



**Red Rock Corridor Commission
Agenda
4:00 p.m. Thursday, January 22, 2015**

**Cottage Grove City Hall, Council Chambers
12800 Ravine Parkway South
Cottage Grove, MN 55016**

	<u>Action Requested</u>
1. Introductions	Information
2. Election of Officers	Election
3. Consent Items*	Approval
a. Checks and Claims	
b. Minutes from the December 2014 Commission Meeting	
4. Implementation Plan*	Approval
a. Consultant Selection	
b. Project Kick-Off Activities	
5. Review Bylaws*	Discussion
6. Newport Transit Station Update*	Information
7. Communication Update*	Information
a. Website and 2015 Activities	Information
b. Website and Social Media	Information
8. Legislative Update* – Josh Olson, RCRRA	Information
9. Other*	Information
a. Discuss 2015 meeting dates, times, and location	
10. Adjourn	Approval

**Enclosures*



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Election of Officers

The Red Rock Corridor Commission Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) calls for the election of a Chair and Vice-Chair from its membership at the first Commission meeting of the calendar year. The Chair and Vice-Chair serve 1 year terms. The Chair presides over all meetings of the Commission, may establish such subcommittees as may be needed from time to time and perform other duties and functions as may be determined by the Commission. The Vice-Chair performs the duties of the Chair during the absence of the Chair.

At the meeting, the Commission will be asked to elect officers for 2015.

Action Requested: Election of Officers



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Checks and Claims

Included is the:
 Johnson Group
 December Invoice

	TOTAL	\$8,100.00
		\$8,100.00

Detailed invoices can be made available upon request.

Action:
Approval



Red Rock Corridor Commission Implementation Workshop Minutes/Notes Thursday, December 18, 2014

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Autumn Lehrke, Chair	Washington County RRA	X
Mike Slavik	Dakota County RRA	X
Janice Rettman	Ramsey County RRA	X
Linda Higgins	Hennepin County RRA	X
Barb Hollenbeck	City of Hastings	X
Jen Peterson, Vice-Chair	City of Cottage Grove	X
Keith Franke	City of St. Paul Park	
Steve Gallagher	City of Newport	X
John Kummer	Denmark Township	
Joseph Moore (alternate)	Denmark Township	X
Cam Gordon	City of Minneapolis	X
Amy Brendmoen	City of St. Paul	

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	
Marc Mogan	Prairie Island Indian Community	
Jess Greenwood	Goodhue County	

Staff	Agency	Present
Jan Lucke	Washington County RRA	
Andy Gitzlaff	Washington County RRA	X
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County RRA	
Joe Morneau	Dakota County RRA	X
Josh Olson	Ramsey County RRA	

Others	Agency
Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County RRA
Joseph Scala	Hennepin County
Emily Buss	SWC Bulletin
Will Schroeer	East Metro Strong
Karla Bigham	Washington County Commissioner-elect

Agenda Item #1: Introductions

Introductions were made by those present.

Agenda Item #2: Consent Items

- a. Checks and Claims
- b. Minutes from the October 2014 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Slavik noted corrections needed in the minutes including duplicates and misspellings for those in attendance. Commissioner Slavik moved approval for the Checks and Claims and Minutes as corrected from October 2014. Commissioner Gallagher seconded. There was no discussion. **All were in favor.** The motion carried.

Agenda Item #3: Draft 2015 Work Plan and Budget

Andy Gitzlaff provided the second reading of the work plan and budget. Highlights of the work plan for 2015 include overseeing and guiding the Implementation Plan, conducting public outreach, and facilitating a Locally Preferred Alternative process with the Metropolitan Council. Public involvement is a key component for the 2015 work plan. Additionally, the work plan involves contributing to studies conducted by others such as studies done by the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit.

The work plan will further communication efforts from the work done as part of the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU). The website is being updated. More details on the website are included in the packet for information on what communication efforts could be continued into 2015. The communications consultant will develop content for eNews and community newsletters as well as materials for awareness and public outreach. Prospective events needing materials include the Newport Transit Station grand opening in the spring.

The budget is on pages 3 and 4 of the meeting packet. The budget has gone up from 2014 due to the Implementation Plan. The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) awarded a grant to Washington County for the Implementation Plan. The money is available as of first of 2015. The local match was provided by the Red Rock Corridor Commission.

