presentation	December 1, 2015
ESABA Lunch and Learn	November 12, 2015
Washington County Realtor Forum	October 20, 2015
Joint Woodbury/Cottage Grove City Council	October 20, 2015
Oakdale Community Meeting	October 15, 2015
Woodbury City Council Workshop	October 14, 2015
Oakdale City Council	October 13, 2015
DC Trip	October 7-8, 2015



St. Paul Chamber of Commerce	September 17, 2015
Lake Elmo City Council	September 15, 2015
Lake Elmo Planning Commission	September 14, 2015
E Segment Public Hearing	September 10, 2015
East Side Enterprise Center	Presentation, August 25, 2015
7 th Street Live	Booth, August 21, 2015
Lake Elmo Open House	Open House, August 19, 2015
Oakdale HOA	Presentation, August 17, 2015
Oakdale Farmers Market	Booth, August 5, 2015
St. Paul Youth Services	Presentation, August 5, 2015
National Night Out – Conway Rec Center	Booth, August 4, 2015
District 1 Community Council	Presentation, July 27, 2015
Landfall Open House	Open House, July 23, 2015
Woodbury Chamber Public Affairs Committee	Presentation, July 23, 2015
CAC	June 24, 2015
District 4 Community Council	Presentation, July 20, 2015
Building Owners and Managers Association	Booth, June 15, 2015
East Side Area Business Association	Presentation, June 11, 2015
Saint Paul City Council Transitway Workshop	Workshop, June 10, 2015
Ramsey Co/St. Paul Community Health	Presentation, June 3, 2015
CAC	Meeting, June 2, 2015
Living Healthy Washington County	Presentation, May 20, 2015
Wilson Apartment Building	Meeting, May 18, 2015
Opus (Carlson Business Park Owner)	Meeting, May 12, 2015
Lake Elmo City Council	Workshop, May 12, 2015
E. 7 th Street Placemaking	Discussion, May 12, 2015
Guardian Angels Finance Committee	Meeting, May 6, 2015
Washington County Public Health staff	Presentation, April 24, 2015
Lafayette Business Park Commuter Fair	Booth, April 23, 2015
Carlson/Oaks Station Property Owner	Meeting, April 22, 2015
Gateway Corridor Development Forum	Forum, April 14, 2015
East Metro Strong Lake Elmo Workshop	Workshop, April 13-14, 2015
Ramsey County Environmental Health Staff	Presentation, March 30, 2015
African American Leadership Forum	Meeting, March 16, 2015
HIA Workshop	Workshop, March 13, 2015
Senate Transportation Committee	Tour, March 5, 2015
Oakdale Chamber	Presentation, March 5, 2015
Ramsey Co/St. Paul Community Health	Presentation, March 4, 2015
Legislative Breakfast	February 27, 2015
St. Paul Station Planning Task Force	Meeting, February 17, 2015
St. Paul Historic Preservation committee	Presentation, February 12, 2015
Stillwater Lion's Club	Presentation, February 10, 2015
Oakdale City Council	Workshop, February 10, 2015



Governor Briefing	Meeting, February 9, 2015
Bus Tour with Chair Duininck	Tour, January 6, 2015
St. Paul Station Planning Task Force	Workshop, February 5, 2015
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting, January 29, 2015
Washington County Public Health Community Leadership	Presentation, January 21, 2015
St. Paul Station Planning Task Force	Meeting, January 6, 2015
Maplewood Planning Commission	Presentation, December 16, 2014
River Valley Action Forum	Presentation, December 9, 2014
ESABA Gala	Table – December 4, 2014
St. Paul Station Planning Task Force	Workshop, December 2, 2014
Legislative Strategy Meeting	November 13 and 21, 2014
Met Council – Committee of the Whole	Presentation, November 12, 2014
Maplewood Station Planning Meeting	November 7, 2014
Lake Elmo Station Planning Meeting	November 6, 2014
Dayton’s Bluff Community Meeting	November 6, 2014
Oakdale Station Planning Meeting	November 6, 2014
Partnership for Regional Opportunity-TOD Committee	Presentation, November 3, 2014
Woodbury Station Planning Meeting	October 31, 2014
District 4 Community Council New Moon Celebration	Flyers/booth – October 30, 2014
St. Paul Station Planning Meeting	October 27 and 30, 2014
Washington County Regional Rail Authority	October 7 th , 2014
Globe University – Welcome Day for Students	Booth – October 1 st , 2014
Woodbury City Council	September 24 th , 2014
Oakdale City Council	September 23 rd , 2014
Maplewood City Council	September 22 nd , 2014
Lake Elmo City Council	September 16 th , 2014
Washington County Regional Rail Authority	Public Hearing- September 16 th , 2014
Metro State University Fall Fest	Booth-September 13 th , 2014
Landfall City Council	September 10 th , 2014
Lake Elmo City Council	Workshop-September 9 th , 2014
Oakdale City Council	Workshop-September 9 th , 2014
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority- Public Hearing	Presentation-September 9 th , 2014
Saint Paul Planning Commission	Update -September 5 th , 2014
Woodbury Rotary Club	Presentation – September 4 th , 2014
Bruce Vento Elementary-Back to School Night	Booth-August 27 th , 2014
City Walk Board (Woodbury)	Presentation-August 27 th , 2014
Metropolitan Council-Transportation Policy Plan Outreach	Booth-August 26 th , 2014
Oakdale City Council Workshop	Workshop – August 26 th , 2014
Maplewood City Council Workshop	Workshop – August 25 th , 2014
St. Paul Transportation Committee	Presentation – August 25 th , 2014
Metro State University-Welcome Day	Booth-August 20 th , 2014
Lake Elmo Property Owners along I-94	Presentation/discussion-August 14 th , 2014
Landfall City Council Workshop	Presentation-August 13 th , 2014



LPA Public Hearing	Public Hearing – August 7 th , 2014
National Night to Unite-several Woodbury neighborhoods	Booth-August 5 th , 2014
National Night to Unite- Dayton’s Bluff, Saint Paul	Booth-August 5 th , 2014
Primrose/City Walk Businesses (Woodbury)	Presentation-July 31 st , 2014
Community Thread-Stillwater	Update-July 29 th , 2014
St. Paul District 1 Community Council	Presentation – July 28 th , 2014
Woodbury Chamber Public Affairs Committee	Presentation – July 24 th , 2014
Wabasha Street Block Party	Booth – July 24 th , 2014
ESABA Bowling Tournament	Booth – July 24 th , 2014
Landfall Planning and Finance Committee	Presentation – July 8 th , 2014
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – June 30 th , 2014
Orange Line Tour	Field Trip – June 25 - 27, 2014
Make it Happen on E. 7 th St. Night Out Business & Community Fair	Event Presence – June 20, 2014
FTA Tour and Workshop	Tour and Presentation – June 20 th , 2014
District 4 Community Council	Presentation – June 16 th , 2014
Green Line Opening	Booth at Depot/Wanderers – June 14 th , 2014
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – June 3 rd , 2014
Target Station Opening	Booth – May 17 th , 2014
National Train Day	Booth – May 10 th , 2014
Future of 4 th Event	Booth – May 8, 2014
St. Transportation Summit	Booth – May 6, 2014
Woodbury Expo	Booth – May 3, 2014
St. Paul Port Authority	Presentation – April 17, 2014
Corridor Cities and Market Analysis Consultant	Meetings - Week of April 14, 2014
Met Council Transportation Committee	Presentation - April 14, 2014
Globe University – Students	Presentations – April 9, 2014
Engage East Side – Gateway Event	Presentation/Panel – April 8, 2014
Globe University – Staff	Presentation – March 28, 2014
Gateway Day at the Capitol	One-on-ones - March 26, 2014
DEIS Scoping Open House, Conway Rec Center	Open House – March 25, 2014
DEIS Scoping Open House, Guardian Angels	Open House – March 24, 2014
District 1 Community Council Open House	Booth – March 22, 2014
Interagency Scoping Meeting	Meeting – March 20, 2014
River Valley Action	Presentation – March 18, 2014
FHWA	Meeting – March 13, 2014
Landfall HRA	Presentation – March 12, 2014
Environmental Quality Board	Meeting – March 12, 2014
Park and Rides	Flyer handout – March 12, 2014
Legislative Strategy	Meeting – February 28, 2014
Engage East Side – Gateway Event	Meeting – February 25, 2014
Washington County Board	Workshop – February 25, 2014



