



Agenda

Gateway Corridor Commission

December 8 – 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 December 8 at Woodbury City Hall (immediately preceding the Gateway Corridor Commission meeting).

<u>Item</u>	<u>Requested Action</u>
1. Introductions	Information
2. Consent Items	Approval
a. Summary of November 10, 2016, Meeting*	
b. Checks and Claims*	
3. Locally Preferred Alternative Adoption*	Approval
4. 2017 GCC Work Plan and Budget*	Approval
5. 2017 Insurance Renewal*	Approval
6. 2017 Communications Scope of Work*	Approval
7. 2017 Strategic Planning Scope of Work*	Approval
8. 2017 Meeting Schedule*	Approval
9. Recognition of Outgoing Members	Discussion
10. Gateway Corridor Lead Agency*	Discussion
11. Environmental Document Update*	Information
12. Communications Update*	Information
13. Other	Information
a. Meeting Dates Summary*	
b. Social Media and Website Update*	
c. Media Articles*	
14. Adjourn	Approval

*Attachments

**Gateway Corridor Commission
Draft November 10, 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 Killo	West Lakeland Township	X
Jane Prince	St Paul	X
Randy Nelson	Afton	X
Mike Pearson	Lake Elmo	
Paul Reinke	Oakdale	X
Bryan Smith	Maplewood	X
Amy Williams	Lakeland	
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	
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	
Matt Kramer	St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce	
Scott Nelson	St. Croix County Highway Department	

Others	Agency	Present
Jan Lucke	Washington County	X
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County	
Hally Turner	Washington County	
Sara Allen	Washington County	X
Andy Gitzlaff	Ramsey County	X
Tom Cook	Metropolitan State University	X
Brian McClung	MZA+Co	X

Jeanne Witzig	Kimley Horn	X
Kristen Zschomler	MnDOT CRU	X
JoAnn Ward	MN House of Representatives	X
Stan Karwoski	Washington County Commissioner Elect	X
Tim Mayasich	Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority	X
John Call	Washington County Lobbyist	X
Youssef Rddad	Woodbury Bulletin	X
Linda Stanton	CAC	X
Peggy Erlandson	LUPC Oakdale	X
Stephen Ebner	West Lakeland Township	X
Dale Gader	MnDOT	X
Pat Bursaw	MnDOT	X
Jane Herrmann	Oakdale citizen	X
Dale Herrmann	Oakdale citizen	X
Sheila Kauppi	MnDOT	X

The Gateway Corridor Commission convened at 4:04 p.m. by Chair Weik.

Agenda Item #1. Introductions

Introductions were made by those present.

Agenda Item #2. Consent Items

Item 2a. Summary of October 13, 2016, Meeting:

Motion made by Councilmember Reinke to approve the October 13, 2016, meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ortega. All were in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

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

Agenda Item #3. Environmental Document Update

Item 3a. Environmental Process Update

Ms. Lucke explained that there will be a change of the environmental class of action to that of a more appropriate Environmental Assessment (EA) to reflect the no-build and draft Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) options currently under review. This change was suggested by the Federal Transit Administration and will be finalized after the December 8 action of the PAC and Commission on the LPA. Ms. Lucke emphasized the EA process would include the same intensity of environmental review and public comment. A memo in the Commission packet describes the difference between the EA versus the EIS.

Item 3b. Kimley-Horn No-Cost Contract Change

Ms. Lucke described a contract amendment to the Kimley-Horn contract to reflect a change in scope, but not a change in budget, extending the contract through February 2017.

Councilmember Smith asked if the change from EIS to EA affects the Kimely-Horn budget. Ms. Lucke explained that EIS tasks that were yet to be complete will be discontinued and efforts will be shifted to EA activities.

Item 3c. MnDOT Cultural Resources Contract Amendment

Ms. Lucke stated the need to amend the original scope and budget to continue work by the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office (MnHPO) and the Cultural Resources Unit (CRU) to reflect the revised project draft LPA and additional work in Dayton's Bluff and the 3M Campus. Memos in the Commission packet reflect the contingency amount requested, scope, and budget. Ms. Kristen Zschlomer from CRU was present to answer questions.

Councilmember Prince asked about the timing of Dayton's Bluff outreach work. Ms. Lucke explained this request would help work continue without a budget gap from November 2016 into early 2017.

Motion made by Commissioner Ortega to approve the MnDOT Cultural Resources Contract Amendment. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Smith. All were in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Item 3d. Monthly Project Update

Ms. Lucke provided an overview of the meeting and public engagement schedule, referencing a memo included in the Commission packet.

Chair Weik opened the floor for questions. No questions.

Agenda Item #4. Draft 2017 GCC Work Plan and Budget

Ms. Lucke shared the draft 2017 GCC work plan and budget, updated after the previous meeting to reflect Commission feedback and priorities. Ms. Lucke provided an overview of the agenda, and noted a strategic planning line item included for the Commission to consider their role once the project transitions to project development, and into the hands of another agency.

Highlighted in the budget was a line item included for a possible delegation visit to Washington D.C. to time with the project's entry into project development, and a visit to a peer region BRT system.

Chair Weik opened the floor for discussion.

Chair Weik noted peer regions who were recipients of FTA funding dollars were expected to act as mentors and share best practices to other regions considering BRT transit technology.

Councilmember Reinke asked if there was consideration for what firms would conduct station area designs. Ms. Lucke discussed the coordinated nature of the FTA TOD Pilot Program Grant; for future consideration, either a panel comprised of city members to choose a firm to execute station design work, or each city to select individually.

Councilmember Smith requested future emphasis on first and last mile connections to transit. Some examples presented at Rail~Volution included creative multi-modal solutions like partnerships with Uber or Lyft, ride sharing services.

Mr. Gitzlaff requested the fund balance, or reserve outside the budget as a helpful piece to share in the final budget. Ms. Lucke agreed that this would be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

Agenda Item #5. Communications Update

Mr. McClung provided a briefing on an October 13, 2016 press release regarding the draft LPA route.

Information was directed to members of the media, legislators and other key audiences, and given coverage by the Woodbury Bulletin. Mayor Giuliani Stephens, Chair Weik and project staff met with members of the Pioneer Press editorial board, who ran a piece about the project - included in the Commission packet.

Social media highlights include: 1,500 impressions on a fact sheet of the new LPA, project Facebook account reached 16,000 people in the month of October.

Continued engagement with legislators and staff, after the election there is a new group of legislators to educate and inform about the project, continue to build bi-partisan support in the MN House and Senate. More information about the state legislative strategy will be available in the coming months.

Chair Weik opened the floor for questions. No questions.

Agenda Item #6. Other

Item 6a. Meeting Dates Summary:

Ms. Lucke announced the next meeting date on December 8, 2016 would cover the action of the PAC on the LPA and a second reading of the 2017 Commission work plan and budget. Both items will need action from the Commission.

At 5:30 pm today a project open house will take place in the same room, followed by 6:30 pm public hearing in the Woodbury City Council Chambers. Mayor Stephens as Chair of the PAC will be presiding over public hearing. Everyone was encouraged to attend. Public input from the evening's events to be included in consideration on the draft LPA decision in December.

Item 6b. Social Media and Website Update:

This item was covered previously by Mr. McClung.

Item 6c. Media Articles:

A list of outreach meetings and media articles included in the Committee packet.

Agenda Item #7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM



Agenda Item #2b

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Checks and Claims

<u>Kimley Horn Contract</u> October, 2016	\$153,860.47
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Contract Utilization = 96%

Total	\$153,860.47
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Detailed invoices can be made available upon request.

Action Requested:

Approval



Agenda Item #3

DATE: November 29, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Adoption

The LPA is a general description of the transit mode and route that is preferred by local governments and is used for long-range planning and federal funding applications. LPA design specifics and definition of additional elements of the project, including station locations, are decided during subsequent engineering and planning efforts. In the environmental document, the LPA is reviewed for impacts on the natural, physical, and socio-economic environments. Because the LPA definition is fairly general, limited changes to the LPA design may be considered during the environmental or project development process without affecting the LPA selection.

On October 13, the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) with input from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended the Helmo/Bielenberg route. The PAC recommended this alternative because it provides access to a high level of retail and non-retail jobs in the near term and future, has station locations in Oakdale and Woodbury's propriety areas, provides the regional benefit of a new roadway bridge connecting Oakdale and Woodbury, and has costs and ridership in line with Federal Transit Administration's rating system for New Starts projects.

