



## Red Rock Corridor Commission Agenda

4:30 p.m. Thursday, October 26, 2023

St Paul Park City Hall

	<u>Action Requested</u>
1. Roll Call / Introductions	Information
2. Pledge of Allegiance	Information
3. Approval of Agenda	Approval
4. Approval of August Minutes*	Approval
5. <u>Red Rock Vision Refresh Update and Discussion</u> Will Schroeer, East Metro Strong	Information
6. 2024 Work Plan and Budget*	Approval
7. 2024 Proposed Meeting Schedule*	Approval
8. 2023 State Legislative Update*	Information
9. Communications Update*	Information
10. Other	Information
a. Updates on Other Projects	
1. Gold Line	
2. Great River Rail	
b. Commissioner Reports	
c. Next Meeting – <i>January 25, 2024</i>	
11. Adjourn	Approval

\*Enclosures



### Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

St. Paul Park City Hall

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Karla Bigham	Washington County RRA	X
Rafael Ortega	Ramsey County RRA	X
Tony Khambata	City of Cottage Grove	X
Jane Prince	City of St. Paul	
Sandi Dingle	City of St. Paul Park	X
Dave Pemble	City of Hastings	X
Marvin Taylor	City of Newport	X

Staff	Agency	Present
Andrea Rehm	Washington County RRA	X
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County RRA	X

Other Attendees	Agency	Present
Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County	X
Will Schroeer	East Metro Strong	X
Christof Spieler	Huitt-Zollars	X
Alissa Zimmer	Huitt-Zollars	X

**Agenda Item #1: Introduction**

Chair Bigham called the meeting to order. Quorum was met.

**Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance**

The Commission stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda Item #3: Approval of Agenda**

Dingle moved approval of the agenda. Pemble seconded. All were in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #4: Approval of May 2023 Minutes**

Ortega made a motion to approve the minutes. Pemble seconded. All were in favor. **Approved.** Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #5: Red Rock Vision Refresh Update and Discussion**

Will Schroeer (East Metro Strong) provided an update on the Red Rock Vision Refresh engagement process. Schroeer discussed the online survey, focus groups, and in-person events including Hastings Party in the Park. The presentation attached to these minutes included samples of some of the survey responses.

Schroeer introduced Christof Spieler, Transportation Director at Huitt-Zollars and consultant for the Red Rock Vision Refresh.

Christof Spieler (Huitt-Zollars) provided an overview of what the team has uncovered in the data on travel patterns and touring the corridor. He also outlined specific issues in this corridor including: one transit line will not solve all the issues in this corridor; travel patterns to jobs are not strictly linear (go to many destinations, including Dakota County, Woodbury, St. Paul); and there are major physical barriers to overcome such as TH 61 and the railroad.

Spierer noted one key takeaway is that trying to serve all areas in this corridor would result in very few people being served well so this corridor will need to be a network as opposed to one line meeting all the needs. Spieler provided background information on different types of transit including express bus, local bus, microtransit, employer shuttles, and deviated fixed route. He also discussed the tradeoffs between frequency, simplicity, speed, and coverage.

Spierer presented some options for consideration but noted that we are not yet at the stage in the process to determine a final vision. These are all options to help illustrate the wide range of opportunities for the corridor. There is likely not one service that will solve all the issues but a combination of multiple services.

Spieler stated there are some options in the corridor today but many people do not know about them, particularly dial-a-ride. He emphasized that employers must play a role in making sure their workforce is aware of transit options, promoting those options, and potentially providing financial support to them.

Khambata noted that Renewal by Anderson (in Cottage Grove) has parking issues and would likely be supportive of becoming an advocate for transportation options.

Bigham requested that cities connect economic development entities or employers to County staff for this study. She stated her vision has always been multiple transit options, including connections to Dakota County (airport, Mall of America). She added that Red Rock needs to complement Gold Line. She agreed that we need to expand and promote what we have available now, like dial-a-ride. She stated new state legislation does provide a lot of new revenue sources, but service will have to be phased in.