Gateway Legislative Kick-Off Breakfast	Meeting – February 20, 2014
Guardian Angels Finance Committee	Meeting – February 19, 2014
Legislative Strategy	Meeting – February 14, 2014
Policy Advisory Committee/Commission	Meeting – February 13, 2014
Woodbury Chamber	Presentation – February 12, 2014
FTA Call	Call – February 12, 2014
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – February 10, 2014
D1/D2 Open House	Open House – February 6, 2014
St. Paul Area Chamber	Presentation – February 6, 2014
Harley Davidson	Meeting – February 3, 2014
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – January 29, 2014
Legislative Strategy	Meeting – January 3, 2014
Washington County Administrators	Presentation – January 22, 2014
St. Paul East Side Groups	Meeting – January 21, 2014
TAC Staff from Woodbury, Oakdale, and Lake Elmo	Meeting – January 9, 2014
Driving tour of Corridor w/ Senator Housley	Tour – December 27, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – December 18, 2013
“Get to Know Woodbury” Realtors event	Booth – December 18, 2013
3M Staff	Meeting – December 16, 2013
Policy Advisory Committee	Meeting – December 12, 2013
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – December 9, 2013
FHWA Staff	Meeting – December 6, 2013
Fostering an East Side Transit Conversation	Transit Summit – December 5, 2013
District 2 Community Council	Presentation – November 20, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – November 20, 2013
FTA Conference Call	Meeting – November 13, 2013
Fostering an East Side Transit Conversation	Town Hall – November 7, 2013
MnDOT, Met Council, County leadership	Meeting – November 1, 2013
FTA Tour	Tour – November 1, 2013
St. Paul District 1 Community Council	Presentation – October 28, 2013
Landfall	Meeting – October 25, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – October 16, 2013
Lake Elmo	Presentation – October 15, 2013
MnDOT/Met Council/County Staff	Meeting – October 11, 2013
East Side Area Business Association	Presentation – October 10, 2013
East Side Partners	Meeting – October 8, 2013
Policy Advisory Committee	Meeting – October 10, 2013
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – September 30, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – September 25, 2013
FTA	Coordination Call #2 – September 25, 2013
Fostering an East Side Transit Conversation – Engage ES	Presentation – September 25, 2013
St. Paul Transportation Committee	Meeting – September 22, 2013



Woodbury staff	Meeting – September 12, 2013
Oakdale staff	Meeting – September 12, 2013
Maplewood staff	Meeting – September 11, 2013
Lake Elmo staff	Meeting – September 10, 2013
3M	Meeting – September 4, 2013
Metro State	Meeting – August 29, 2013
St. Paul staff	Meeting – August 29, 2013
Community Advisory Committee	Meeting – August 26, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – August 21, 2013
FTA	Coordination Call – August 15, 2013
East Side Groups Update	Meeting – August 13, 2013
Policy Advisory Committee	Meeting – August 8, 2013
Hot Dogs and Transit – Engage East Side	Booth – August 3, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – July 24, 2013
Hot Dogs and Transit – Engage East Side	Booth – July 13, 2013
Development Forum	June 24, 2013
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability	Staff level meeting – June 7, 2013
Engage East Side Resident Network staff	Discussion on CAC – May 31, 2013
Start of DEIS	

OPINION > LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pioneer Press Letters to the Editor for October 5, 2016

By **LETTER WRITERS** | letters@pioneerpress.com

PUBLISHED: October 5, 2016 at 12:14 am | UPDATED: October 4, 2016 at 6:50 pm

WHY SUCH COVERAGE OF A MINORITY VIEW?

I was disappointed to see the prominent and substantial publicity you gave to an anti-transit group's meeting opposing the Gold Line ("Group opposing St. Paul-Woodbury transit will meet Wednesday night," Sept. 28).

This issue is particularly disconcerting given the 2016 Washington County poll of residents who identified lack of transit options as their top concern. That's higher than taxes, higher than crime, higher than traffic congestion. If anything, desire for transit improvements better reflects the will of the East Metro. It makes your hefty coverage of this minority view that much more puzzling.

Across the metro area, people want more transportation options that really work. They want to be able to get out of frustrating traffic by taking a bus or train. They want to be able to walk or ride a bike to work, school, shopping or to visit their friends and family. That's important for everyone, but especially so for seniors, young people, people with disabilities and people with lower incomes struggling too much to own a car. It's important for people like Kim, one of our members in Woodbury, who regularly rides transit and says the Route 351 bus is packed. To make transit work throughout the metro area, we'll need to improve existing routes and build new ones. It is time both media and policy makers embraced this reality and its potential to improve our communities.

Jessica Treat

The writer is executive director of Transit for Livable Communities.

Flood Warning

New Gold Line may end at Woodbury Village

By [Youssef Rddad](#) on Aug 18, 2016 at 6:13 p.m.



Following Lake Elmo's withdraw from a proposed project to bring Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to the Twin Cities' East Metro, planners are looking for an alternative route that could have Woodbury come out on top.

The Gateway Corridor Commission announced Thursday several alternative route for the proposed Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit that avoid Lake Elmo, including a route south of Oakdale that terminates in Woodbury Village.

Previously estimated at \$485 million, the Gold Line bus BRT project will connect Union Depot Station in St. Paul, passing through Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury along Interstate 94.

In January, Lake Elmo's city council voted 3-2 to cut ties with the project, prompting planners to go back to the drawing board for the line's eastern route.

One of the routes presented would see the bus turn south on Helmo Avenue in Oakdale, eventually crossing over the interstate on a dedicated BRT bridge. The route would continue south onto Bielenberg Drive in Woodbury and end at the express bus park and ride in Woodbury Village.

This commission is considering the Bielenberg Drive route because it passes close to existing and future healthcare services, as well as retail, restaurants and offices.

Woodbury Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens said having the Gold Line go down Bielenberg Drive would also compliment existing express busses traveling up and down that way.

Currently about 40 busses run along Bielenberg Drive during morning and evening rush hours, but only a handful run during the afternoon and at night, said Washington County planner Lyssa Leitner. Daytime travelers only have a short window to commute to and from St. Paul to cities like Oakdale and Woodbury, she said.

With an increase in job growth in Woodbury, people commuting to Woodbury sometimes don't have public transit options, Stephens said.

"We've heard that from the representatives on the commission and from public comment that there's not way to get out here for jobs that are here," Stephens said. "You have to drive."

Details about how the line would connect Woodbury and Oakdale are also being determined with three other plans up for consideration, including a BRT bridge connecting Weir Drive and Hadley Avenue in Oakdale, as well as plans for busses to cross the I-94 on Radio Drive.

Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik, who chairs the the Gateway Gold Line Corridor Commission, said the flexibility of having busses versus a light rail system may lead to possible expansions and tweaks .