\$10,000 was included in the budget for administration and activities. Activities could include the Newport Transit Station grand opening event in the spring. Standard expenditures such as printing and insurance are in the budget. Advocacy for 2015 is also included and will use the Ramsey County state and federal lobbyist. \$30,000 was included for communications and \$5,000 for the website. There is the potential to keep Johnson Group on for another year as the communications consultant. However, that decision would be an approval item for the Commission at a later time.

\$360,000 of the budget came from the CTIB grant for the Implementation Plan. Dues are paid by the following counties splitting \$50,000 according to the percent listed: Ramsey County (37.5%), Dakota County (10%), Washington County (35%), and Hennepin County (17.5%). Fund balance at the end of the year is used to offset dues and this brings down the total commitment to \$90,000 in revenue for the \$450,000 budget.

Commissioner Rettman asked if there is a need to change anything in the budget to accept the grant from CTIB. Andy Gitzlaff responded that no change is needed. The budget was written assuming the grant would be awarded. Andy clarified that this meeting was the second reading of the budget and will be the final decision on the budget. "Draft" would be removed from throughout the document and the document would then be the final version.

Commissioner Gallagher moved approval of the 2015 Work Plan and Budget. Commissioner Peterson seconded. There was no discussion. **Roll call. All in favor.** The motion carried.

Agenda Item #4: Metro Transit's Service Improvement Plan

Andy noted that a different version of the presentation would be delivered than what was in the packet.

Adam Harrington, Metro Transit Director of Service Development, came to describe Metro Transit's Service Improvement Plan. The plan focuses on bus service to support and grow the regional transit system. In the region, buses carry 80% of passengers with rail carrying 20% of passengers. This service plan is for identifying and prioritizing improvement projects. Projects with the greatest priority will flow up to regional service improvement plan update for all regional service providers into one master plan. All service providers worked together to develop criteria and score the projects for possible inclusion in the plans.

Criteria are consistent with other plans. Stakeholder outreach to get sense of the bus investments needed went on throughout winter 2013-2014. The comment period finished at the end of November 2014. The comments are now being incorporated into the document. The plan is not exclusive of all needed projects in the area but is a framework to prioritize projects going forward. Over 4000 public responses have been received to inform the plan.

Adam Harrington discussed the framework to prioritize projects including connecting people with jobs. He mentioned there is a struggle between frequency and coverage demands. The plan was developed using Guiding Principles including; maximizing ridership growth, providing faster travel time, and improving transit equitably. The proposed projects were evaluated with productivity-based (50%), social equity-based (25%), and system connectivity criteria (25%).

Metro Transit screened about 160 projects based on these factors with 120 ranking high or medium on criteria just described. Adam Herrington emphasized the projects would not bring new coverage as it focuses on operations.

Commissioner Rettman asked if materials were available on the website. Adam Harrington responded that this specific presentation is not but most information is. Commissioner Rettman asked if Metro Transit was still taking comments on the Service Improvement Plan? Adam Harrington responded that while officially the comment period is closed, Metro Transit won't turn anybody away.

Commissioner Rettman stated that East-West transit lines are lacking in the region and asked for clarification on the status of Red Rock. Adam Harrington stated that Red Rock has been ranked as a medium. Commissioner Gordon wanted to know why Red Rock didn't score as high. Adam Harrington explained that there is not currently a strong market to downtown Saint Paul for all day service along the corridor. More details are included in the report. Commissioner Gordon asked if providing service to Minneapolis would help the corridor to score higher. Adam Harrington explained that the corridor was assessed with service from Hastings through Saint Paul to Minneapolis for the purposes of the report analysis.

Commissioner Gordon stated that the money for service improvement is discussed as a subsidy and wondered why that language was used. Commissioner Gordon thought the language skews it to be thought of negatively. Adam Harrington clarified that it is industry standard to use the word "subsidy".

Commissioner Gordon asked if lowering the fares could increase ridership. Commissioner Gordon stated that Minneapolis schools are paying for student and ridership has gone up drastically.

Commissioner Slavik asked if Route 376, the commuter bus to Hastings, was omitted from map since it wasn't a part of the district. Adam Herrington stated that extending service to Hastings would require the city to be in capital levy district. He stated there is a cost benefit trade off since Hasting riders already go to Fort Snelling and Cottage Grove. Commissioner Slavik stated that people are using the service without paying into it. He thinks there is demand and will still be if service was extended to Hastings. But he realizes that Hastings won't pay into the district without benefiting from the service.