Public Input

The PAC held a hearing on November 10 at Woodbury City Hall to receive public comment on the proposed LPA. Comments were also submitted via email and mail during a 30-day public comment period from October 13 to November 13. A total of 56 comments were received during the public comment period and 153 comments were received since the east-end refinement process began in May. Staff will provide a verbal summary of the comments received during the LPA review process at the meeting.

The comments can also be viewed in full on the project website at the following location:

http://thegatewaycorridor.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-11-13-Eastern-End-Public-Comment-Summary_FINAL-1.pdf

Resolutions of Support

Oakdale and Woodbury are the two cities that need to pass resolutions of support because the route changes are within their borders. Oakdale passed a resolution of support on November 22 and Woodbury passed a resolution on November 30. The City of Maplewood also passed a resolution of support on November 28. Ramsey and Washington Counties, as the local funding partners, will act on resolutions of support on December 13 and 20, respectively.



A technical summary of the process is available on the project website and will be updated as additional actions are taken by the PAC and counties.

<http://thegatewaycorridor.com/documents/2014/LPA%20Information%20Packet.pdf>

PAC and TAC Input

The TAC confirmed the LPA at their meeting on November 16. The PAC will review the public input and make a final recommendation on the proposed LPA decision to the Commission at their December 8 meeting, which will be held directly before the Commission meeting.

The Commission will be asked to act on a resolution of support. A draft resolution is attached to this memo.

Action

Approve final LPA recommendation for submittal to Metropolitan Council for inclusion in the Transportation Policy Plan

RESOLUTION TRANSMITTING THE GATEWAY CORRIDOR COMMISSION'S SUPPORT FOR THE REFINED EAST END SECTION OF THE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (LPA) THAT RUNS THROUGH THE CITIES OF OAKDALE AND WOODBURY TO THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Gateway Corridor is a proposed project that will provide for transit infrastructure improvements in the eastern portion of the Twin Cities, and;

WHEREAS, the purpose of the project is to provide transit service to meet the existing and long-term regional mobility and local accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public within the project area by providing all day bi-directional station-to-station service that compliments existing and planned express bus service in the corridor, and;

WHEREAS, the Gateway Corridor is located in Ramsey and Washington Counties, Minnesota, extending approximately 9 miles, and connecting downtown Saint Paul with its East Side neighborhoods and the suburbs of Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, and Woodbury, and;

WHEREAS, the Gateway Corridor project received the important Presidential designation as a Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard Project, and;

WHEREAS, the identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is a critical first step in pursuing federal funding for the Gateway Corridor project, and;

WHEREAS, the LPA includes the definition of the Gateway Corridor mode and a conceptual alignment which can be refined through further engineering efforts, and;

WHEREAS, LPA resolutions of support for the BRT Alternative A-B-C-D2-E2 generally on the Hudson Road – Hudson Boulevard alignment that crosses to the south side of I-94 between approximately Lake Elmo Avenue and Manning Avenue were provided by the PAC, GCC, each of the Gateway Corridor cities, and Ramsey and Washington County Regional Railroad Authorities in 2014, and;

WHEREAS, the Gateway Corridor (Gold Line) was officially included in the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, and;

WHEREAS, several alignment and station location options were developed and assessed as part of the LPA refinement process from Lake Elmo/Settlers Ridge Parkway to Manning Avenue in Lake Elmo; and

WHEREAS, in December 2015, the Woodbury City Council took action on the refined LPA alignment between Lake Elmo Avenue/Settlers Ridge Parkway and Manning Avenue in Lake Elmo as follows:

- BRT Alignment A-B-C-D2-E-2 which on the east end begins and ends at the Manning Avenue park and ride in Lake Elmo, travels south on Manning Avenue to Hudson Road, proceeding west on Hudson Road to Settlers Ridge Parkway, with a station in the vicinity of Settlers Ridge Parkway, then proceeding north on Settlers Ridge Parkway to Hudson Boulevard in Lake Elmo. The LPA alignment from this point west remains unchanged.

WHEREAS, in January 2016 the Lake Elmo City Council took action to not support the Gateway project through their community, requiring further refinement of the LPA alignment east of I-694, and;

WHEREAS, additional alignment and station options have been evaluated east of I-694 in the cities of Oakdale and Woodbury, and;

WHEREAS, the East End Working Group, Technical Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, Policy Advisory Committee and Gateway Corridor Commission after reviewing technical analysis and input

from the public, recommended the Dedicated BRT Alternative A-B-C-D3 (see figure) as the refined LPA for public comment, and;

WHEREAS, the Policy Advisory Committee and Gateway Corridor Commission held a public hearing on November 10, 2016 at the Woodbury City Hall on the recommended LPA, at which time 12 people testified, and;

WHEREAS, the comment period for the recommended LPA remained open through November 13, during which time 56 comments were received, and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Gateway Corridor Commission has taken into consideration the technical information and public input on each of the east end alignment and station options for the section of the corridor east of I-694 in the Cities of Oakdale and Woodbury, and hereby identifies Dedicated BRT Alternative A-B-C-D3 (see figure) as the LPA. The LPA alignment from west of I-694 remains unchanged; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution adopted by the Gateway Corridor Commission be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council for their consideration.