Bus rapid transit has been slowly making its way to the Twin Cities' metro with the opening of the Red Line in 2013 , which connects Apple Valley to the Mall of America. Earlier this summer, Metro Transit debuted the A-Line BRT, which cuts through St. Paul's Snelling avenue and connects the 46th Street Light Rail station to Rosedale Mall.

Like those lines, the Gold Line will operate similar to light rail transit, or LRT, where passengers pay before they they board and busses dock into stations for 10 to 15 seconds. Busses will also stop at stations every 10 minutes during rush hour and will continue running throughout the day.

The Gold Line would be the first BRT line in the Twin Cities Metro to travel on a dedicated lane.

The Gateway Corridor Commission and Policy Advisory Committee is currently seeking comments about the considered routes before drafting a final plan.

Residents can weigh in on the project by going to: thegatewaycorridor.com

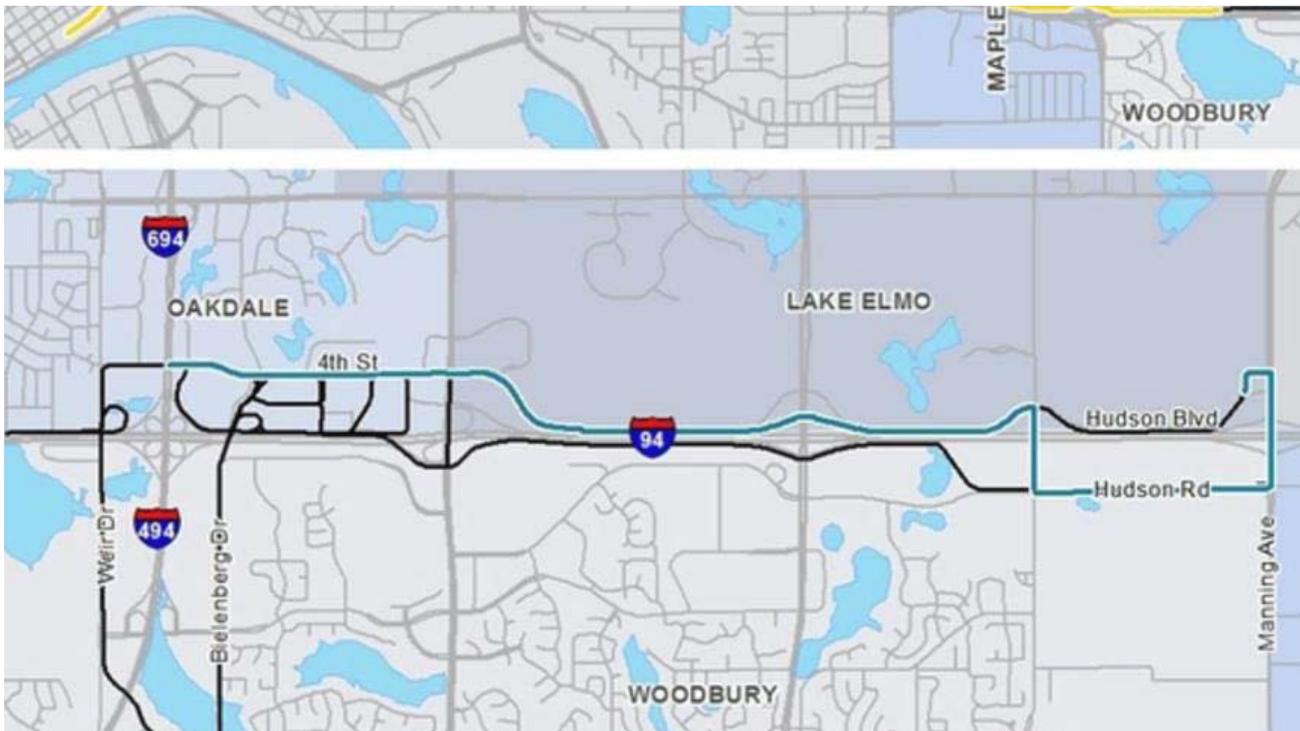
The commission expects to select a route by the end of the year.

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Woodbury Bulletin

Weigh in on proposed Gold Line routes

By [Youssef Rddad](#) Today at 9:11 a.m.



Before we know if the Gold Line bus-rapid transit Route will turn into Woodbury Village, the Gateway Corridor Commission is seeking public feedback at an open house next Wednesday.

Before the commission selects a route for the eastern part of the line, the commission needs to gather public input at the open house as well as online. The event runs from 5-7 p.m. on Oct. 5 at the Envision Event Center in Oakdale.

The Gold Line will connect downtown St. Paul and the east metro along Interstate 94 on dedicated bus lanes.

Bus rapid transit, or BRT, has been slowly making its way to the Twin Cities' metro after the opening of the Red Line in 2013, which connects Apple Valley to the Mall of America. Earlier this summer, Metro Transit debuted the A-Line BRT, which cuts through St. Paul's Snelling Avenue and connects the 46th Street Light Rail station to Rosedale Mall.

Like those lines, the Gold Line will operate similar to light rail transit, where passengers pay before they board and buses dock into stations for 10 to 15 seconds and will arrive at stations more frequently than other bus lines.

The Gateway Corridor Commission, a body of public officials across different counties, cities and other organizations, needed to find an alternative route for the line's eastern section following Lake Elmo's withdrawal from the project.

The commission presented potential alternative routes in August, including one that would cross the interstate on a new bridge as the route turns south into Woodbury along Bielenberg Drive.

Other routes the commission is considering could terminate in Inwood Drive in Oakdale, as well as another that would by running along Hudson Road in Woodbury and terminate near Manning Avenue.

Officials say they are considering these routes because of future and existing development.

In light of shorter routes, the project's original \$485 million estimate will likely decrease anywhere from \$25 to \$75 million, depending on which route the commission selects, said Washington County Planner Lyssa Leitner. Daily

ridership projections have also decreased to about 7,400, down from 8,000 because the route would have fewer stops.

Those who attend the open houses will be able to learn more about the routes and offer feedback on the project.

An advisory committee will be drawing up a draft of a preferred route at its Oct. 13 Policy Advisory Committee meeting based on in-person and emailed comments.

Officials say they plan to select a route by the end of the year.

Those who cannot attend the open house can submit feedback online under the contact page at thegatewaycorridor.com.

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Line might stop in Woodbury

Our VIEW

The city has done it again. Finances reportedly are a wreck, council member points to council member as the cancer corrupting the room (even issuing gag orders against elected official), and now what we assumed was a done deal has come crashing down.

Thank goodness, we're not talking about our city. Woodbury has been far more functional than Lake Elmo, as evidenced by recent news that the court proceedings of the latter will carry a \$200,000 insurance deductible.

Let us be clear, we only wish our neighboring city well. We are just glad to not be in those shoes. Lake Elmo, please keep its drama on the north side of the interstate, thank you very much.

Well, with all the drama in Lake Elmo over the years, it must not have been a surprise to elected officials when in January the Lake Elmo City Council voted against the locally preferred route for Gold Line (aka Gateway Corridor) bus-rapid transit, which would've gone through Lake Elmo and Woodbury.

However, it was a shocker to some of the affected neighborhoods when the new preference was announced in September. Maybe we got caught up in the momentum for the project, forgetting that a turn into Woodbury and the abandoning of the east side of Woodbury was a possibility.