Andy Gitzlaff stated that Red Rock being including in the plan meant that the corridor may be able seek further funding in the future. He mentioned that staff was excited to see that information from previous studies along the corridor included in the Service Improvement Plan.

Agenda Item #5: East Metro Strong Overview

Will Schroeer, Executive Director with East Metro Strong, introduced his organization to the Red Rock Corridor Commission. East Metro Strong is just over six months old. Last year McKnight Foundation provided funding for regional economic vitality outside of regular grant making. The aim was to create a place to advance transit and economic development through the three eastern metro area counties. The effort came from elected officials with an interest in taking responsibility for eastern growth. East Metro Strong is not competing with the West Metro. Will Schroeer explained that the entire region won't thrive without a strong east metro. He used the example that transit routes that extend into Minneapolis help that city thrive as well.

East Metro Strong's goal is to promote aggressive transit development and focused economic development. Members of the board included elected officials from cities and counties as well as businesses in the east metro and the Saint Paul Foundation. East Metro Strong is a remarkable example of a private-public partnership.

The board feels there is urgency around development around east metro transit lines. The east metro area is behind many other metro areas in transit development. East Metro Strong wants a east metro that offer choices for the people they want to come here and to compete with cities around the nation. Will Schroeer explained that Millenials, though not the only generation, are the fastest growing section of the work force. Right now, Denver is first in the nation for attracting Millenials partially due to transportation.

East Metro Strong is currently working to create a vision for transitway investments to support additional economic growth in the east metro. The organization also works to support others in implementing that vision. East Metro Strong is working with east metro corridor commissions in addition to educating the public and other stakeholders. East Metro Strong is helping to carry the message that good transit produces good economic development.

East Metro Strong's request of Red Rock Corridor Commission is to participate in a visioning process. The organization would like to hear from east metro stakeholders what they would like to see on the regional transit map and what values should be reflected going forward. The process has already been completed with the Gateway Corridor Commission and will take approximately two hours.

Commissioner Rettman stated that the Commission would be interested in the conversation. Will Schroeer will work Washington County staff to schedule that visioning conversation.

Agenda Item #6: Resolutions

- a. Commissioner Slavik read a resolution highlighting Commissioner Hollenbeck's service to the Red Rock Corridor Commission. Commissioner Hollenbeck is only the second member from Hastings to serve on the RRCC. Commissioner Slavik moved the resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Barb Hollenbeck stated she is honored to have served these last eight years and will continue to be an advocate going forward for Red Rock and other corridors.
- b. Commissioner Peterson moved the same resolution for Steve Gallagher from Newport. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slavik. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Steve is excited to see the opening of Newport Transit Station.
- c. Commissioner Rettman thanked Autumn Lehrke and moved a resolution thanking Autumn Lehrke. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. **All in favor.** Motion carried. Autumn Lehrke expressed pleasure serving on the Commission for the last four years. She is proud of the Commission's work.

Agenda Item #7: Implementation Plan Update

Andy Gitzlaff stated that the CTIB grant money has been received and is available January 1. The RFP process is in motion with three proposals having been received. Staff has recommended bringing two firms forward for interviews: Kimley Horn and SRF. After interviewing the two teams, staff will bring a final recommendation to the Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) in January. There is great talent interested in working on the project and this is an important milestone for the Commission and the Corridor. The work will represent one voice to advance the corridor. The Implementation Plan process is to start in early 2015.

Agenda Item #8: Communication Update

- a. Status of the new website
Andy Gitzlaff stated that the new website is live though there have been some problems with analytics.
- b. Website and social media
Facebook is trending along with an ever increasing number of "likes." Staff is posting on Facebook regularly to give people reasons to come back to the page. For example, Metro Transit's Service improvement Plan was posted and drove comments from the area.

Commissioner Rettman encouraged continued support for engaging the corridor through social media.

Agenda Item #9: Legislative Update

Kevin Roggenbuck with Ramsey County RRA stated that the Minnesota Office of Management and Budget has announced a budget surplus of \$1 billion for 2016-2017 on top of the \$373 million for 2015. Governor Dayton doesn't see a general tax increase except for transportation. Included in the packet is the list of MN House of Representative Committee chairs for the upcoming legislative session that starts on January 6, 2015.

The Federal Omnibus bill funded the federal government until September 2015 in the amount of \$1.1 trillion. Everything was included except homeland security which will be covered under a different bill.