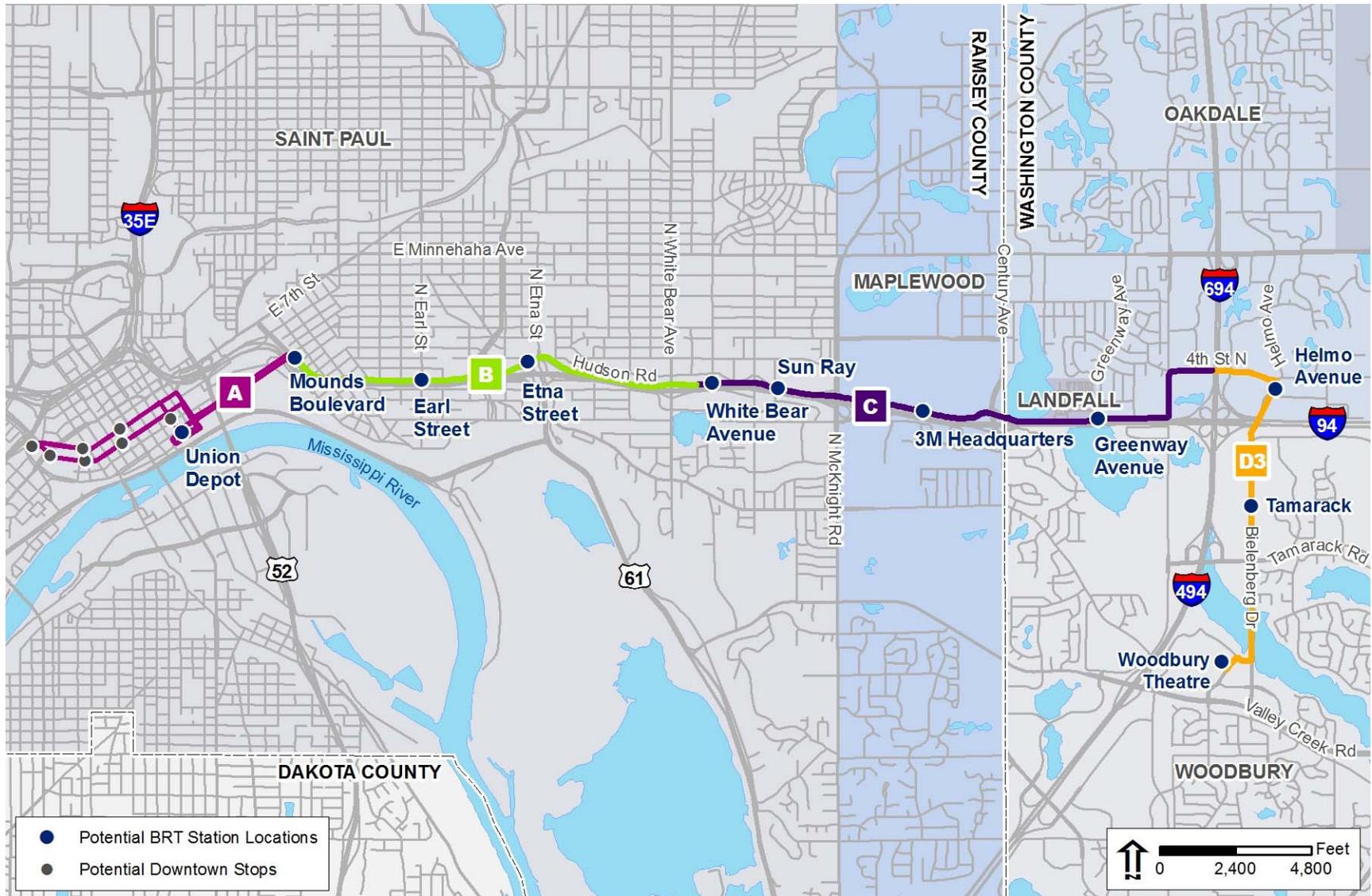
Chairperson

Date Approved by Commission

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the Resolution presented to and adopted by the Gateway Corridor Commission at a duly authorized meeting thereof held on the 8 day of December, 2016 as shown by the minutes of said meeting in my possession.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
ORTEGA	_____	_____	_____	_____
WEIK	_____	_____	_____	_____
PRINCE	_____	_____	_____	_____
SMITH	_____	_____	_____	_____
REINKE	_____	_____	_____	_____
STEPHENS	_____	_____	_____	_____
PEARSON	_____	_____	_____	_____
KYLLO	_____	_____	_____	_____
NELSON	_____	_____	_____	_____
WILLIAMS	_____	_____	_____	_____

Alternative A-B-C-D3





Agenda Item #4

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: 2017 Work Plan and Budget

At the November 2017 meeting the Commission discussed general items to include in the 2017 work plan and budget. A final 2017 work plan and budget is attached for discussion. This is the second reading of the draft work plan and budget. Action on the work plan and budget will take place at this meeting.

Action Requested: Approval



Gateway Corridor Commission

2017 DRAFT Work Plan and Budget

Commission Priorities for 2017

- Continue work on the environmental document, with particular focus on cultural resources.
- Oversee and guide the work of the Commission's communication consultant in the execution of the Commission's strategic communication plan.
- Support the project's request for \$3 million in state funding for project development in the 2017 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.
- Transition the project to the State of Minnesota to lead future phases of study, design and construction.

Work Plan

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:

- A. 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.
- B. Work with CTIB, state and local agencies to identify regional priorities for the corridor.
- C. 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).

- D. Work with the public-private partnerships such as East Metro Strong to catalyze job growth and economic development opportunities within the Gateway Corridor
- E. 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:

- A. Utilize and implement recommendations from the Strategic Communication Plan.
- B. Develop and grow a supporter base email distribution list.
- C. Present to civic and community groups, businesses and chambers of commerce, and local agencies throughout the Corridor.
- D. Distribute materials including press releases, newsletters, fact sheets, and other public information items.
- E. Identify media recognition opportunities of Commission meetings and events through print, radio, and public access television.
- F. 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:

- A. Advocacy
 - i. 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.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. Promote increased transit funding to improve and expand the existing transit service in the Corridor.
 - iv. Establish positions and specific requests on legislative initiatives that affect the Gateway Corridor.
 - v. Travel to Washington D.C. to meet with key members of the Minnesota delegation and federal agency staff on the status of the project and the need for Federal funding.
- B. Outreach
 - i. Identify and establish communication and action plan with the business community along the corridor.

- ii. Engage the various and diverse community and business groups along the corridor.
- iii. 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 2017. 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 project development team

4. Transitway Development Process

A. Draft Environmental Document

The Commission began the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the corridor in May 2013. In fall 2016, the Federal Transit Administration determined that the appropriate class of action is an Environmental Assessment. All the work the commission has done to date will be utilized to complete a draft EA document. This document will be the foundation for project development and finalizing the EA. The Commission will work with the Project Development team to ensure there is a smooth transition of environmental assessment work done to date.

B. 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 2017. In addition, the Commission will coordinate a visit to see bus rapid transit in a dedicated guideway in another metropolitan region as a learning opportunity, particularly in the area of station area planning.

C. Project Transition Activities

Project Support Activities are needed in 2017 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 preparation of materials to support the project's request for entry into Project Development and the Project Development application. 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.

D. Project Development

Project Development (PD) is the next phase in the federal transitway development process. This phase includes preliminary engineering, which brings the project up to approximately 30% design. 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 2017 and approved summer 2017. The PD phase will go from summer 2017 to summer 2019. The Gateway Corridor project will transition to the State as the project sponsor at the start of PD.

5. Administrative Activities

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

- A. Prepare and adopt a yearly Work Plan and Budget
- B. Prepare annual financial statements
- C. Contract with an independent auditor to perform the annual audit
- D. Review insurance needs and procure appropriate insurance
- E. Provide Commission and staff administration
- F. Manage Commission expenses
- G. Manage the consultants selected for any of the various work tasks undertaken by the Commission
- H. Conduct strategic planning around the role of local agencies in Gateway Gold Line BRT Project Office and the future role of the Gateway Corridor Commission, Policy Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee.

Gateway Corridor Commission

DRAFT 2017 Revenues

Revenues	Amount
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Oriented Development Pilot Program Grant (Station Area Planning)	\$ 1,000,000
Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) Project Support Grant (2017 CTIB Grant) Station Area Planning (2016 CTIB Grant)	\$ 225,000 \$ 270,000
Regional Railroad Authorities (RRA) Ramsey County Washington County	\$ 130,000 \$ 130,000
Gateway Corridor Commission Fund Balance	\$ 20,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,775,000

DRAFT 2017 Expenditures

Expenditures	Amount	Revenue Source
Public Involvement Communications and Government Relations Contract Public Information Materials / Events / Advertising Local Agency Visit to Peer Region Commission Delegation Travel to Washington DC	\$ 150,000 \$ 4,000 \$ 20,000 \$ 12,000	RRA dues RRA dues RRA dues RRA dues
Management / Administration Supplies / Materials / Printing / Memberships Insurance / Audit Strategic Planning	\$ 4,000 \$ 11,000 \$ 14,000	RRA dues RRA dues RRA dues
Technical Studies Station Area Planning Project Transition Activities	\$ 1,300,000 \$ 250,000	\$1,000,000 FTA; \$270,000 CTIB, \$30,000 RRA dues \$225,000 CTIB, \$25,000 RRA dues
Contingency	\$ 10,000	RRA dues
TOTAL	\$ 1,775,000	



Agenda Item #5

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: 2017 Insurance Renewal

The Gateway Corridor Commission's insurance policy with the League of Minnesota Cities is up for renewal in 2017. Coverage for the work of the Commission is currently held through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust. Coverage includes open meeting, municipal liability, auto and crime. The premium last year was \$3,770 and was paid by the Commission.

At the time coverage was obtained, the Commission was asked to determine whether it would waive the statutory tort liability limits. The Commission chose **NOT** to waive such limits. This means that an individual claimant would be able to recover no more than \$300,000 on any claim. If the Commission chose to waive the limits, a claimant could recover up to \$1 million.

The League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust would like confirmation that the Commission would again chose not to waive the statutory tort liability limits. Insurance renewal cost is included in the Commission's 2017 draft budget.

The Washington County Risk Manager has reviewed the request and recommends that the commission **DOES NOT WAIVE** the monetary limits on tort liability established by Minnesota statutes. This is also consistent with other corridor commission insurance coverage plans.

Action Requested: Continue insurance coverage with League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for 2017 and that the statutory tort liability limits not be waived as recommended by the Washington County Risk Manager.



Agenda Item #6

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: 2017 Communications and Government Relations Contract Amendment

The Gateway Corridor Commission has been under contract with MZA + Co for one year. Agenda item 4 is the 2017 budget and work plan, which proposes an amendment to the communications and government relations contract to allow for a time and scope extension in the amount of \$150,000. This amount is contingent on Commission input and approval.

The 2017 work plan and budget identified a legislative coordination strategy as a key work item.

The proposed scope of work for 2017 for Communications and Government Relations is attached to this memo.

Action Requested: Approval for the use of up to \$150,000 to amend the contract with MZA + Co to allow for a time and scope extension to provide additional communication and government relations services, consistent with the 2017 budget and scope of services.