But when we first talked about finding a new locally preferred route for the bus-rapid transit, the published map indicated a south-of-the-interstate route from west of Radio Drive to Settlers Ridge Parkway was on the table. This month, discussions focused on a dedicated busway on a bridge over Interstate 94 at Bielenberg Drive, as well as a through route to the Woodbury 10 Theatre, site of an existing Metro Transit hub. This route stays on the west side of Woodbury.

Your local newspaper is undecided on the best route for the new transit line. But like some average Joe citizens, we reacted to the newly proposed route with surprise.

We always thought the route would take us through Woodbury to Manning Avenue, not cut off halfway across town.

Although the Gold Line was never proposed with a cheap price tag, we didn't realize that a buses-only bridge might be built over I-94.

We didn't think the four commissioners would propose to put the end of the line in a district currently unrepresented on the Washington County Board.

Surely, there is good reason for transit proponents' reactions to the new proposal. The timing can be explained by more than one unfortunate circumstance — namely the death of a beloved commissioner and the drama at Lake Elmo City Hall.

Undoubtedly, Gold Line advocates are thankful for Gov. Mark Dayton's promise to put \$3 million of seed money for the \$485 million project into his

Woodbury

Bulletin

9-14-16

Our View: Gold Line surprise

Continued from Page 6A

next budget proposal.

Hopefully, residents continue to turn out to discuss the pros and cons of the Gold Line routes so that our voices can be taken into account as the planners and consultants and elected officials put together an alternative route from the Union Depot in St. Paul, through Maplewood, Landfall,

Oakdale and Woodbury.

We don't foresee Woodbury City Council joining Lake Elmo in distaste for the Gold Line. Our city has proven far more progressive than the neighbor at issue. But we do hope that all facets of the new proposal can be carefully considered as residents adjust to what might not have been a surprise route to elected officials and may have shocked

a few who, unaware of all options, mistakenly thought the first plans — in an entirely different city — were a foregone conclusion. We all ought to understand the frustration that might fester when one city's lack of cohesiveness dramatically affects a neighbor and willing partner.

Mathias Baden, editor of the Woodbury Bulletin, wrote this editorial.

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Gold Line busway may end up in Woodbury

Lake Elmo's objections force a re-evaluation.

By David Peterson (<http://www.startribune.com/david-peterson/10645651/>) Star Tribune |

AUGUST 18, 2016 — 9:04PM

Lake Elmo's refusal to host the Gold Line busway out of downtown St. Paul is leading transit planners to propose sending a cavalcade of buses down a major arterial roadway toward the western end of Woodbury instead.

An advisory panel of local officials learned Thursday that serious thought is being given to building a new bridge over Interstate 94 connecting Helmo Avenue in Oakdale and Bielenberg Drive in Woodbury, and sending buses across it to a station near a major commercial concentration at Tamarack Road.

"And remember," said Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik, "this is not light rail, confined to a track, so theoretically a bus could be free to go on to other destinations, such as Cottage Grove or even Stillwater."

With such a drastic change from past plans, officials from both Woodbury and the regional corridor commission promised extensive consultations with businesses and homeowners along the proposed new bus-rapid transit (BRT) route.

They also stressed that no decisions have been taken and other alignments remain in the mix. A public hearing is expected in November, followed by a formal recommendation and local cities' consent by December.

Militantly rural Lake Elmo decided in January to opt out of the Gold Line, whose planners had hoped to use the community's extensive open land to build busy new nodes of activity.

That raised the prospect of switching the route toward wide-open vistas still available on the eastern edge of Woodbury, where a major landowner would have been delighted. But Woodbury nixed that idea, which also would have alarmed the quiet neighboring suburb of Afton.

The Gold Line, if approved and funded, would be the state's first busway of its type — avoiding freeways but having dedicated lanes of its own in both directions. Buses are to run every 10 minutes during rush hour and frequently through the rest of the day.

The line would extend from Union Depot in downtown St. Paul and through the East Side into Maplewood — including 3M headquarters — Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury.

Under the latest thinking, the buses would enter Oakdale and go south on Hudson Boulevard and Helmo Avenue, crossing I-94 on a new bridge that would include separate lanes for BRT and motorists, plus a trail.

Transit planner Lyssa Leitner stressed that lots of buses already ply Bielenberg Drive; there's an express bus park and ride at the Woodbury Theater, near the Target Greatland store in Woodbury Village.

A new BRT route could interfere with some access points, she said, but everyone along the roadway either has an alternative exit and entrance, or one could be furnished in some way.

City officials pointed to the proposed route, she said, partly because it's "the location of some of the older retail" in the suburbs, areas likely headed for redevelopment anyway. A new bridge connecting Helmo and Bielenberg also is already in Oakdale and Woodbury's long-term plans, she said.

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and long term could consider running buses on Valley Creek to the City Hall area as
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well. That probably makes Afton nervous, but up on 94 our options are limited.”

dapeterson@startribune.com 651-925-5039

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Gov. Dayton promises \$3 million for Gateway Gold Line



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Submitted by admin on Sun, 09/11/2016 - 12:00am

By: [Marjorie Otto \(/by/marjorie-otto\)](#)
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the BRT commission members and other community leaders, such as Woodbury state Rep. JoAnn Ward (center), on Sept. 1. Many leaders, including Ramsey County Commissioner Rafael Ortega (right) felt that the east metro could use more investment from the state.

As a part of his 87 counties in 86 days tour, Gov. Mark Dayton made a stop in the east metro on Thursday, Sept. 1.

Dayton was invited to a public roundtable discussion at Woodbury City Hall to talk about the proposed Gateway Gold Line bus rapid transit corridor.

Civic leaders saw the meeting as an opportunity to drive home their point that this project needs more state investment and is just as worthwhile as some of the high-profile transit projects in the west metro. They convinced Dayton, who promised \$3 million at the end of the meeting.

The Gold Line BRT would provide frequent, all-day service from the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul through the East Side of St. Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury. The bus transit line is projected to open in 2023.

Dayton met with members of the Gateway Corridor commission, including: Ramsey County commissioner Rafael Ortega, vice chair; Washington County commissioner Lisa Weik, commission chair; St. Paul City Council member Jane Prince; Woodbury mayor Mary Guiliani Stephens, and many others.

While the communities the Gold Line BRT would serve are unique demographically, geographically, and economically, the elected officials all voiced a common concern: the lack of investment by the state in the east metro.

Many commission members, including Ortega, told Dayton that they feel the east metro does not get the same priority as the west metro when it comes to transportation projects and economic stimulus. Commission members cited the Southwest Light Rail Transit line corridor as an example. The proposed light rail line would run from downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie, and make stops in the Hennepin County suburbs of St. Louis Park, Hopkins and Minnetonka.

St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce president Matt Kramer, who is an ex-officio member of the commission, shared the same sentiments as Ortega, contending that the west metro is disproportionately receiving more state funding for infrastructures upgrades than the east metro.

Kramer said that these types of public transit projects are needed in Ramsey and Washington counties to move employees both ways, from urban to suburban and suburban to urban jobs.

Transportation is “missing piece”

Tom Cook, special assistant to Metropolitan State University’s president, said rapid transit like the proposed Gateway bus line would make it easier for students to commute to the college’s East Side campus. He added that with Metro State’s new science facility, students from other campuses will be coming to use those facilities as well.

Jane Prince, who represents St. Paul’s Ward 7, said that while the East Side has done “tremendous work” to build itself back up after the Great Recession, “transportation is the missing piece.”

Paul Sawyer, president of the St. Paul District 1 Community Council, explained to Dayton that the area he represents is a very diverse. He said the Battle Creek, Sun Ray and Eastview neighborhoods have large immigrant populations with low household incomes.