Agenda Item #10: Other

- a. Next meeting is January 22, 2015.
- b. The 2015 meeting schedule will be discussed at the January 2015 meeting.
Andy Gitzlaff clarified that with new RRCC members coming in at the January meeting, it would be a good time to look at time and location for the meetings for 2015. Andy Gitzlaff stated that

Commission members should also be thinking of stakeholders to engage in the Corridor's projects with the upcoming visioning conversation and Implementation Plan.

Commissioner Gordon asked about establishing a new chair and finding new members from the corridor communities. Andy Gitzlaff stated that historically the chair and vice chair are appointed at first meeting of the year. Members from the cities can change at any point.

Agenda Item #11: Adjourn

Commissioner Peterson moved to adjourn. Commissioner Slavik seconded. There was no discussion. **All in favor.** The motion carried.



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan Update and Consultant Selection

Item 4a

Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) on behalf of the Red Rock Corridor Commission (Commission) seeks consultant services for an Implementation Plan for the Red Rock Corridor. The anticipated cost of the Implementation Plan is \$400,000 and will take 12 to 15 months to complete. The RFP was released on October 30, 2014 and proposals were due on December 3, 2014. The following is an outline of the proposals received, review team, and timeline for the Implementation Plan.

Proposals Received

We received three proposals from the following teams:

- Kimley Horn with sub-consultant Parsons Brinckerhoff
- SRF Consulting Group with sub-consultants HNTB, Connetics Transportation Group, and Leland Consulting Group
- Perkins and Will with sub-consultants Nelson Nygaard, Bolten and Menk, and Community Design Group

Proposal Review Process and Consultant Selection Process

Staff from Ramsey, Washington, and Dakota Counties, Cities of Hastings and Cottage Grove, Metropolitan Council, and Metro Transit reviewed the proposals based on the following factors outlined in the RFP:

- Expressed understanding of project objectives and technical competence of the proposal, work plan, and project approach.
- The experience, resources, and qualifications of the proposal team and individuals to be assigned to the project as key personnel
- The availability of personnel and other resources to perform the work within the specified project schedule.
- Proposed public involvement approach and Project Manager and design team experience in conducting successful stakeholder engagement for similar projects.
- The responder's background and experience with similar work, including ability and experience in handling projects of similar nature.

Based on the proposal ratings, staff interviewed the SRF and Kimley Horn Teams. After taking into account the input from the proposal evaluation committee and careful deliberation, staff recommends executing a contract with the Kimley Team to complete the implementation plan.

The Kimley Horn team provides the project approach that best meets the various needs of the corridor.

Timeline

It is anticipated that the project will begin in February and be completed in late summer 2016. A more detailed project schedule will be prepared as soon as work begins.

Action

Authorize Washington County Regional Railroad Authority to enter into a contract on behalf of the Commission with Kimley Horn for consultant services to complete the Implementation Plan.

Item 4b

As part of the Implementation Plan, staff would like to conduct a workshop with the Commission in February to generate ideas for engagement throughout the coming year. This facilitated discussion will take place during the regularity scheduled Commission meeting and will be an important activity to set the tone for great engagement during the Implementation Plan process.

Action

Information



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Review Bylaws

The Red Rock Corridor Commission last updated its bylaws in 2005. The adopted bylaws are attached to this memo for the Commission's review and discussion. Proposed changes and updates will be discussed at the January meeting. Any discussed changes will be reviewed by Washington County staff and attorneys and the final bylaws will be brought back at the February meeting for approval.

Action
Discussion

**FINAL AMENDED
RED ROCK CORRIDOR COMMISSION
BYLAWS**

I. NAME

The name of this joint powers board shall be the Red Rock Corridor Commission (“Commission”).

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Commission is to collaboratively plan for multi-modal transportation improvements in the Red Rock corridor.

III. TERM

These Bylaws shall become effective upon approval by the Commission and shall continue in full force and effect for such time as the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, dated July 27, 2004, remains in effect.

IV. VOTING STRUCTURE OF COMMISSION

A. Representatives

1. The Commission shall consist of one representative as the voting member for each governmental unit that has entered into the Joint Powers Agreement. Each member shall appoint an alternate to serve in the event the representative of that governmental unit is unable to fulfill his/her duties.
2. Representatives and alternates shall not receive expenses nor any salary for their services.

B. Quorum

A majority of members, provided such majority includes at least two (2) Financial Members, as defined in the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall not be found if fewer than two (2) Financial Members are present.