December 1, 2016

Lyssa Leitner
Senior Planner
Washington County Public Works Department
14949 62nd Street North
Stillwater, MN 55082

RE: Contract Amendment Request: Term Extension

Dear Lyssa:

MZA+Co is currently under contract with the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) to provide communications and government affairs services for the Gateway Corridor project (Contract Number 8890).

The contract commenced in February 2016. This letter outlines the scope of services proposed for a one-year extension of the contract. The new contract would begin on February 1, 2017 and extend until January 31, 2018.

The scope of services includes:

1. Project Management & Strategy
2. Strategic Message Development
3. Media Relations
4. Community & Business Engagement
5. Social Media and Website Content Development
6. Government Relations

MZA+Co is a full-service public relations and public affairs company based in St. Paul. Our team is known for our strategic approach to helping clients meet their goals. With decades of experience in business, public affairs and government, we have established strong reputations for innovative thinking and skilled execution. MZA+Co is working with Cook Girard Associates to work hand-in-hand to execute successful government relations strategies and tactics congruent with communications and outreach to the business community and constituents.

Sincerely,



Brian McClung
Co-Founder/Partner
MZA+Co

PROFILE OF MZA+CO TEAM

For this project and proposal, MZA+Co is partnering and subcontracting with Cook Girard Associates. While MZA+Co will provide project management and lead the overall project for this contract, Cook Girard Associates will direct and supplement the day-to-day lobbying activities necessary for a successful effort at the State Capitol.

Brian McClung will serve as lead principal and project manager with a focus on developing an overall communications strategy including strategic message development; maximizing social media tools; directing grassroots tactics and engagement of the business community; and working on government relations strategies.

Brian has spent nearly 20 years at the intersection of media, politics and business as a television news reporter, campaign manager, political spokesperson, communications strategist, and public relations executive. From 2004 to 2010, he served Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty as Press Secretary, Director of Communications, and Deputy Chief of Staff. Brian's media and public relations work has been recognized with a Politics in Minnesota/Capitol Report "Leaders in Public Policy" award. Brian continues to have strong relationships with reporters at the State Capitol and around Minnesota and is a regular guest on the state's most-watched public affairs programs – Twin Cities Public Television's "Almanac" and KSTP-TV's "At Issue with Tom Hauser."

Judy Cook is co-founder and Senior Partner of Cook Girard Associates, with more than 30 years of experience in public policy and politics in Minnesota. Cook is repeatedly recognized as one of the leading government affairs professionals in Minnesota. She has an unequaled reputation for her skills as an effective communicator and advocate on behalf of clients. Throughout her career, Cook has successfully managed some of the most complex legislative and regulatory issues addressed by Minnesota policymakers.

Cook has expertise on a variety of public policy issue areas including health care, business regulation, civil law, environment and government transformation. She is known for tackling tough government affairs challenges and achieving results through a broad, bi-partisan base of relationships while developing and implementing effective strategies. She has proven the ability to work across the political spectrum to arrive at consensus on public policy issues from the simple to the most controversial, yielding positive results.

Cook has long received recognition for her achievements, including being named by Twin Cities Business Magazine to their list of "100 People to Help You Thrive in 2013." In October 2010, the national political magazine, "Campaigns and Elections" included Cook among their list of "100 Influencers in Minnesota." In 1997, while President of the Minnesota Retail Merchants Association, Minnesota Monthly Magazine named Cook one of the "21 Most Influential Women in Minnesota." Cook has also served on numerous boards and organizations during her years as a leading government affairs professional in Minnesota.

Jim Girard is co-founder and Senior Partner of Cook Girard Associates. Girard has unique perspective and expertise in public policy, having served in multiple roles in Minnesota State Government. Girard's eight years in the Minnesota House of Representatives (1989 – 1996) and two years as Commissioner of Revenue (1996 – 1998) give him a unique perspective on the landscape of Minnesota politics. This experience gives Girard a depth of relationships with legislators and key staff in various state agencies, providing valuable insight and access to clients. As a legislator, as an executive in the Administration and as a government affairs professional, Girard has a keen understanding of issues and how to achieve positive outcomes.

During his time in the legislature, Girard was a leader in numerous successful public policy initiatives and was elected by his peers to serve on the House Republican Caucus Executive Committee. As Commissioner of Revenue in the Carlson Administration, Girard led all aspects of the state agency responsible for tax policy and revenue collection in the state—resulting in unique knowledge and insight into Minnesota budget and tax policy. As a government affairs professional, Girard is a recognized leader on tax policy and economic development, working across the political aisles. He has a proven ability to create and lead bipartisan coalitions to accomplish legislative goals. Girard's comprehensive background also includes expertise in developing linkages between government and business.

Girard's tax knowledge and policy experience is also being drawn upon in his capacity as Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Minnesota Center for Fiscal Excellence.

Katharine Tinucci is Senior Vice President at MZA+Co. Katharine served as Governor Mark Dayton's Campaign Manager during his successful re-election in 2014, overseeing all aspects of his campaign. Prior to the re-election campaign, Katharine was Press Secretary to Governor Dayton during his first term, where she planned and executed communications strategy for advancing the Administration's agenda and acted as spokesperson for the governor. Katharine also played a key role during Dayton's 2010 campaign for governor, serving as Deputy Campaign Manager for Communications. She is a frequent contributor to TPT's "Almanac" and WCCO Radio. Katharine earned a B.A. in Theatre and Theology from Loyola University Chicago and a J.D. from the University of St. Thomas School of Law

Mark Giga is a manager for MZA+Co and will focus on earned media and grassroots outreach on this project, reporting to Brian McClung. Giga has more than a decade of experience working on public relations and public affairs projects for Fortune 50 companies, advocacy organizations, members of Congress and government agencies. In addition, Giga is a veteran who served with the United States Marines Marine Wing Support Squadron 471 and Golf Company, 2nd Battalion 24th Marines. He is a skilled writer and communicator who has managed long-term communications outreach efforts and achieved excellent results.

The following individuals are available to provide assistance and strategic counsel to the project and Commission on an as-needed basis.

Kurt Zellers is a Partner and Co-Founder of MZA+Co. Kurt served six terms in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 2003 to 2015, including as the state's 57th Speaker of the House. Kurt's extensive national network includes Speakers and Majority Leaders in legislatures across the United States. In Minnesota, Kurt authored legislation on many key initiatives including public safety issues, mental health treatment for adolescents, and building a new hospital for his local community in Maple Grove. Kurt has also worked as an executive for public relations firms, private sector businesses and three statewide campaigns during the past 20 years. His PR experience includes working with the world's leading chemical company, BASF, on advocacy issues, crisis communications, media training and coaching.

Chas Anderson is a Partner and Co-Founder of MZA+Co. Chas has more than two decades of experience in the public and private sectors as an advisor on state policy, politics and corporate strategy and communications. She has extensive experience in public policy, strategic message development and providing leadership around issues and association management. Her expertise flows from her work in politics and in state government as well as in the private sector on behalf of corporate and non-profit clients.

She served as Executive Director and Chief of Staff of the Minnesota House of Representatives (2011-14) and for two governors including serving as Deputy Commissioner of Education for Governor Tim Pawlenty (2003-10). As Executive Director and Chief of Staff in the Minnesota House, Chas managed over 200 employees and directed the legislative appropriations process and decision-making for the \$60 billion all funds and two-year state budget.

In 2012, Chas was named "Top Legislative Staffer" by Politics in Minnesota and in 2001 received an award from the Minnesota Supreme Court for her work on improving access to the Judiciary. Chas earned a B.A., *Magna Cum Laude*, from St. Cloud State University and an MBA from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota.

Sarah Strong-Belisle is a Director of Government Relations for Cook Girard Associates. Sarah joined Cook Girard Associates in late 2000, fresh from earning her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Duke University. Strong-Belisle has exhibited a natural talent for effective legislative advocacy and has worked her way up the government affairs ladder to her current position.

Sarah has significant experience crafting legislative strategies and legislation, especially in the areas of commerce, workforce development, and information privacy. Over the last decade she has gained a working knowledge on a variety of business and governmental issues, frequently leading ad hoc coalitions on complex issues. She is also known for her ability as a tough negotiator on behalf of clients, working tirelessly to achieve consensus among diverse groups on controversial issues. Sarah is also a gifted writer – her updates combine her with a unique political insight and are a favorite among clients.