Many of them can’t afford to have vehicles and bus service is sporadic in many parts of District 1.

Sawyer said a rapid transit line like the Gold Line would “substantially improve the lives of those in my area.”

The commission shared with Dayton some of the trials the project has dealt with, such as the Lake Elmo City Council voting earlier in 2016 to step out of the project.

That has left planners needing to create alternative routes, which were recently released in August.

Homeowners voice skepticism

Residents were given a chance to speak as well. Steve Ellenwood, a Woodbury resident, said he was concerned about the long-term investment needed to maintain a rapid transit line. He was also skeptical whether the project would ease traffic congestion, one of the project’s main selling points.

Other homeowners argued that the project would add more traffic to city streets and would change the fabric of their communities and way of life.

One Oakdale resident said the people in her neighborhood, comprised largely of retirees, would never have a need or use a system like this.

Another Woodbury resident, Marsha Adou, said she had lived in Manhattan for a number of years and used the public transit there all the time. She said she believes Minnesotans oppose transit so often because they are not accustomed to it.

“It’s just the fear of the unknown,” Adou told the crowd.

After hearing about the project and how it would affect the varying communities, Dayton asked how he could help to support it.

Commission members asked if he could add \$3 million for the Gateway Gold Line BRT to his proposed state budget in 2017.

Commission chair Weik stressed that the Gateway Gold Line BRT project needs to be successful in order for other east metro transit projects to advance.

Dayton said while he could not guarantee passage by the Legislature, he would support adding \$3 million for the Gold Line project to next session’s budget.

"There does need to be a balance," said Dayton when asked whether he believes the east metro could use more investment in relation to the west metro.

He said that the \$3 million would be a step towards doing that.

Marjorie Otto can be reached at 651-748-7816 or at eastside@lillienews.com (<mailto:eastside@lillienews.com>). Follow her on Twitter at @EastSideM_Otto.

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Gov. Dayton to give \$3 million boost for Gold Line bus project

By [Youssef Rddad](#) on Sep 1, 2016 at 5:49 p.m.



2 / 2



The proposed Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project is getting a boost following Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton's visit to Woodbury.

Dayton held a public discussion Thursday afternoon about the proposed bus line in Woodbury as part of his tour of the state. During the discussion, Dayton said he would allocate \$3 million from his budget for the project's next funding cycle.

"We have to have an expanded metro system if we're going to have a viable region economically and socially," Dayton said.

Previously estimated at \$485 million, the Gold Line BRT project will connect Union Depot Station in St. Paul, with Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury along Interstate 94.

If built, federal dollars and local sales tax would cover the majority of the project, with 45 percent of funds coming from the federal government and 35 percent from the five-county metro's sales tax. Ramsey and Washington counties would also pitch in 5 percent of the project's costs and the remaining 10 percent would come from the state.

Compared to other cities Dayton's visited--including San Francisco, Boston and Washington D.C.--he said public transportation in the metro area has fallen short.

"I've never seen public transit that ends downtown, so it just shows me how far behind we are," he said.

The Gateway Corridor Commission, a body of public officials across different counties, cities and other organizations, [recently unveiled potential new routes](https://www.woodburybulletin.com/news/government/4097305-new-gold-line-may-end-woodbury-village) (https://www.woodburybulletin.com/news/government/4097305-new-gold-line-may-end-woodbury-village) for the Gold Line BRT, which included a route that would end at Woodbury Village.

The commission needed to find an alternate route following the Lake Elmo City Council's decision to withdraw from the project early this year. The group expects to have a route selected by the end of the year.

The Gold Line would be the first BRT line to travel in a dedicated lane. Construction on the line is expected to start in 2018 with service beginning in 2022.

Supporters of the project have become increasingly sensitive about transportation projects receiving more support in the western metro despite having to pay an increased sales tax to fund them since 2008.

Now, some say it's the East Metro's turn for a large project.

"If we don't have a balanced transit system...it means we're losing out on opportunity," said Sen. Susan Kent, DFL-Woodbury who attended Thursday's discussion.

St. Paul City Councilmember Jane Prince, who represents the ward where the Gold Line would pass through, said many people living on St. Paul's East Side are not able to access public transit that brings them to jobs if they don't drive. "We need to see this come to life," she said.

Still, some Woodbury residents voiced opposition to the bus line, mainly touching on cost and its ability to reduce traffic congestion.

Woodbury resident Steve Ellenwood said he worries about long-term financial costs that could be occurred after the project is built and doesn't believe the Gold Line will relieve traffic congestion.

"You can't put enough buses on the road to take enough traffic off the road to get rid of the congestion," Ellenwood said.

He added taxi services like Lyft and Uber could serve people better because they wouldn't have to travel to bus stops and could be dropped off and picked up at specific locations.

Marsha Adou, a 30-year Woodbury resident, said she the East Metro needs better transportation options as Minnesota's population ages and senior adults living in places like Woodbury may not be able to make routine trips to places like pharmacies or grocery stores.

"I think it should have taken faster than 30 years," she said. "You need to have more than just cars.

Adou, who lived in Manhattan for a number of years before coming to Minnesota, said that she feels those in opposition of the project are not accustomed to mass transit.

"It's just fear of the unknown," she said.

9/2/2016

Gov. Dayton to give \$3 million boost for Gold Line bus project | Woodbury Bulletin

Dayton said after the roundtable discussion that he'd be open to exploring a special session to address transportation projects.

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NEWS

Revised Gold Line still a stinker, citizens group says

By **BOB SHAW** | bshaw@pioneerpress.com

PUBLISHED: September 27, 2016 at 5:41 pm | UPDATED: September 27, 2016 at 5:46 pm

Don't be fooled by the route change for the planned Gold Line bus project, says project opponent Linda Stanton of Woodbury.

It's still a stinker, she said.

Newly released estimates show the proposed route into Woodbury would be cheaper and shorter but would have lower ridership.

"We just don't need a clunky thing like this," said Stanton, who chairs [Citizens for Smart Transit](#).

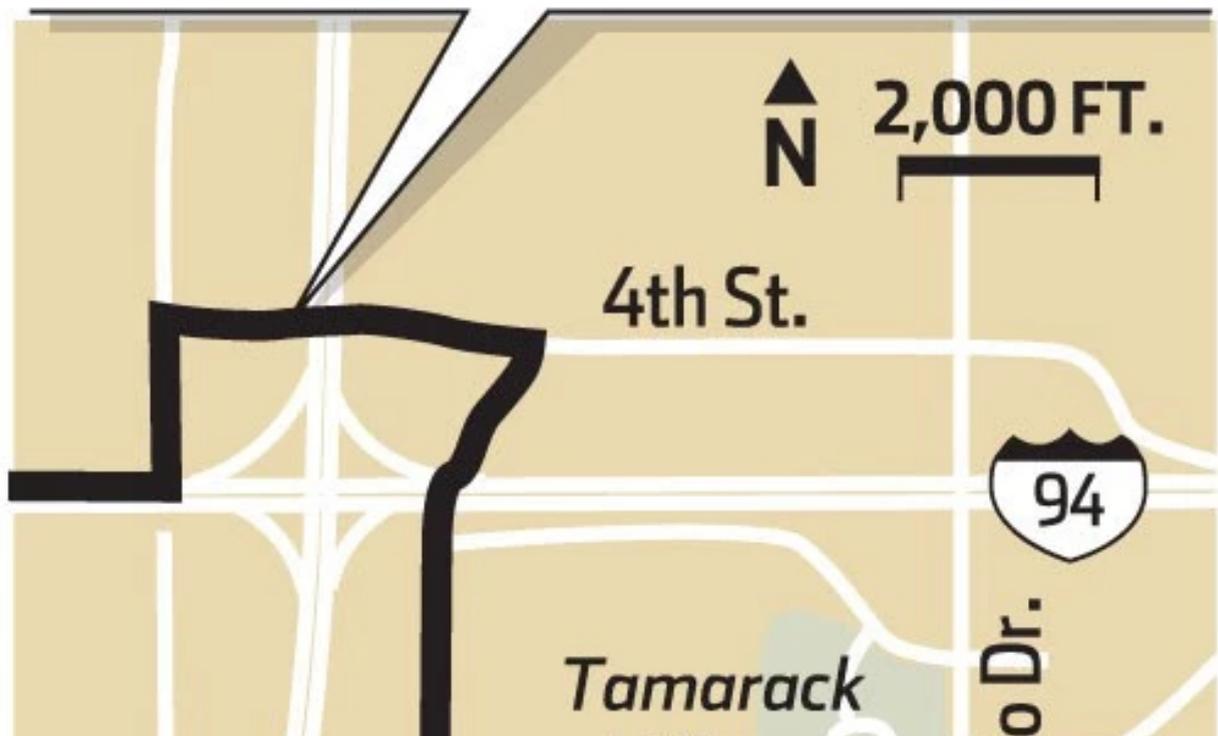
The group is sponsoring a town hall meeting Wednesday night in Lake Elmo with a theme of "The Met Council and Transit Policy: How Did We Get to This Point?"