C. Voting

The Commission shall function by majority vote of the quorum present at the meeting. Each representative shall be entitled to one vote, except for Financial Members, which shall have two votes. For any action to be approved, other than annual budget approval, there must be an affirmative vote of at least two of the Financial Members as part of the majority of the members present. The annual budget and expenditures or any

amendments thereto must receive an affirmative vote of all Financial Members. If a representative is absent, the appointed alternate may exercise the voting rights for the member.

D. Officers

1. The Commission shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from its membership.
2. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed below and by the parliamentary Authority adopted by the Commission. Such duties shall include:
 - a. The chairperson shall provide notice of meetings or cancellations, set the agenda, and preside at all meetings.
 - b. The vice-chairperson shall perform the duties of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson and shall also perform the duties and functions of the Treasurer.
3. Each officer may perform other duties and functions as the Commission determines necessary.
4. Officers shall serve for a one year term or until their successors are elected. Officers shall be elected at the first meeting of the calendar year.
5. An office vacated by resignation of an officer shall be filled by election. The departing officer shall be allowed to vote in the election, provided that he or she still sits as a member.

E. Meetings and Notice

1. Regular Meetings

The regular meeting of the Commission shall be held on the last Thursday of each month at 3:30, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. If the date of the regular meeting is a holiday, the meeting shall be the preceding Thursday. The Chairperson may, in his or her discretion, cancel a regular meeting upon furnishing reasonable notice to each representative.

2. Annual Meeting

The first meeting of the calendar year shall be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing officers, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise.

3. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the discretion of the chairperson or upon the request of any two members.

Three days notice shall be provided for all special meetings. A member may waive his or her right to the three-day notice requirement and consent to a lesser notice period. A special meeting may be held with lesser notice if three-fourths of the members concur to the lesser notice. The minutes of a special meeting should reflect that each member received proper notice or consented to lesser notice.

A special meeting shall be called only for unusual circumstances that cannot be postponed until the next regular meeting. The agenda for a special meeting shall be confined exclusively to the specific item(s) and can be changed only upon a unanimous vote of members present.

4. Open Meeting Law

All meetings of the Commission shall be conducted pursuant to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

5. Minutes

Minutes shall be taken at each regular or special meeting. The minutes shall document all Commission actions and activity and shall be approved by the Commission. A Financial Member designated by the Commission shall be responsible for maintaining a complete and accurate set of all minutes and records.

6. Books and Records

All books shall be retained by the financial officer of the designated Financial Member and be available for review by any member during normal business hours. The financial officer will provide a final year end financial statement to the Commission.

V. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

The Commission may, by majority vote, accept as ex-officio, non-voting members.

Such ex-officio members shall have the same rights as members, except that they shall have no vote on matters acted upon by the Commission.

VI. COMMITTEES

The Commission from time to time may deem it necessary to create standing committees or ad hoc committees to carry on the work of the Commission. The Chairperson shall appoint the chairperson and the members of all such committees.

VII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. The Executive Committee shall consist of a representative from each Financial Member. Members of the Executive Committee shall elect a Chair. Executive

Committee meetings shall be open to all members of the Commission, who may participate in any discussion of matters under consideration by the Executive Committee, but shall have no right to vote on such matters.

- B. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Commission between its business meetings, make recommendations to the Commission, and shall perform such other duties as are specified in these Bylaws and in the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the orders of the Commission, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Commission.
- C. Unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held as determined by the Committee. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chairperson.
- D. A majority of representatives of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- E. The Executive Committee shall develop and make recommendations to the Commission regarding the on-going responsibilities of the Commission.

VIII. PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION

The Rules of Parliamentary Procedure and Practice contained in Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the Commission in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, any special rules of order the Commission may adopt and any law or any statutes applicable to any member of the Commission.

IX. AMENDMENTS

- A. Following adoption of these Bylaws, they may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting and that the amendment is not inconsistent with the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement or any statutes applicable to this organization.
- B. These Bylaws may be amended only if a majority of all Financial Members agree.

THESE BYLAWS WERE APPROVED BY THE Commission on the 29 day of July, 2005 witness the attached minutes reflecting the official action of the Commission.



DATE: January 15, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Newport Transit Station Update

Background

The Newport Transit Station is a critical stop along the Red Rock Corridor that will increase transportation options and mobility and build the ridership base within the corridor. The Newport Transit Station is a long-term investment in both transportation infrastructure and economic development. The Transit Station has been designed to accommodate greater use over time as more service options are added and other land uses are developed around the station site.