A proven leader both inside the capitol and out, in April 2011 Sarah was named "#1 Rising Lobbyist" in a Politics in Minnesota survey of a bipartisan group of legislators, lobbyists and staff. She is wrapping up eight years of service on the Minnesota Government Relations Council

Board of Directors, where she was selected by her peers to serve in a variety of leadership roles, including Board President in 2014. While in MGRC leadership, Sarah was the point person for the lobbying community on the significant Capitol renovation project and worked to ensure continued public access to the legislative process during construction. Sarah also had the honor of serving as Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Sexual Violence Center, a Twin Cities' crisis assistance and advocacy organization for victims of sexual violence. A proud Youth in Government (YIG) alum, she has also served on the YIG Alumni and Communications Committee.

Joe Sellwood joined Cook Girard Associates in 2013, directly coming off of statewide election campaign efforts and previously working in business-to-business sales. Joe is an important part of the Cook Girard team; working on a variety of issues, analyzing policy and gathering information, educating legislators and coordinating with various stakeholders. Going into his fourth session, he has been a key player in drafting and influencing the passage of critical legislation for his clients. His passion for politics and public policy is helping those inside and outside of the legislative world to better understand the issues that impact Minnesotans.

Joe understands the importance of teamwork and commitment, having served six years as an infantryman in the Minnesota Army National Guard. He achieved the rank of sergeant and spent nine months in Kosovo as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, with an honorable discharge in May, 2012. Aside from politics, Sellwood is an assistant varsity football coach at New Life Academy in Woodbury.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Project Management and Strategy

A significant part of this proposal is effectively managing the Gateway Gold Line project's communications and government affairs efforts and developing effective strategies for ensuring a successful outcome at the State Capitol.

Deliverable 1: Overall project management

Timeline: Ongoing.

Staff: Brian McClung

Brian McClung serves as the overall project manager, working closely with the Gateway Corridor Commission and staff to develop an overall calendar aligned to the project's strategies, goals, activities and tactics. The timeline for the contract extension has essentially three phases: (1) The 2017 Legislative Session; (2) Post-session; (3) Lead up to the 2018 Legislative Session (expected to begin in February or March 2018)

Deliverable 2: Manage day-to-day activities involved with executing overall project plan

Timeline: Management will begin upon execution of the contract and ongoing.

Staff: Brian McClung, Mark Giga

It will be important to make sure that day-to-day management of the organization is effective. We will assist with efforts that would include the following activities:

- Communicate with the Commission and its partners, staff, and supporters on a regular basis
- Provide regular and key information for Commission Board Meetings
- Prepare materials for Gateway Corridor Commission and staff

2. Strategic Message Development

Deliverable 1: Overall Strategy Development

Timeline: Ongoing. The team will work together to tie together communications and government relations plan, strategy and tactics.

Staff assignment: Brian McClung, Judy Cook, Mark Giga, Katharine Tinucci

Our core messages and target audiences have been defined. We will continue to work to refine and share our messages during 2017 and 2018.

-
- A. *Key Project Goals – phases of activity*
 - 1. 2017 Legislative Session
 - 2. Post-session
 - 3. Ramp up to the start of the 2018 Legislative Session

 - B. *Audience Development & Definition*
 - 1. Key Groups
 - a. Local
 - b. Regional
 - c. Statewide

 - 2. Define audience categories
 - a. Supporters
 - b. Opponents
 - c. Persuadable
 - d. Advocates

 - C. *Communication Themes/Message Development*
 - 1. Themes to provide focus for messages and information for Gateway Corridor partners, supporters, and other audiences.
 - 2. Key facts to share with supporters

 - D. *Strategy Development*
 - 1. Beginning of 2017 Legislative Session focus
 - a. Outreach to legislators
 - b. Preparation for the session
 - c. Identifying key potential supportive partners
 - d. Review and revise existing messages
 - e. Opponent monitoring and response

 - E. *Legislative session focus*
 - 1. Issue advocacy focused on:
 - a. Governor’s office
 - b. House of Representatives
 - c. Senate

 - F. *Update and Review*
 - 1. Review goals and tactics
 - 2. Develop changes
 - 3. Update plan

3. Media Relations

The heart of the proposal is executing an effective public affairs plan for the Commission, including strong media relations efforts.

Deliverable 1: *Develop and execute media relations plan*

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff assignment: Brian McClung and Katharine Tinucci

Communications is the use of paid and earned media along with digital media and social networking tools to gain publicity for the campaign, drive more people to participate, and create a statewide presence.

A. Earned Media

1. *Press releases* — Releases will be sent to reporters, editors and producers to share information about the campaign
2. *Press conferences* — Leaders can hold press conferences when there is newsworthy information to announce and when Q&A with reporters would be helpful
3. *Commentaries/Letters to the Editor* — Opinion pieces will be submitted to local publications and news websites
4. *Media coordination* – We will engage key reporters and editors to share background information and make sure the right contact from the Gateway Corridor is able to respond to questions or other earned media opportunities
5. *Media training* — Help key Gateway Corridor leaders be more effective in how they work with the media, perform in interviews, etc.

B. Effective Messaging

We work with Gateway Corridor staff to develop and fine tune effective messages. This helps enhance understanding of Gold Line BRT and influences perceptions held by both the public and policymakers.

- Strategic language audit & message development
- Producing key message one-pagers and talking points

4. Community and Business Engagement

The Gateway Corridor team has done an excellent job engaging stakeholders over the past six+ years. We will continue to build on that foundation to grow support for the project with residents, businesses and elected officials.

Deliverable 1: *Work to grow the list of grasstops and grassroots supporters that can be used to communicate with and activate supporters*

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff: Brian McClung and Mark Giga

One of our goals for the 2017 legislative session is to collect more email addresses from supporters and potential supporters, and using that data to wisely target and activate at the right time. We will work with Commission to use the right platforms (most likely e-mail, online advertising, and the website) to engage supporters and constituents.

- Keep supporters up-to-date on progress of the Gateway Gold Line
- Pro-actively drive supporters to participate in the legislative process
- Monitor grassroots activities
- Build organizational value
- Contribute to the strategic planning process

Grasstops engagement involves the strategic involvement of high profile leaders to advocate for the Gateway Corridor. The effort would identify and engage visible leaders from the private and public sectors that are willing to offer public support for our positions.

A. Industry and other Business Leader Engagement

One of the major resources available to this campaign is existing relationships with businesses and affinity groups. Through sustained engagement, it is possible to build a list of credible advocates and create connections with the employees of businesses and business organizations, effectively extending the campaign's reach.

Grasstops outreach typically occurs in three phases: Targeting, Education, and Mobilization.

Phase 1: Local Government and Business Leader Targeting

Prioritizing which businesses to reach out to will help focus resources on those business leaders who offer the most potential for developing credible, active spokespeople and champions.

By targeting key leaders, the campaign will demonstrate strong, broad based business support to legislators while at the same time signaling to other business groups that supporting Gateway Corridor is important.

Phase II: Outreach and Education

Once business leaders are targeted, the campaign can systematically conduct outreach based on the level of interest.

- Member Communications – Using regular communication channels to inform employees, trade groups and business organizations about our efforts and encourage them to get engaged.
- One-on-Ones – Directly meeting with pro-transit business organization contacts and explaining our goals will be a primary recruitment tactic.

-
- Business Community Events – Attending business community events and providing information regarding the effort.
 - Materials and online resource center — Digital tools companies and partners can use to learn about and talk about the importance of supporting the Gateway Corridor, such as FAQs, talking points, and more.

Phase III: Mobilization

Grasstops leaders will make the case for the importance of our issues with other business leaders, legislators, and the public. They will be mobilized to:

- Conduct visits with policymakers — Have one-on-one conversations with targeted legislators to convey the need for supporting Gateway Corridor
- Conduct one-on-ones with other business leaders to recruit them to actively advocate for Gateway Corridor
- Act as spokespeople at events, including service club presentations, press conferences, business community meetings, and other events
- Write letters to policymakers
- Write letters to the editor
- Give testimony at the Capitol
- Host events or visits for policymakers
- Provide recommendations for other leaders who could get involved

B. *Other Community Leaders*

Prominent community leaders may also be effective grasstops advocates. As the campaign progresses, it will be essential to assess the list of leaders that the campaign has built, identifying opportunities for continued outreach to various leaders, community groups and trade associations.