Pemble discussed how the TH 61 river bridge will continue to be a bottleneck especially with new development and redevelopment. He agreed education about available options for the public is a large component of improving transportation in the corridor.

Spieler stated that we often think about capital costs as the largest barrier for transit but the reality is that operation costs are the larger issue. He added that a new revenue stream for operating is a real opportunity.

Dingle stated that the presented options were interesting and could work. She noted that she had not previously considered thinking outside the box of a north/south corridor and pursuing complementary options that are east/west from the TH 61 corridor.

Khamabata agreed that the east-west service in addition to north-south service was promising and had the potential to alleviate traffic congestion in key areas.

Taylor stated that the City of Newport just approved a new apartment and noted his concern that the area might be being overbuilt if the Newport Transit Center is not used as planned. He emphasized the importance of forward thinking so the City develops in compatible ways with future transit.

Spieler stated that the best way to create great transit service is to develop places people can walk to, such the Newport Transit Station and surrounding area. He added that it could still serve an important role in the service network if past planning direction changes.

Dingle emphasized the importance of the last mile of a commute, and the ways the system will get people to the many different final destinations. She suggested a potential relocation of the existing Cottage Grove park and ride closer to the growing industrial park.

Khambata agreed that the existing park and ride was planned with the single purpose of express service to St Paul. He suggested it could be improved by introducing local busses to collect there.

Ortega stated that Ramsey County is in the process of approving many new developments. He noted his concern about whether expanding transit can keep up with development.

Khambata agreed that infill development is sometimes higher density than what master plans might account for. He added that this leads to many problems stemming from inadequate infrastructure. He discussed the rapid development occurring in Cottage Grove and the neighboring communities.

Ortega added that the workforce is not only 9 to 5 shifts, and that the range of schedules and transportation needs makes planning difficult.

Spieler stated that employers can play an important role in preparing the area for the introduction of more transit options in the way they design new development—such as orienting employee entrances near public streets and potential future bus stops.

Schroer discussed the project team’s next steps, including refining recommendations.

**Agenda Item #6: Communications Update**

Rehm reviewed the information included in the meeting packet.

**Agenda Item #7: Other**

Bigham stated the Cottage Grove Park and Ride will offer shuttle service to the Minnesota State Fair.

No other updates.

**Agenda Item #11: Adjourn**

Chair Bigham adjourned the meeting.

**Memo**

**Date:** October 26, 2023  
**To:** Red Rock Corridor Commission  
**From:** Will Schroeer, East Metro Strong  
**Subject:** Red Rock Vision Refresh Update and Discussion

For this agenda item, East Metro Strong will present findings and recommendations from the draft Red Rock Corridor Vision Update report.

- The findings will summarize public input and analysis by Huitt-Zollars of needs in the corridor.
- Drawing on that public input, and on that analysis, we will present:
  - Our recommendations for a refreshed Vision for the Red Rock Corridor
  - Recommendations for next steps.

We look forward to discussing with you and getting your input.



**DATE:** October 26, 2023  
**TO:** Red Rock Corridor Commission  
**FROM:** Staff  
**RE:** 2024 Work Plan and Budget

**Overview**

The proposed 2024 work plan and budget is attached for review. The work plan focuses on commission administration, community engagement, and coordination with partner agencies. The key items are also listed below:

- Build off of re-visioning process that responds to current transit needs, with further consideration to local connections and innovative partnerships with cities, employers, and other stakeholders.
- Inform state and federal legislators of the need for improved transit service in the Red Rock Corridor.
- 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 Red Rock Corridor.
- Continue communication efforts through the use of social media and updating the website to coincide with the next steps in the corridor implementation.

The proposed 2024 budget is \$13,500. The budget will be covered 100% by existing fund balance.

Staff will provide an overview of the draft work plan and budget at the meeting and will seek approval from the commission.