The Newport Transit Station was built with federal, state and Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) funding. Matching funds were provided by the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority.

Start of Transit Service

Express bus service between the Newport Transit Station and downtown St. Paul began on December 1st, 2014. The Transit Station is initially being served by Metro Transit Route 364, which is an existing line that has been rerouted to serve the facility. Route 364 provides three express trips to downtown St. Paul each weekday morning and afternoon. Commuters can avoid congestion on Highway 61 and travel between the transit station and downtown St. Paul in approximately 24 minutes.

Performance of the route will continue to be monitored by Metro Transit as riders get accustomed to the route change and the new transit facility location during the winter months. Route details can be found on Metro Transit's website: <https://www.metrotransit.org/Route/364>

Grand Opening Event

A formal grand opening event is being planned for spring 2015. The purpose of the event will be to showcase the transit station building and site amenities to the broader public, to build awareness for additional plans for development around the station site and transit expansion in the Red Rock Corridor, and thank project partners. A committee with representation from Washington County, Metro Transit, the City of Newport and the Red Rock Corridor Commission will be formed to help plan for the event.

Action

Information



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Communication Update

Item 7a

Updated Website

The new website was launched in late 2014. Staff is working on reviewing every page to ensure consistency and accuracy of the content. This will be ongoing through January.

Item 7b

Website

Since the website was updated in late 2014 we have been having issues producing analytics. Staff is working through this issue and will bring analytics to the Commission at future meetings.

Facebook

The Facebook page is now up to 209 likes. There have been no instances where comments needed to be removed from the Facebook page in accordance with the Commission's Facebook use policy.

Action:

Information



DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Legislative Update

8a State Update

The legislative session began on Tuesday, January 6, 2015. Below is the weekly preview for January 12-16 as provided by Lockridge Grindal Nauen.

Senate Democrats

Senate Democrats are putting a clear focus on education and greater Minnesota. Among their first six bills are additional funding for natural disaster relief, voluntary free pre-kindergarten education, and a proposal to make MnSCU's two-year colleges free for graduating high school seniors. Senate Majority Leader Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) pointed out most of these institutions are in greater Minnesota.

House Republicans

House Republicans unveiled reforms for teacher evaluations and MNsure, as well as tax cuts and regulatory reform for businesses, and incentives for employees of nursing homes and long term care facilities. There was little overlap between the House Republican and Senate Democrat first bills, so the many promises by leadership of cooperation and bipartisanship will be tested early.

This week at the state Capitol

Committee hearings begin

Committees will hold their first meetings, which will largely consist of overviews from state agencies and non-partisan staff. These presentations will help guide their work in the coming months. Among those giving presentations this week are State Demographer Susan Brower in the House Aging and Long Term Care Committee and the Future Farmers of America state officers in House and Senate agriculture-related committees. The schedule of upcoming committee meetings can be found [here](#).

Transportation

Transportation chairman and Senate File 87 chief author Senator Scott Dibble (DFL-Minneapolis) introduced the Senate Democrats highly anticipated transportation package today, January 12. The bill includes almost \$800 million in new revenue by 2016 via increases in gross receipt taxes and vehicle registration annual fees. The House GOP bill, carried by chairman Tim Kelly (R-Red Wing), was announced last Thursday. It includes \$750 million in spending for roads and bridges over four years and no mention of mass transit or gas tax increases. Many predicted transportation would be a top issue at the Capitol this session, and the attention it has received thus far from lawmakers indicates they will be correct.

Capitol Preservation Commission

The Capitol Preservation Commission, chaired by Governor Mark Dayton, will meet this Wednesday, January 13. The Commission will receive an update on design activities, construction activities, the Fine Art subcommittee, and the restoration schedule.

8b Federal Update

Please see the attached federal update prepared by Lockridge Grindal Nauen (LGN) for the Counties Transit Improvement Board.

Action

Information

LOCKRIDGE
GRINDAL
NAUEN

P. L. L. P.
Attorneys at Law

www.locklaw.com

MINNEAPOLIS
Suite 2200
100 Washington Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2179
T 612.339.6900
F 612-339-0981

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Suite 210
415 Second Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002-4900
T 202.544.9840
F 202-544-9850

MEMORANDUM

TO: Counties Transit Improvement Board

FROM: Dennis McGrann // Andy Burmeister // Sean Anderson

DATE: January 15, 2015

RE: Counties Transit Improvement Board Federal Update

Below you will find the January update for the *Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)*. The following update will examine the current status of a number of legislative and regulatory items which could impact CTIB priorities in the short-term and long-term. In addition, it provides an outlook and analysis of issues, and highlights potential opportunities for CTIB to engage as Congress continues its work in 2015. Of additional note, the President is set to give his State of the Union Address on Tuesday January 20, 2015 and release his annual budget request on February 2, 2015.