5. Social Media and Website Content

Our team will continue to provide social media content and execution.

Deliverable 1: Execute social media outreach

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff assignment: Katharine Tinucci

-
1. *Monitoring* — Using our existing media platform, we will track and monitor Twitter, Facebook, and other online channels to make sure the Gateway Corridor team is able to stay connected to the tone and tenor of information being shared
 2. *Content plan* — To make sure this effort is effectively using social media, our team will help create and manage a content plan for social media that will include the creation of an a calendar to plan content development and posting, a strategy to respond to claims, and how to engage and share content with and from others
 3. *Build Out Digital Infrastructure*
 - *Contact Database* – Building out the contact database so that it has seamless integration with social media and recruitment tools
 - *E-Advocacy* – Incorporating the ability to share information or send messages to legislators to make advocacy quick and easy online
 - *Facebook* – Creating two-way communication with supporters, providing a great outreach platform
 - *Twitter* - Establishing a Twitter feed that targets citizens and thought leaders who might repost content and share information online
 - *Other Digital Spaces* – Identifying and participating in sites such as blogs and other forums are tools that can be leveraged to amplify our messages
 4. *Execution*: Under the direction of Commission staff, we will post, provide key links and share news articles, on a regular schedule.

Deliverable 2: Review and update content for website

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff assignment: Katharine Tinucci

6. Government Relations

For this part of the proposal, MZA+Co is working with Cook Girard Associates. The two companies and their employees work closely together to ensure strategies and tactics are implemented to success.

There are a number of key work items that will be the direct responsibility of the Cook Girard government affairs team in 2017 on behalf of the Gateway Corridor Commission. All members of the Cook Girard staff will be actively involved in the project and our skills and relationships will be utilized when and where they can be most effective. Judy Cook will serve as the lead contact at Cook Girard Associates for the government affairs efforts and will ensure that each staff member is taking on the appropriate role and responsibilities for this initiative to succeed.

Deliverable 1: Overall Strategy Development

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff involved: Brian McClung, Judy Cook, Jim Girard, Mark Giga, Katharine Tinucci

The MZA+Co and Cook Girard team will work with the Gateway Corridor Commission to develop a winning strategy for the 2017 session that can be further developed for legislative funding needs in future sessions. We will create a seamless, coordinated legislative effort that incorporates the messaging and grassroots strategy that is developed for the initiative. We will communicate regularly and coordinate closely with the local legislators and local government lobbyists, as well as other stakeholders, to create a successful plan of action for the lobbying effort-- starting before the session begins through its conclusion and beyond. Strategy elements also include determining the best approach for funding (bonding or general fund) along with effective management of the entire lobbying team.

We believe strategy development is an ongoing and dynamic process that may need to be adjusted based on the changing environment at the Capitol, including overall goals, timing of activities, adjustments in messaging, and all plan execution. We are adept at recognizing when to revisit a strategy and when to stay the course, and will work closely with the Gateway Corridor Commission and MZA+Co on all elements of the public policy plan for the Gateway Gold Line.

Deliverable 2: Lobbying / Monitoring / Information Gathering and Reporting

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff involved: Judy Cook and Jim Girard

The large number of new legislators, the new Republican majority in the Minnesota Senate, and the number of issues in front of lawmakers in the 2017 session will make Cook Girard Associates' proven lobbying capabilities critical to success for the Gateway Gold Line funding effort. We have strong relationships and regular communication with key individuals in state government which provides us the opportunity to gather and share critical information with the Gateway Corridor Commission. We know the mood and activities at the Capitol, so we can help you navigate the ever-changing climate.

A cornerstone of our efforts will be direct lobbying by Cook Girard staff, coordinated with lobbyists representing the local counties, as well as local officials and other stakeholders. Educating legislators and building a strong base of supporters who recognize the value of the Gateway Gold Line project is critical to success this session and into the future. We will first focus on Committee members and leadership, then broaden efforts to the other key legislators. We will work to identify the best messengers from among the coalition lobbyists for each audience, whether it is individual legislators, staff or the Administration.

Cook Girard is recognized for our attention to detail and constant presence at the Capitol. From scheduling and attending meetings with legislators, to monitoring legislative hearings, tracking

legislation and providing constant updates, Cook Girard’s team will ensure that you are provided with comprehensive reports on all activities, consistently well represented and well informed. Day-to-day lobbying activities will include:

- Conduct individual meetings with key legislators, staff and the Administration to educate and gain support
- Conduct ongoing communication with bill authors and area legislators
- Schedule meetings for Commission members and other supporters with legislators, staff and Administration
- Attend, monitor and report on all hearings and meetings of interest to the Gateway Corridor Commission
- Provide regular updates and attend client meetings
- Work with MZA+Co on issue management, including coordination of lobbying efforts among local government lobbyists and other stakeholders

Deliverable 3: Coordinate with Local Government Partners, Coalition and Stakeholders

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff: Brian McClung, Judy Cook, Jim Girard

Cook Girard Associates, along with MZA+Co, will manage the overall lobbying effort, working collaboratively with the entire Gateway Gold Line team, including local government staff, other retained consultants, association partners, business supporters and other stakeholders. Especially in the 2017 session, projects such as this are time-intense and require maximization of key relationships. This cooperative approach will be most effective as the group works simultaneously on various elements of the overall strategy to reach the desired objective. In this way, the team can best gain the necessary support for this project.

We recognize that success in a coalition depends on a level of trust among partners and we know how to build and maintain the necessary level of trust. Cook Girard will play the important role of keeping all players on task through a clear communications plan and an efficient method for reporting lobbying information.

Deliverable 4: Client Communications

Timeline: Ongoing

Staff: Judy Cook and Jim Girard

Unequaled in Minnesota government affairs, we will provide ongoing and seamless communication with the Gateway Corridor Commission on all legislative efforts. When the legislature is in session, we maintain an ongoing presence at the Capitol, giving you the necessary knowledge and understanding about what is happening both publicly and behind the scenes. We will provide up-to-the-minute information about the legislative process, emerging issues, negotiations on critical issues and important anecdotes.

Our goal is to ensure that you are up-to-date and well informed on all issues and activities that impact the Gateway Gold Line Project.

Deliverable 5: Post-Session Communications and Lobbying

Timeline: Post-session from June 2017 through January 2017

Staff: Judy Cook and Jim Girard

Government affairs efforts do not end when the legislative session concludes. Especially with a project that will have future legislative funding needs, it will be important for Cook Girard Associates to maintain communications with key legislators, staff and the Administration during the interim and leading into the 2018 session.

On behalf of the MZA+Co team, we look forward to working with you to continue to advance the Gateway Corridor project.

Proposed budget:

Task No.	Task Description	Task Total
1.0	Project Management	\$29,500.00
2.0	Communications, Media, Outreach, and Ongoing Strategy	\$40,000.00
3.0	Social Media	\$7,500.00
4.0	Government Relations/Lobbying	\$54,000.00
5.0	Graphics	\$3,000.00
6.0	E-mail services/list development	\$1,000.00
7.0	Contingency	\$15,000.00
	Total Project Cost	\$150,000.00

Sincerely,

Brian McClung
Partner/Co-Founder
MZA+Co



Agenda Item #7

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Strategic Planning Scope of Work – Gateway Corridor Commission

The transition of the Gateway Corridor into a new project phase requires strategic planning to include necessary consideration regarding Commission role, membership, and activities moving forward. The below task of work provides an overview of the expected tasks for strategic planning that will result in revising the joint powers agreement.

Gateway Corridor

1. Review and report on how other counties and/or joint powers boards transitioned projects to the Metropolitan Council.
2. Review the current Gateway Corridor Commission joint powers agreement.
3. Facilitate strategic planning sessions with Commission members and staff to result in revision recommendations to the joint powers agreement, including Commission role, membership, and activities, based on the transition of Gateway Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit to the Metropolitan Council.
4. Revise the joint powers agreement as directed by the Gateway Corridor Commission based on the outcome of task 3. This task should also include efforts to ensure that a revised joint powers agreement is acceptable to all Commission member legal departments.
5. Present the revised agreement to the Gateway Corridor Commission for action.