**Action**

Approval



# 2024 Work Plan

## Management, Policy, and Administrative Activities

Commission activities will include:

1. Prepare and adopt the annual Work Plan and Budget
2. Prepare the annual financial report
3. Review insurance as needed and procure appropriate insurance
4. Provide commission and staff administration
5. Manage commission expenses
6. Manage the consultant selected for each of the various work tasks undertaken by the commission

## General Activities

The Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) will work with corridor municipalities, chambers of commerce and other business groups, community members, the Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and other stakeholders as needed to continue the advancement of the Red Rock Corridor. To accomplish this, the RRCC will do the following:

1. Inform state and federal legislators of the need for improved transit service in the Red Rock Corridor.
2. 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 Red Rock Corridor.
3. Work with state and local agencies to identify regional priorities for all transportation modes in the corridor.

## Visioning Process Next Steps

1. The Commission is finalizing the re-visioning process and the final report is anticipated to be adopted in early 2024. It is anticipated that 2024 activities will focus on coordination efforts to investigate options to implement the Re-Visioning next steps with no additional financial needs from the Commission.

## Public Involvement

The commission's public involvement activities will build on past communication efforts and strategy as outlined in the Implementation Plan. The commission's activities will include:

1. Distribution of newsletters and project updates at public events including fairs and community festivals.
2. Recognition of commission meetings and events through various media sources (i.e., social media, print, radio, and public access television).
3. Coordination of updates to the project website to coincide with any studies or initiatives being undertaken in corridor area.
4. Project webpage hosting, content management, and social media utilization.





# 2024 Budget

## 2024 Expenditures

Operating Expenditure Category	Amount
Corridor Administration/General Activities <sup>(1)</sup>	
- Corridor Insurance	\$1,500
- Materials/Postage/Printing/Memberships	\$1,000
- Events/Tours/Advertising	\$1,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>
Public Involvement	
- Website Hosting	\$2,000
- Communication Services (incl. possible contract services)	\$6,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>
Contingency	\$2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,500</b>

**Notes:**

1. The county regional railroad authorities typically cover administrative functions including mailings. However, such items are eligible for reimbursement as approved by the commission.

## 2024 Revenue

Revenue Source	% Due	Amount Due	Fund Balance	Total Revenue
Red Rock Corridor Commission Fund Balance	100%	\$0	\$13,500	\$13,500
<b>REVENUE TOTAL</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$13,500<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>\$13,500</b>

**Notes:**

1. \$13,500 of the commission's 2023 end of year fund balance (\$37,664.21 as of October 2023) will be used to cover RRCC financial members' 2024 budget contributions.



**DATE:** October 26, 2023  
**TO:** Red Rock Corridor Commission  
**FROM:** Staff  
**RE:** 2024 Proposed Meeting Schedule

The proposed dates for the 2024 Red Rock Corridor Commission meetings are listed below. Meetings are planned to be held in person at St. Paul Park City Hall from 4:30p-6:00p.

**Dates**

January 25, 2024

April 25, 2024

July 25, 2024

October 24, 2024

**Action:**

Approval



**DATE:** October 26, 2023  
**TO:** Red Rock Corridor Commission  
**FROM:** Staff  
**RE:** 2023 State Legislative Update

**Overview**

Staff will present the attached presentation which provides an overview of 2023 State Legislative outcomes related to transportation.

**Action**

Information

A dark teal silhouette of Washington County with a white, irregular border, positioned on the left side of the slide.

# 2023 Transportation Legislative Outcomes

Red Rock Corridor Commission Update

# Omnibus Transportation Funding Bill

## **Largest Funding increase for Transportation since 2008**

- About 1 Billion in additional funding for all transportation
- Increase in license tab fee
- Increase in fuel tax
- Increase in metro sales tax for transit
- Delivery fee for transportation
- Full dedication of revenue from the sales tax on auto repair parts
- Matching dollars for IJJA
- Capital bonding bill with significant funding for all modes of transportation
- Trunk highway bonds (\$158M) for Corridors of Commerce – regional balance process established