Of specific note, we would like to highlight our recommendation that the Counties Transit Improvement Board consider a visit to Washington, D.C. in 2015 to meet with the Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration, and Congressional Representatives. We believe the maintenance and strengthening of these relationships will help assure continued success for CTIB supported projects well into the future.

CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE:

The end of the legislative schedule was marked by debate over government funding for Fiscal Year 2015. In the end, Congress passed the “Cromnibus” bill, which combined an omnibus spending package funding the government through September 15 with a short-term Continuing Resolution for the Department of Homeland Security through February 27th. Current stopgap funding for the Highway Trust Fund is set to expire in May. If Congress does not act by this deadline, the Fund will be unable to sustain transportation projects across the country.

In the 114th Congress, the Senate now consists of 54 Republicans, 44 Democrats, and 2 Independents. The new Republican majority means new Leadership positions and Committee Chairmanships in the Senate.

January 14, 2015

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RECOMMENDATIONS: *The House and Senate are starting to get back to “regular order” which suggests that there will likely be a flurry of appropriations, budget, and authorization activity in the coming weeks and months. We will continue to keep the updated on the schedule in the House and the Senate and alert you of opportunities to engage in the legislative and regulatory process.*

THE “CROMNIBUS” AND TRANSPORTATION:

With hours to spare before a government shutdown, the 113th Congress managed to pass the “Cromnibus” spending package for FY15. Within the bill, the Department of Transportation received \$17.8 billion in discretionary appropriations (\$21 million above FY14). Within those funds, the Federal Aviation Administration received \$12.3 billion. The Federal Transit Administration was given \$2.3 billion (\$17 million less than FY14) and the Federal Railroad Administration received \$1.6 billion (\$141 million above FY14). Amtrak was funded at \$1.4 billion, with a stipulation that no funding was available for high-speed rail programs. The TIGER program, which funds competitive grants for critical infrastructure projects, received \$500 million (\$100 million below FY14). Based on the levels of MAP-21, there is almost no change in the amount of highway, road, and bridge funding directed toward states. The bill also called for the DoT to finalize its proposed rule on crude oil tank car safety by Jan. 15, two months earlier than the previous timeframe. It is unlikely that the rule will be completed in time.

RECOMMENDATIONS: *With the Cromnibus completed, appropriators are now turning their attention to the Fiscal Year 2016 appropriations process. Sources suggest that there is a desire to follow “regular order” this year, meaning there could be an opportunity for CTIB to engage with policy-makers to help influence top-line spending levels for programs of importance to CTIB and the advancement of your priorities. With this in mind, we will be in touch with recommendations on whom to touch base with and on what issues to discuss.*

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND:

The most significant transportation measure in front of Congress this session is the already-delayed highway bill. Rather than holding a major debate last session, lawmakers pushed off the decision until May of this year. The policy side of the bill is less controversial, but major funding issues remain unresolved. The Highway Trust Fund is in danger of hitting an unsustainable level in the first half of 2015. As a result, advocacy groups and legislators are discussing long-term and more sustainable solutions. This includes the possibility of an increase in the gas tax for the first time since 1993. While this might be a tough sell politically, lower gas prices may lessen the pain caused by the increase, at least in the short-term.

The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee will also address a reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration and Amtrak passenger rail bill this session.

The transportation agenda facing Congress presents a bit of a time crunch due to the Highway Trust Fund's deadline and the need to ensure funding is designated by the House Ways and Means Committee before the details can be fully hammered out. As a result, Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA-9) and ranking member Peter DeFazio (D-OR-4) are planning to start out the session by addressing the less controversial Amtrak bill. Afterwards, the agenda becomes a bit more ambiguous, with legislators working on both the highway and FAA bill simultaneously. This will offer some leeway in case of any issues with Ways and Means and would allow for an "audible" to either bill depending on the circumstances.