TOTAL BUDGET: \$14,000

Action Requested: Approval



Agenda Item #8

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: 2017 Meeting Schedule

Through the development of the Bylaws, the Commission identified a regular scheduled meeting date of the second Thursday of every month at 3:30 PM. Included below are the actual dates for 2017:

January 12

February 9

March 9

April 13

May 11

June 8

July 13

August 10

September 14

October 12

November 9

December 14

Action Requested: Motion to adopt the 2017 meeting schedule.



Agenda Item #10

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Gateway Corridor Lead Agency

Over the past year, project funding partners, including Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, MnDOT, and Ramsey and Washington Counties, have undergone a process to determine which agency should lead the project in future phases of work, including project development, engineering and construction. This process included a risk assessment lead by MnDOT that focused on which agency would be best to lead the project through construction. MnDOT and Metropolitan Council representatives will be at the Commission meeting to discuss the lead agency.

Action Requested: Discussion



DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Jeanne Witzig, Kimley-Horn
RE: Environmental Document Update

Key Work Activities/Progress from mid-November to mid-December 2016

■ Meetings

- *Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)* – The PAC/Gateway Corridor Commission (GCC) held an open house and public hearing on the draft locally preferred alternative on November 10, 2016 in Woodbury. Project team members were present to answer questions about the draft LPA.
- *Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)* – The TAC met on November 16, 2016. The focus of the meeting was to review the input received during the draft LPA review period and updated technical findings for the draft LPA; with a focus on the D3 section of the alternative (alignment and stations through Oakdale and Woodbury). **The TAC recommended to the PAC that Dedicated BRT Alternative ABC-D3 advance as the final LPA for the Gold Line project.**
- *Meeting with MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit (CRU)*– On-going coordination meetings (via phone and in person) have been taking place. Areas of focus include finalizing the revised area of potential effect (APE), Dayton’s Bluff property inventories, and completion of Phase II Inventory forms.

■ Other Project Activities

- Finalized updated Operating and Maintenance Cost Technical Memo.
- Finalized capital costs estimate to reflect comments provided at cost workshop.
- Finalized Preliminary Land Use and Economic Development analysis and memo to address New Starts Evaluating Criteria. Findings presented at the November TAC meeting.
- Prepared supporting background information for LPA decisions by the TAC and PAC in November and December, respectively.
- Advanced work on the Dayton’s Bluff Decision Making Document.
- Finalized concept plans for Dedicated BRT Alternative ABC-D3.
- Continued review and revisions to DRAFT environmental document chapters and associated Technical Reports.

- Continued work on corridor video, including development of narrative to accompany video images.
- 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 chapters.
- Revise the current LPA Selection Summary Report (pending final decision by PAC/GCC on LPA).
- Finalize East End Tech Memo to reflect actions taken in November and December, 2016.
- Finalize Dayton's Bluff Decision Memo.
- Amend the Scoping Decision Document to reflect changes to the project since the SDD was published (pending final decision by PAC/GCC on LPA).
- Coordinate with FTA regarding Federal Register notification regarding change in class of action for environmental review (pending final decision by PAC/GCC on LPA).
- Finalize corridor video.
- 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 and WCRRA.



Agenda Item #12

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Brian McClung, MZA+Co
RE: Gateway Corridor Communications and Government Relations Update

Since our last memo, our government affairs and communications team has been working to share information and work on legislative strategies as the attention of lawmakers shifts from the election to the 2017 legislative session.

Following the November 10 open house and public hearing, local news coverage let citizens know that the draft locally preferred alternative would be considered by the Oakdale and Woodbury City Councils (Woodbury Bulletin article – Gold Line moves to Woodbury, Oakdale city councils: <http://www.woodburybulletin.com/news/government/4164091-gold-line-moves-woodbury-oakdale-city-councils>). That article included information that the new cost estimate for Gold Line BRT is \$65 million lower than the previous LPA (\$420 million vs. the previous route’s \$485 million estimate). As you know, both city council subsequently passed resolutions supporting the new route.

Strategic Communications – We shared information with media to promote the Open House and Public Hearing. There was excellent attendance at both, showing strong public interest in the project.

Following the hearing we worked with media to provide additional information and research about BRT and transit.

We are now engaged in the process of reviewing and refreshing our Gold Line BRT Fact Sheet for the 2017 legislative session. We will also do a review of the Gateway Corridor website to make recommendations on updates.

Government Relations – The chairs of Minnesota House and Senate committees have now been named. Sen. Dave Senjem & Rep. Dean Urdahl are chairing their bodies’ bonding committees. Transportation committee chairs are Sen. Scott Newman & Rep. Paul Torkelson. Our team has been reaching out to have conversations with key legislators about Gold Line BRT. The 2017 legislative session is set to begin on January 3.

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 162 times. We now have 142 followers.

Our recent top tweet earned 2,963 impressions – it was a tweet about the Open House getting underway.

Our November tweet impressions were 13.9K and in October we had 15.2K tweet impressions.

Facebook also continues to be a very strong outreach tool for us. We reached 1,150 people on Facebook between Nov. 2 and Nov. 29.



Agenda Item #13

DATE: November 30, 2016
TO: Gateway Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Other Items

Items 13a. Engagement and Meeting Dates Summary

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

Month	Meeting	Date	Planned Start Time
January	Commission	January 12	3:30pm

Item 13b. Social Media Updates

Facebook

The Gateway Corridor Facebook page was launched on Monday, February 20, 2012. The page currently has 603 '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 12-3,951.

Twitter

The Gateway Corridor Twitter account (@GoldLineBRT) was launched in March 2016. The account currently has 142 followers.

Item 12c. 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
Washington County Regional Railroad Authority	December 20, 2016
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority	December 13, 2016

Previous Outreach

Stakeholder	Status
Woodbury City Council	November 30, 2016
Maplewood City Council	November 28, 2016
Oakdale City Council	November 22, 2016
Woodbury City Council Workshop	November 16, 2016
Dayton's Bluff Community Council	November 14, 2016
3M Bicycle Users Group	October 19, 2016
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 Duinick	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