# Transportation Advancement Account

Revenue Sources to Transportation Advancement Account	Distribution
<p><b>Delivery fee:</b> 50 cents on retail delivery orders over \$100</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective July 1, 2024</li> <li>• <i>Exemptions include food and beverages; drugs, medical devices, and baby products; small businesses with &lt;\$1M retail sales</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>36% to metropolitan counties</b></li> <li>• <b>10% to CSAH fund through the HUTDF</b></li> <li>• 15% to Larger Cities Assistance Account (population over 5,000)</li> <li>• 27% to Small Cities Assistance Account</li> <li>• 11% to Town Road Account</li> <li>• 1% to food delivery support account</li> </ul>
<p><b>Full allocation of auto parts sales tax (by FY2033)</b></p>	
<p><b>New Metro Area Sales Tax (3/4%)*</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 83% to the Metropolitan Council               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% for transit system purposes</li> <li>• 5% for active transportation – distributed by TAB</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b><u>17% to the 7 metropolitan area counties</u></b></li> </ul>

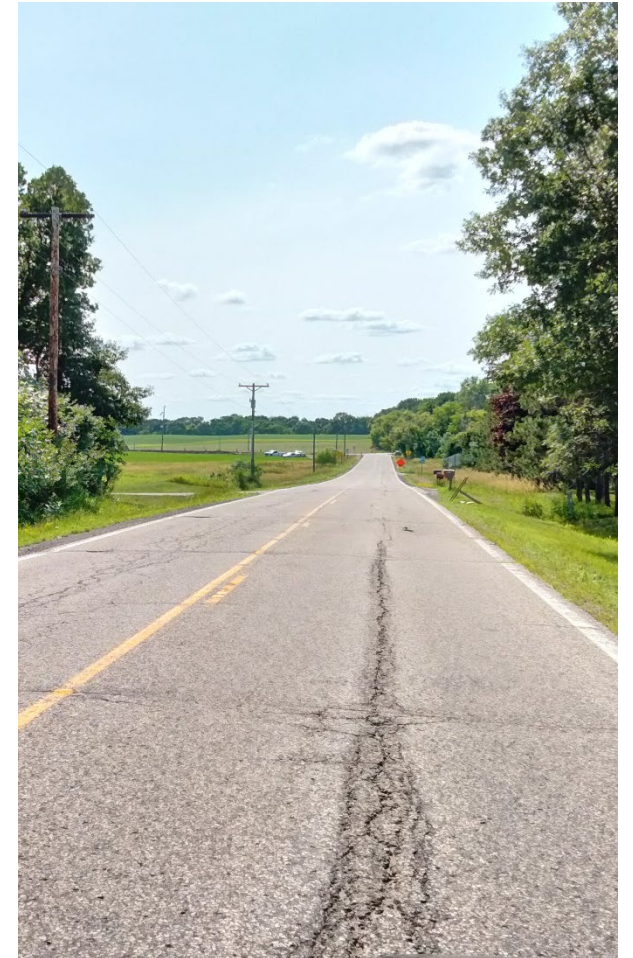
\*Must supplement not supplant existing revenues