In Congress and as it relates to funding, lawmakers are focused on finding solutions for budget gaps in transportation spending. Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman James Inhofe (R-OK) has indicated that the GOP continues to consider a gas tax increase as a possible answer to shortfalls. He pointed to the equitable nature of the tax, which only affects those who use gasoline. Nevertheless, his statement primarily served to reinforce that all options remain on the table.

As crude oil prices continue their slow descent, state-level policymakers are looking for alternatives to the long used per-gallon tax on gasoline. This is largely a result of increased fuel efficiency depressing revenue for infrastructure projects. States like Oregon, California, Washington, and Indiana are studying the viability of taxing miles driven, rather than gallons consumed. Nevertheless, these proposals are unlikely to be necessary in the short-term, as revenues should remain steady for the next decade.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Discussions surrounding how to fund transportation and transit will be at the forefront of the legislative agenda this year. There will be a number of opportunities for CTIB to engage in these discussions and we believe the Board's engagement will assist in raising the awareness of your projects and priorities. Although discussions have begun, the debate has not yet hit full speed. We will provide the Board with a number of recommendations as this process proceeds.

RECONCILIATION AS A VEHICLE FOR TRANSPORTATION FUNDING:

Sources indicate that a procedural maneuver known as budget reconciliation may allow Republicans to achieve their longstanding priority of overhauling the corporate tax code while also providing much-needed funds for transportation. Through budget reconciliation, a filibuster-proof procedure, the GOP and President Barack Obama could achieve a mutual victory on tax policy. In recent weeks, the groundwork for this effort has been quietly laid by Senator John Thune (R-SD). If successful, it could provide a substantial cut to corporate tax rates and offer the funding needed for a long-term transportation bill.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Details of utilizing reconciliation for transportation funding are just emerging. We will continue to gather details and alert CTIB of opportunities to engage as discussions proceed.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STUDY:

Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that a USDOT study helping policymakers prepare for future economic and demographic changes will be released in a few weeks. Shifting trends, such as increased migration to urban centers and population growth in the South and West will significantly change the needs of cities in the next 30 years. USDOT is also studying car-sharing companies like Uber or Lift and the increased popularity of commuting by bicycle or on foot. The study won't provide specific solutions, but instead points to trends that will disrupt the state of transportation and America's infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS: We will provide a copy of the report to CTIB when it becomes available and will review for policy ideas and trends which may be helpful to the Board as you work to advance your project priorities.

FTA – A YEAR IN REVIEW:

In the past year, public transportation ridership built on already-historic levels to reach a record number of Americans. To support that infrastructure, the Federal Transit Administration awarded its largest ever amount of funding, providing \$15.7 billion through over 2,200 grants. Even without counting \$3.6 billion in funding for communities affected by Hurricane Sandy, it was a record-setting year. Safety remained a priority as over \$44 million in grants were offered to state transportation safety agencies to improve policies and maintain monitoring capabilities. In 2014, the “Ladders of Opportunity Bus Initiative” gave \$100 million to modernize and expand service to those who rely on public transportation to reach vital opportunities and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS: We provided this for your information.

MCMILLIAN RENOMINATED AT FTA:

President Barack Obama has decided to re-nominate Therese McMillan for the top job at the Federal Transit Administration. McMillan is currently serving as acting administrator of the FTA and was nominated for a permanent position last session. However, the Senate never completed the confirmation process. Beginning in 2009, McMillan served as a Deputy Administrator for the FTA. President Obama also nominated T. Bella Dinh-Zarr to serve on the National Transportation Safety Board.

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CONCLUSION:

As always we will continue to monitor these and others transit related issues. Please do not hesitate to contact Dennis McGrann at (202) 544-9840 or dmmcgrann@locklaw.com or Andy Burmeister at (202) 544-9844 or arburmeister@locklaw.com if you have any questions or would like additional information.



DATE: January 14, 2014
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Meeting Date, Location, and Time

Commission members have requested a discussion on the meeting date, time, and location of Commission meetings. In 2014 the Commission moved meetings from the last Thursday of the month to the fourth Thursday of the month, but still at 4:00 p.m. and Cottage Grove City Hall. The intent of this agenda item is to determine if there is a more convenient time, date, and/or location that would work for Commission members. If meetings were to stay on the fourth Thursday for the remaining months of 2015 the meeting schedule would be as follows:

- February 26th
- March 26th
- April 23rd
- May 28th
- June 25th
- July 23rd
- August 27th
- September 24th
- October 22nd
- November 26th (would need to reschedule due to holiday)
- December 24th (would need to reschedule due to holiday)

Action:
Discussion