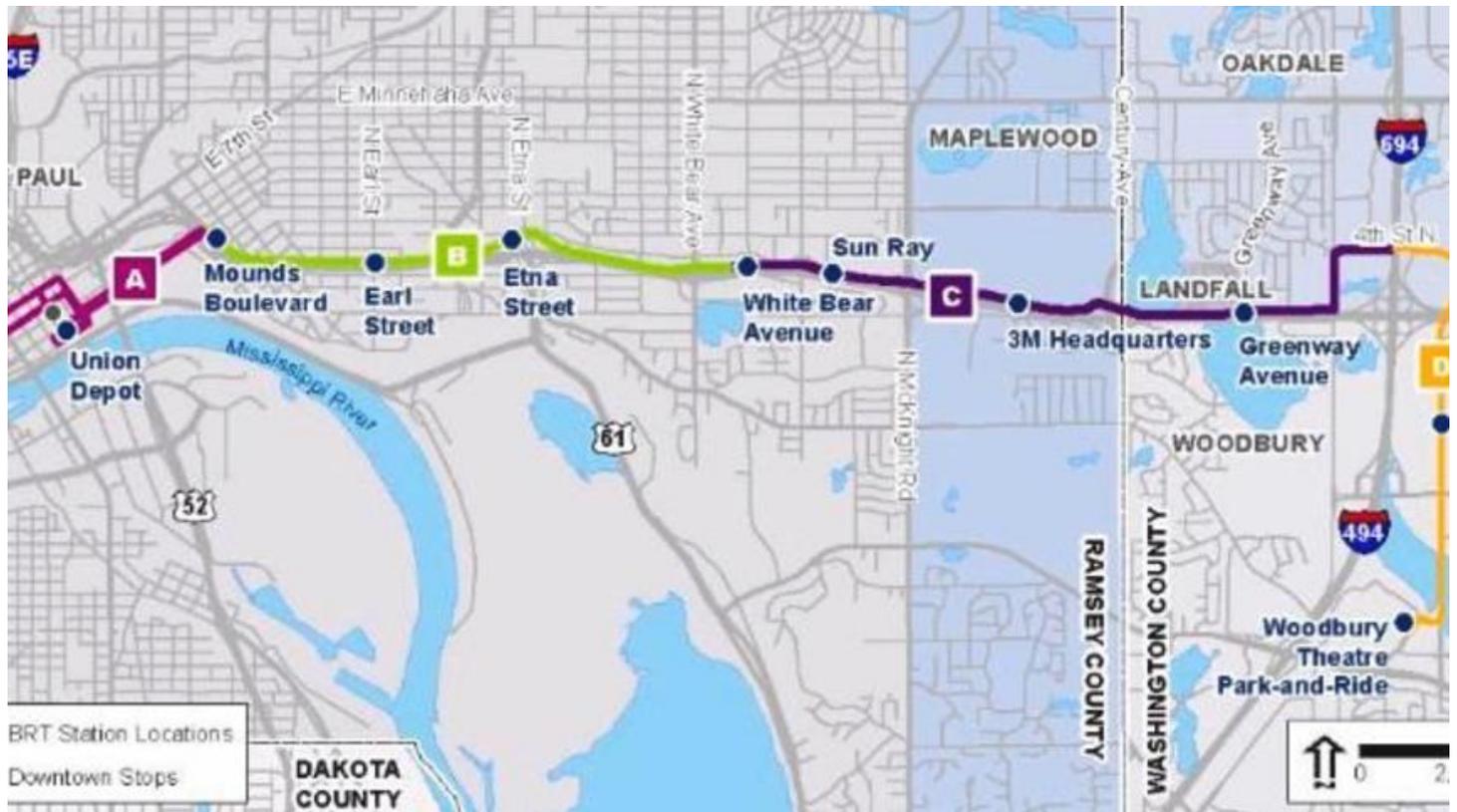


Technical Advisory Committee	Meeting – September 25, 2013
FTA	Coordination Call #2 – September 25, 2013
Fostering an East Side Transit Conversation – Engage ES	Presentation – September 25, 2013
St. Paul Transportation Committee	Meeting – September 22, 2013
Woodbury staff	Meeting – September 12, 2013
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	

Gold Line gets green light from Oakdale, Woodbury

By Youssef Rddad Today at 11:36 a.m.

- 1



The Gold Line will soon move into a deeper planning phase following Woodbury and Oakdale's approvals of the new bus rapid transit (BRT) route.

The Gateway Corridor Commission, who is the body planning the project, needed the two cities to pass resolutions -- a set of conditions -- before the project moved to the next phase. The Woodbury City Council approved its resolution Wednesday, and Oakdale pledged its support during its Nov. 22 meeting.

With resolutions passed, the project will move into the engineering phase, which includes more detailed analysis on the route, environmental impacts and a number of public meetings before construction begins in about two years.

Woodbury's resolution included a number of stipulations for the line, including a desire for more buses feeding into the BRT route, continued support for east metro transportation systems, safety and support of existing express buses.

Cities the Gold Line passes through will again vote on whether they support the project in about two years.

Officials said they anticipate the Gold Line could be operating by 2023.

The Gold Line will run in both directions from Union Depot in St. Paul through the city's East Side, Maplewood, Landfall and Oakdale before terminating at Woodbury Village.

The route was originally intended to pass through Lake Elmo and end somewhere near Manning Avenue in Woodbury, but the city opted out of the project leaving the route's eastern end in question.

Despite backtracking to find an alternative route, Oakdale Council Member Lori Pulkrabek said last Tuesday she prefers the new route more than the original.

"I was not a big fan of the previous route, and am so pleased we have this new route," she said. "Thank you, Lake Elmo, for pulling support because, frankly, this worked out great."

Woodbury Council Member Christopher Burns, who cast the lone no vote for the city's resolution, said in an email Thursday that he's still not convinced the alternative route is best for Woodbury and the east metro.

He said he would prefer more express buses and lanes along Interstates 94, 469 and 694.

"I think the eastern suburbs have long been not treated as well as the western suburbs on transit dollars and favor other infrastructure investments," Burns wrote. "That said, this will come back to us several more times for additional approvals, and I will keep an open mind."

The route would turn south into Woodbury from Oakdale and requires a new bridge to be built connecting Helmo Avenue and Bielenberg Drive over Interstate 94.

Buses travel along dedicated bus-only lanes and arrive more frequently than express or regular buses. Similar to light rail, riders pay the fare before boarding.

Officials estimate the project would cost about \$420 million factoring future inflation in 2023, with operating maintenance costing roughly \$9 million, not factoring for inflation.

The Gateway Corridor Commission will hold its next meeting Dec. 8 in Woodbury.

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Viewpoints on Gold Line stack up

By [Youssef Rddad](#) on Nov 14, 2016 at 11:04 a.m.



As the Gold Line bus-rapid transit (BRT) project revs up, residents' viewpoints are as well.

More than a half-dozen locals weighed in on the project during a Nov. 10 public hearing in Woodbury. Those opposing the project touched on concerns about diminishing property value, noise, disruption and project costs, while supporters argued it would create more economic opportunities, reverse-commute options and enhancements to existing bus service.

The Gold Line would connect downtown St. Paul with its eastern suburbs along bus-only lanes, passing through Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale in Woodbury near Interstate 94. Buses arrive at stations frequently throughout the day and riders pay on the platform before boarding.

The Gateway Corridor Commission, a body of public officials and other state agencies charged with planning the project, needed to find an ending route for the line's eastern end after Lake Elmo's withdrew from the project in January.

Last month, the commission selected a new route in Oakdale and Woodbury as one of five feasible alternatives. Officials estimate the costs to be about \$450 million for the route that will require a new bridge to connect both cities

over I-94 on Bielenberg Drive and Helmo Avenue.

The commission also considered another route that would terminate near at Oakdale Shopping Center, which would slash an additional \$50 million off of its costs but would have fewer projected riders by 2040 compared to the Bielenberg-Helmo route.

Woodbury resident Peter Grasse said he feels BRT will create an economic boost for the east side of town and provide reverse-commuting options for people living in urban areas who don't own cars.

"I think we need to think about the perspective of people coming for jobs," said Grasse, a retired 3M Co. worker. "This option greatly helps people get to jobs we have in Woodbury."

Chase Lemke, a University of Minnesota student who lives near the campus, also spoke Thursday evening on what he feels the importance is of public transit options for connecting the cities and suburbs.

The cost of parking in the city tends to be a deterrence for car ownership, he said, so he relied on Metro Transit's Red Line, which connects the Mall of America to Apple Valley, when he went home to visit family in Lakeville.

While in high school, he relied on public transit to commute to and from a job that's helped him afford college, Lemke added.

Officials have said federal dollars and local sales tax would cover most of the Gold Line's cost, with 45 percent of funds coming from the federal sources and 35 percent from the five-county metro's sales tax. Ramsey and Washington counties would pitch in 5 percent of costs and the remaining 10 percent would come from the state.

For longtime skeptic Linda Stanton, the costs simply aren't worth it compared to possible alternatives.

Stanton added that she still feels planners haven't addressed the project's costs and return on investment.

"That's probably my biggest objection," she said. "I think we could do a lot better."

Gold Line opponents also called for examining cheaper solutions like increased express bus service because it wouldn't require new infrastructure.

"I have a feeling that the price tag would be much less than the millions and millions of dollars that we're seeing by installing this BRT," Oakdale resident Linda Pederson said.

Lynne Marcus of Woodbury said the existing express lines don't work for her and isn't flexible enough when people need to leave work early during the day or stay late after buses stop running.

"There are many times when I wish I was taking advantage of it and haven't been able to," she said. "I'm sorry that this is not able to make everybody happy."

Residents living near Bielenberg Drive said they already have to contend with the rapid development occurring in the area, leading to added congestion and traffic noise.

George Broshears said he remembers riding his bike as a child down Bielenberg Drive when it was a dirt road and never would have imagined the amount of development that's occurred in recent decades.

He owns a home near where BRT busses might travel and said he's concerned the Gold Line will have a negative impact on his property value.

She also worries about a potential uptick in crime rates near bus stations. His neighbor, Julie Domke, said any increase in crime would be alarming for her.

Washington County transportation manager Jan Lucke said many of the written responses to project planners indicate general support from commenters. She also pointed to a recent Washington County survey indicating residents desire more transit options.

The commission expects to begin analyzing capital, maintenance and operating costs, as well as estimates on ridership following the end of the Nov. 13 public comment period.

Officials plan to solidify the BRT route by the end of the year and anticipate a 2023 opening for the Gold Line.

Those interested in commenting can visit the Gateway corridor Commission's website or by emailing Washington County Planner Lyssa Leitner at lyssa.leitner@co.washington.mn.us (<mailto:lyssa.leitner@co.washington.mn.us>).

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