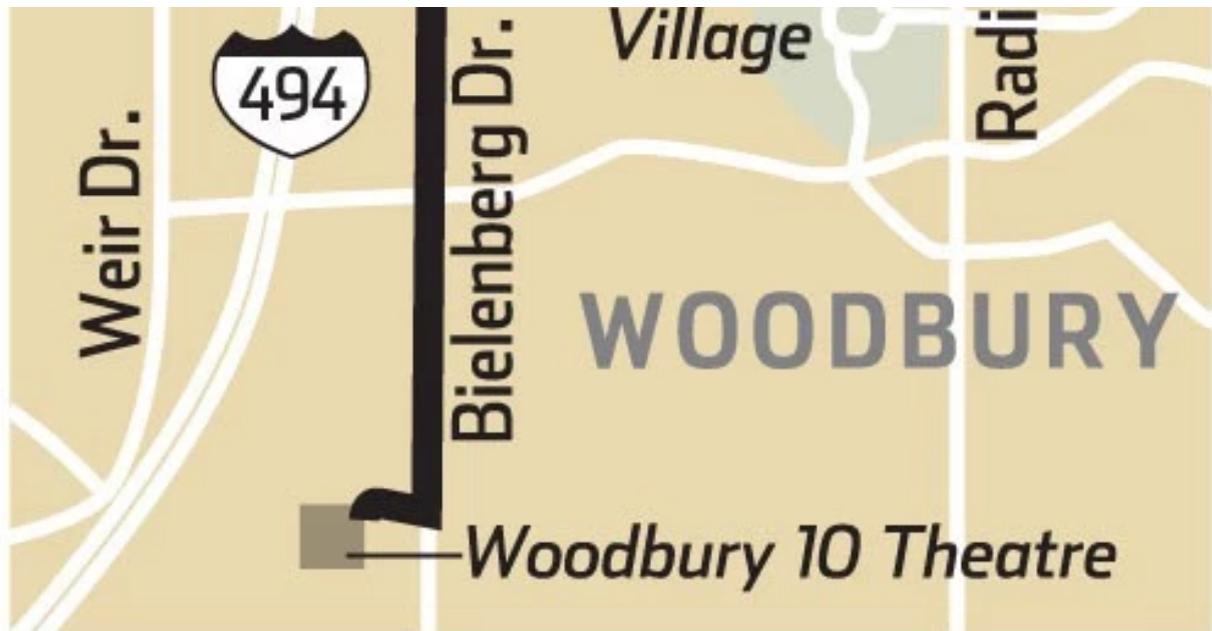
In August, Gold Line planners announced the planned bus rapid transit (BRT) line would [turn south into Woodbury](#) instead of continuing east along Interstate 94. This followed opposition by Lake Elmo, where the City Council in January banned the buses, saying they would bring unwanted development.

This week, officials released cost estimates for the new route, according to Lyssa Leitner, a transportation planner with Washington County. It would cost about \$460 million — \$25 million less than the original proposal. It also would be three miles shorter. It would have 10 stops, compared with the original 12. By 2040, it is projected to have 8,000 riders a day — about 600 fewer than the original proposal.

New Gold Line route proposed

A new alternative route for the Gold Line would send rapid-transit buses north along Bielenberg Drive in Woodbury into Oakdale. The route is one of several being considered by officials.





**Source: Gateway Corridor Commission
PIONEER PRESS**

The new route would start at St. Paul's Union Depot, head north and veer through the East Side, Maplewood and Oakdale, then cut south on a new bridge over I-94 at Helmo Avenue. It would run along Bielenberg Drive, ending at a park-and-ride near Valley Creek Road.

The original proposal would have continued east through Oakdale, crossed I-94 near Radio Drive into Woodbury and continued east to Manning Avenue.

Officials will be choosing a preferred route by the end of the year.

Supporters of the project have said the proposal is the best way to get federal, state and local tax money for the project. If the Gold Line were built, federal sources would pay for 45 percent, with 35 percent a metro-county sales tax, 10 percent from the state and 5 percent each from Washington and Ramsey counties.

Reducing traffic on the busy I-94 corridor is crucial, they say. An estimated 300,000 people are living east of St. Paul along the I-94 corridor today, with 90,000 more expected to move in by 2030.

Leitner estimates the transit time from Woodbury to downtown St. Paul on the new route would be 20 to 25 minutes. A Pioneer Press reporter made the trip in a car in 16 minutes during the 8 a.m. rush hour Tuesday, with construction slowdowns along I-94.

But Leitner said the Gold Line planners aren't trying to set up the fastest route. Instead, they want a local-service route, making stops at several locations. It is designed for use by people without cars, in addition to being used by commuters, she said. The buses would run on dedicated two-lane roadways, making stops every seven minutes during peak times.

Stanton prefers the new Woodbury route to the original but said it is still a waste of money.

"I would like to see them start over," she said.

The town hall meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in Lake Elmo, 8511 Hudson Blvd. A \$5 donation is suggested to help fund the nonprofit Citizens for Smart Transit, whose goal is to stop the Gold Line project.

Speakers will include Anoka County Commissioner Scott Schutte, retired state Department of Transportation official Frank Pafko and Republican Minnesota Representatives Linda Runbeck of Circle Pines and Jerry Hertaus of Greenfield.

In addition to holding public meetings, Citizens for Smart Transit has lobbied the Legislature to withhold state funding for the project.

Tags: St. Paul, Transportation, Washington County

Bob Shaw **Bob Shaw**

Bob is a 40-year veteran (yes, he is grizzled) who edited one Pulitzer Prize winner and wrote two that were nominated. He has also worked in Des Moines, Colorado Springs and Palo Alto. He writes about the suburbs, the environment, housing, religion -- anything but politics. Secret pleasures: Kayaking on the Mississippi on the way to work, doughnuts brought in by someone else. Best office prank: Piling more papers onto Fred Melo's already trash-covered desk.

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NEWS

Meeting will lay out future St. Paul-to-Woodbury Gold Line transit options

By **BOB SHAW** | bshaw@pioneerpress.com

October 3, 2016 at 12:45 pm

A meeting about the Gold Line rapid-transit bus proposal is planned for 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Envision Event Center, 484 Inwood Ave. N., Oakdale.