# Transportation Advancement Account – Metro Counties

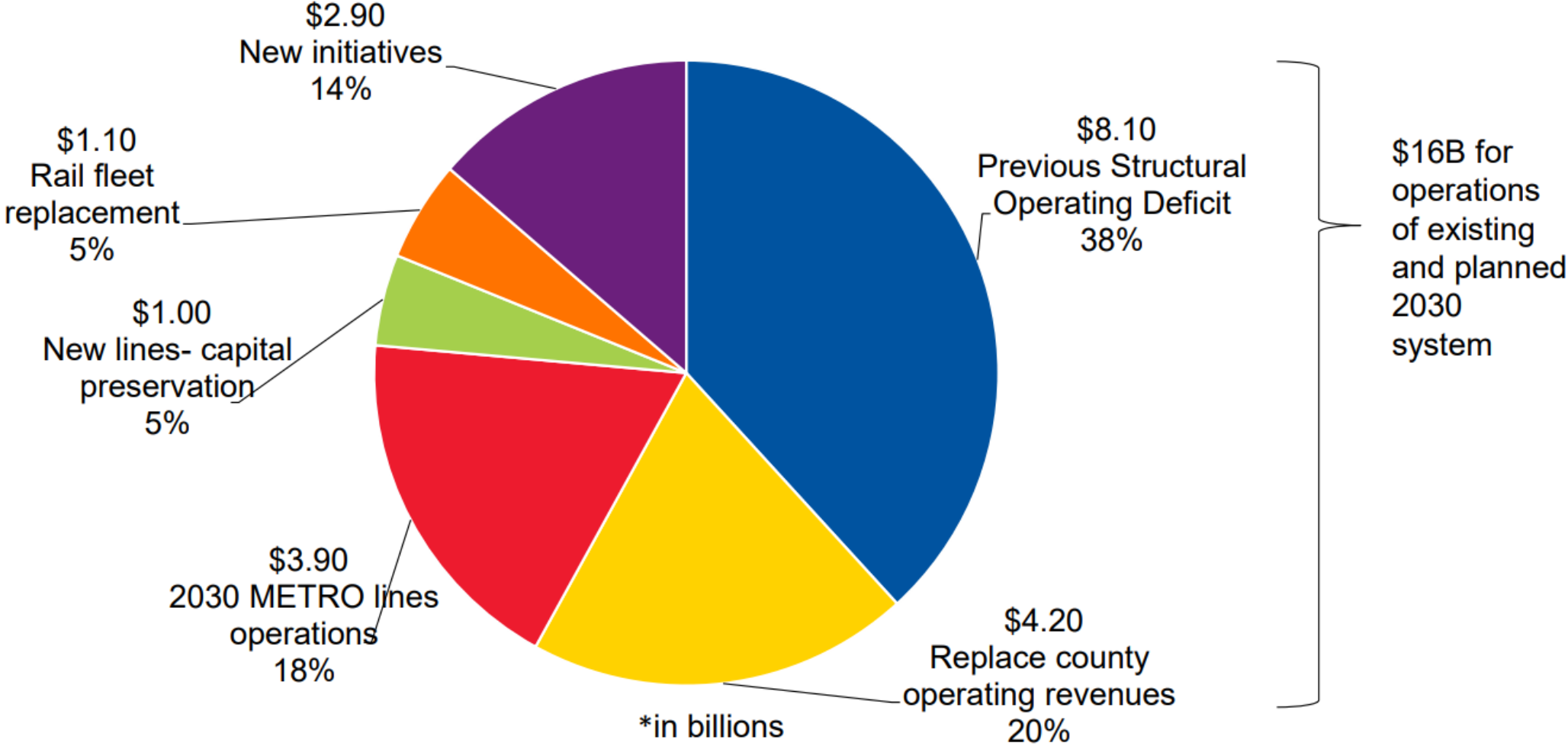
Money to metro counties distribution based 50% on need and 50% on population

## **Metropolitan county funds usage requirements:**

- 41.5% for active transportation and transportation corridor safety studies
- 41.5% for repair, preserve, or replace without adding capacity
- 17% for transit purposes, complete streets projects, or mitigation under new greenhouse gas impact law



# Metropolitan Council 30-Year Sales Tax Projections



Information taken from Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole presentation from October 4, 2023



# Other Policy and Funding Changes

## Metropolitan Council / Metro Transit

- County share of transitway operating costs shift to Metro Transit
- All capital maintenance costs paid by Metro Transit
- Various transit operating policies (i.e., transit code of conduct requirement, cleaning and repair standards, Metro Mobility enhancement pilot)
- Metropolitan Governance Task Force

## MnDOT (statewide)

- Additional funds to local road, bridge, active transportation, and safe route to schools grant program
- \$13.6M in EV infrastructure
- EV and electric bike credits
- New greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment





**DATE:** October 26, 2023  
**TO:** Red Rock Corridor Commission  
**FROM:** Staff  
**RE:** Communications Update

**Facebook**

The Red Rock Corridor Facebook page has 416 likes and a total of 425 people follow the page, which is a slight increase since the August meeting. Staff aims to keep the page active by posting transit-related news from across the region several times per month.

**Press**

None

**Action:**

Information