Members of the Gateway Corridor Commission will present information and answer questions about five proposals for routes between St. Paul's Union Depot and Woodbury. They expect to pick a preferred route by the end of the year.

Buses would run on a new two-lane dedicated roadway at seven-minute intervals during rush hours.

The service would start in St. Paul and run through the city's East Side, Maplewood and Oakdale. From there, the proposed routes vary.

The most ambitious plan calls for a roadway crossing Interstate 94 on or near the Radio Drive overpass, then cutting across northern Woodbury to a new park-and-ride lot at Manning Avenue. This proposal has been estimated to cost \$485 million.

The commission recently announced a **new possible route**, cutting south from Helmo Avenue in Oakdale across a new interstate bridge into Woodbury. The route would follow Bielenberg Drive to the park-and-ride lot at the Woodbury 10 Cinema on Valley Creek Road. That route would be three miles shorter, and cost \$25 million to \$75 million less.

The other routes offer service to Inwood Avenue using different routes.

The commission is also inviting comments from the public via email. The Gateway Corridor contact form is available by clicking on “Get Active Today” on the website thegatewaycorridor.com.

Opponents of the project, Citizens for Smart Transit, held a [town hall meeting](#) Wednesday in Lake Elmo.

Tags: Transportation, Washington County, Woodbury



Bob Shaw

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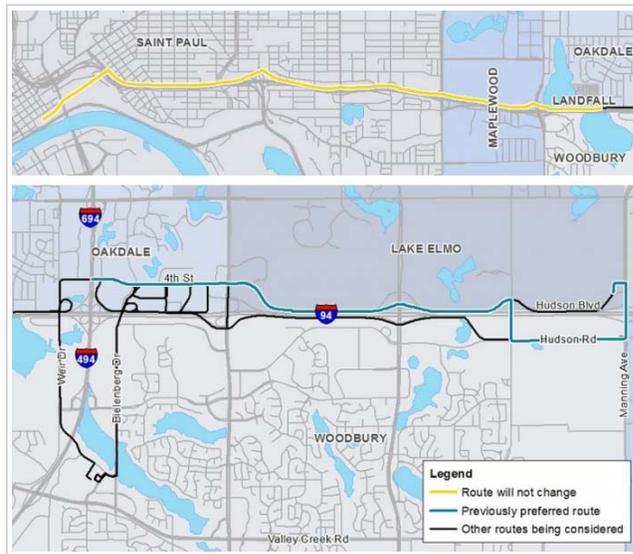
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New bus rapid transit route considered for Oakdale, Woodbury

<http://eastsidereviewnews.com/simpleads/redirect/193517>

Submitted by admin on Wed, 08/24/2016 - 12:00am

By: [Aundrea Kinney \(/by/aundrea-kinney\)](#)
[\(/articles/2016/08/24/new-bus-rapid-transit-route-considered-oakdale-woodbury\)](#)



The
Gateway
Gold
Line
BRT
Policy
Advisory
Committee
member

Members reviewed new route options in Oakdale and Woodbury at their August 18 meeting. A decision on the preferred route is expected this fall after a robust community engagement process.

A potential new route for the proposed bus rapid transit Gateway Gold Line was revealed at an Aug. 18 meeting of the Gateway Corridor Commission and Policy Advisory Committee.

The Gold Line BRT will provide frequent, all-day service from the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul through the East Side of St. Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale and Woodbury.

The project is expected to run primarily along streets that parallel Interstate 94 with dedicated bus lanes and a balance between accessible stops and a minimized travel time.

The initial routes under consideration for the segment through Oakdale included Fourth Street and a segment that combined travel along Fourth Street and Hudson Road.

At previous meetings, many Oakdale homeowners shared their displeasure with the Gold Line buses using Fourth Street.

Although Lake Elmo was initially included in the project, its city council opted to withdraw from the project last January, a decision that forced Gateway Corridor planners to consider alternative routes and allowed Oakdale and Woodbury the chance to reconsider their priorities.

For example, Oakdale city officials shared with the project leaders a preference for the rapid transit bus line to utilize Hudson Boulevard instead of Fourth Street, a desire for a bus station near the intersection of Helmo and Fourth Street for job access, and an interest in park-and-ride availability at an Oakdale station.

Based on these re-evaluated priorities and over 120 resident responses, a working group — staff from Oakdale, Woodbury, Washington County, Ramsey County, MnDOT and Metro Transit — has been discussing possible alternatives for this eastern portion of the route, which led to the potential new route.

Upon entering Oakdale the latest proposed route would turn south on Hudson Boulevard or Helmo Avenue, and cross over Interstate-94 on a new bridge with

dedicated BRT lanes, new general vehicle traffic lanes and a recreational pathway.

The new route then would continue south along Bielenberg Drive in Woodbury to an existing express bus park-and-ride lot at the Woodbury Theater. This route abandons the general east/west orientation of the initial possible routes.

“Bringing Gold Line BRT south into Woodbury on Bielenberg Drive takes advantage of the existing express bus service at Woodbury Village, which will complement both systems, and provides additional opportunities for connecting residents to jobs,” said Woodbury mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens in a statement. She is also chair of the Policy Advisory Committee.

At the Aug. 18 meeting, project manager Lyssa Leitner also pointed out that compared to the project’s other three bridge options, constructing a bridge from Helmo Avenue to Bielenberg Drive makes the most sense.

She explained that there are less engineering concerns with this option than with a bridge from Hadley Avenue to Weir Drive, and it would still minimize the impacts to Fourth Street, a concern voiced by many Oakdale homeowners living near that road.

Also, a new freeway overpass at this location is already part of the Oakdale and Woodbury comprehensive city plans and would allow for car, bike and pedestrian traffic to share the connection.

“With Gold Line BRT, Oakdale sees a positive opportunity to create economic development, jobs and growth that will benefit both our residents and employers,” said Oakdale city council member Paul Reinke in a statement.

Reinke is also a member of the Gateway Corridor Commission. “This new route shows strong promise for ridership and redevelopment potential and still provides great opportunities for Oakdale businesses and residents.”

“The working group has not made any official recommendations yet,” Leitner said and explained that the group is providing this information to the public with the hopes of collecting feedback indicating whether or not the new routes are closer to the community’s desires than the initial routes were.

For more information visit www.theGatewayCorridor.com (<http://www.theGatewayCorridor.com>).

Aundrea Kinney can be reached at 651-748-7822 or akinney@lillienews.com (<mailto:akinney@lillienews.com>).

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NEWS

New Gold Line alternative route takes a turn south in Woodbury

By **BOB SHAW** | bshaw@pioneerpress.com

PUBLISHED: August 18, 2016 at 3:54 pm | UPDATED: August 18, 2016 at 4:28 pm

For the Gold Line bus project, Lake Elmo's loss could be Woodbury's gain.

A new route for the proposed bus-rapid transit line avoids Lake Elmo entirely and bends the route south two miles into Woodbury.

The route announced Thursday by the Gateway Corridor Commission is one of several alternatives that could connect downtown St. Paul to the city's East Side and to Maplewood, Oakdale and Woodbury. The commission is expected to officially pick its preferred route by the end of the year.

The new alternative cuts about two miles off other proposals that would stretch east to Manning Avenue. Instead, it cuts south at Helmo Avenue to Valley Creek Drive.

Buses would travel on a newly built dedicated two-lane road. Officials have not yet given an estimated cost for the new route, but the original was estimated at \$485 million.

In 2015, the route most favored by the commission had its easternmost point in the northeast corner of Woodbury, crossing Interstate 94 and running across Lake Elmo and Oakdale. It was designed so that westbound commuters from Wisconsin could easily get off the freeway and onto rapid-transit buses.

But the Lake Elmo City Council in January banned the rapid-transit buses, fearing they would bring unwanted development.

Since then, planners have developed alternate routes. Two still begin in the northeast part of Woodbury, proceed west, then cross I-94 at Radio Drive or Weir Drive.

The new alternative swaps four miles of east-west road in Lake Elmo or Woodbury for two miles of north-south road into Woodbury.

The route would cross I-94 on a new bridge at Helmo Avenue and run south along Bielenberg Drive to the parking lot of the Woodbury 10 Cinema, which is a park-and-ride.

Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik, chairwoman of the Gateway commission, said the Gold Line would mean a big improvement in service over current express bus service between Woodbury and downtown St. Paul.

“The biggest complaint I hear is that the express buses don’t run all day,” she said. The new Gold route would feature buses running every 10 minutes during peak times, and somewhat longer intervals in other times.

“You would not even need a schedule,” Weik said.

The plan is a departure from previous routes, which followed I-94. The new route veers into Woodbury, past hotels and shopping centers. It would give access to the Target store on Valley Creek Road.

At a meeting in Woodbury Thursday, commission manger Lyssa Leitner said the new route would put a priority on local service and connections to workplaces, even at the expense of freeway commuters.

“With this, we are putting more focus on jobs,” she said.

Woodbury Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens, chairwoman of the policy advisory committee of the Gateway Corridor Commission, did not call the new alternative route along Bielenberg her favorite.

“But this one shows a little more promise,” she said.

Tags: Lake Elmo, Transportation, Woodbury

Bob Shaw

Bob is a 40-year veteran (yes, he is grizzled) who edited one Pulitzer Prize winner and wrote two that were nominated. He has also worked in Des Moines, Colorado Springs and Palo Alto. He writes about the suburbs, the environment, housing, religion -- anything but politics. Secret pleasures: Kayaking on the Mississippi on the way to work, doughnuts brought in by someone else. Best office prank: Piling more papers onto Fred Melo’s already trash-covered desk.

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New Route Proposed for Gold Line in East Metro

New Route Proposed for Gold Line in East Metro



August 19, 2016 12:13 PM

A new route has been proposed for a Bus Rapid Transit line that would connect the east metro region.

Once finalized, the Gateway Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit would run from Union Depot in St. Paul to Woodbury. The planned service will be the first line to have a dedicated busway so it's not slowed down by other traffic. Buses will run every 10 minutes during rush hour and then at other regular intervals throughout the rest of the day.

The Gateway Corridor Commission and Policy Advisory Committee discussed the new route during a meeting Thursday at Woodbury City Hall.

The new route was created after the Lake Elmo City Council voted 3-2 in January to not be part of the project. (<http://kstp.com/news/stories/s4010300.shtml>)



Proposed Gold Line route.

The St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce said Lake Elmo officials had concerns about how the transportation options would affect growth and development in the city. The vote took the city out of further planning for the line.

Because other cities continued to be supportive of the project, the Gateway Corridor Commission looked at a new plan for the eastern end of the line.

According to the commission, new routes being considered would enter Oakdale and turn south on Hudson Boulevard or Helmo Avenue, crossing over Interstate 94 on a new bridge that would include both dedicated lanes for BRT and new general traffic lanes and a trail, and continue south along Bielenberg Drive, where buses already run, in Woodbury to an existing express bus park-and-ride at the Woodbury Theater, near the Target Greatland store in Woodbury Village.

Commission members say the route was created based on current and future development opportunities. They say it will give access to jobs, shopping, dining, hotels, health care services and more.

Now, the commission will gather community input through a public hearing, neighborhood events and online opportunities to comment.

Credits

(<http://kstp.com/article/stories/s8782.shtml>) Jennie Lissarrague

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Updated: August 19, 2016 12:13 PM

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VIEWPOINT: East metro deserves 100-year plan for transportation

By [Woodbury Bulletin Staff](#) on Aug 29, 2016 at 6:26 a.m.

Woodbury Bulletin

The recent article in the Star Tribune, titled "East metro officials worry as jobs people migrate west" by David Peterson (Aug. 13) and the other articles about transit recommendations by Washington County that fail inspire the populace should prompt a revisit of the whole East Metro transportation planning effort. Bottom line, scrap the plans and start over.

It is clear the future trend is that workers will rely on public transportation. Today, the millennials are opting to live in central cities and use public transportation to travel to work and play. Suburban seniors are retiring, selling their cars, and moving near transit hubs. There is no reason to think this trend will change.

The Gold Line bus-rapid transit (BRT) as planned by Washington County was nothing more than shooting low and hitting the mark. Fortunately, two cities and concerned citizens held their noses placing the ill-conceived plan in jeopardy. Many officials cannot plan beyond their own mortality while a quality transportation system is a 100-year proposition. Their goal: to be there for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Thus, short-term, lowest-cost solutions are favored. A low-cost system ensures fast construction, but history has proven it will not survive to the generation of their grandchildren. We have a history of stadiums to prove that.

Thus we have a transit plan not only for the Gold Line but of the Red Rock Corridor line that is a warmed-over bus system. While the west metro is building a rail transportation system for the future, we are planning a system with the goal to be completed in the next couple of election cycles.

I have engineered transportation communications and signaling systems across North America. What most communities build is a quality system a few links at a time. As more funds come available, more is built. This also allows time for development patterns to gel especially if the right of way and station locations are defined on the yet to be constructed portion of the line.

So what should be done?

Transportation systems work best when lines are triangulated or interconnected at nodes. Interconnections at employment and market centers are the best. If the east metro wants to be more than an ill-designed, ill-served branch line off of a large west metro rail system, a triangular connection should be planned.

Step 1: Immediately start engineering a light-rail transit (LRT) line from the 3M Center corporate complex west via the Union Depot via an upgraded Canadian Pacific's Ford Plant railroad spur. It is important to buy this line before abandonment! Once it is abandoned, the NIMBYs will never let it be more than a bike trail. This will put the end of the line 0.75 miles from the Blue Line across the river. It also places in line in the major development of the old Ford Plant. A bridge, a station for the Minnesota Veteran's Home, and you have a connection to the Blue Line. Now you have LRT service from 3M to St.

Paul to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and on to the Mall of America. It triangulates with the Blue and Green LRT lines and connects market and employment centers.

Step 2: At or near the 3M LRT station, construct a park-and-ride station. It will serve buses from the east metro including the Red Rock. These should be standard buses and coaches operating on streets and highways.

Step 3: Begin defining right-of-way on or adjacent to interstates 94 and 494, and U.S. Highway 61 from the 3M Center. Purchase right-of-way and station locations.

Step 4: Construct park-and-ride stations. Serve them with standard buses and coaches operating on existing highways and streets.

Step 5: As funds are available and development demands, begin extending the LRT system along both right of ways.

Yes I am proposing a 100-year transportation system.

There will be no photo ops for our elected officials because there won't be a quick solution consisting of a warmed-over bus system.

Planners and decision makers must think long term like those in the rest of the country. It will bring the east metro into a quality metrowide transportation system much appreciated and utilized by our grandchildren. Such a system will never be cheaper to build than if started today. It will certainly be cheaper than if it starts as an ill-conceived bus system and in a generation must be replaced with LRT.

Leonard J. Koehnen is a professional engineer who lives in Woodbury.

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