

**Gateway Corridor Commission
February 10, 2011
Woodbury City Hall, Birch Room**

Members	Agency	Present
Rafael Ortega	Ramsey County	
Lisa Weik	Washington County	x
Kathy Lantry	St Paul	
Will Rossbach	Maplewood	x
Paul Reinke	Oakdale	x
Mary Giuliani Stephens	Woodbury	x
Dean Johnston	Lake Elmo	
Dan Kyllo	West Lakeland	x
Randy Nelson	Afton	x
Brian Zeller	Lakeland	x
Victoria Reinhardt, Alternate	Ramsey County	x
Gary Kriesel, Alternate	Washington County	x
Paul Rebholz, Alternate	Woodbury	
Brett Emmons, Alternate	Lake Elmo	x
Dave Schultz, Alternate	West Lakeland	
Pat Snyder, Alternate	Afton	
Peg Larson, Alternate	Lakeland	

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	Present
Greg Watson	Woodbury Chamber of Commerce	x
Mike Amundson	Baytown Township	x
Doug Stang	3M	
Richard McNamara	Oakdale Business and Professional Association	
Tim Ramberg	St. Croix County	x
Zach Schwartz	St Paul Chamber of Commerce	

Others	Agency
Ted Schoenecker	Washington County
Mike Rogers	Ramsey County RRA
David Jessup	City of Woodbury
Don Place	Woodbury Economic Development Commission
Dave Schultz	West Lakeland Township
Todd Clarkowski	Mn/DOT
Josh Straka	Congresswoman McCollum's Office
Bill Goff	Mn/DOT
Bob Hughes	City of River Falls

Stephanie Eiler	Hill
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The Gateway Corridor Commission convened at 3:30 p.m. by Chair Weik.

Agenda Item #1. Introductions

Introductions were made by those present.

Agenda Item #2. Approval of Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda. Motion made by Zeller to approve agenda. Seconded by Rossbach. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #3. Summary January 13, 2011 Meeting

Motion by Reinhardt to approve the meeting summary as amended on page 11 b. Seconded by Rossbach. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #4. Consent Items

- a. Checks and claims: Motion by Rossbach to approve the consent items. Seconded by Reinke. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #5. Gateway Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Schoenecker introduced Stephanie Eiler to present the highlights of the Alternative Analysis Study.

Stephanie presented a power point presentation which provided an overview of where the study is at today including details on the alternatives to go out for review at a series of public meetings at the end of the month. She indicated that we are on an eighteen-month schedule that is divided into three phases and we are currently in the Alternatives Development Phase-Phase Two-which includes narrowing down of the alternatives to go out to the public for comment. If the public agrees with these alternatives, those are the ideas that will continue for a detailed study in Phase Three. She reviewed the technical memos and noted that these have been reviewed and revised by the TAC and PAC. She presented the goals and specifically touched on the recent revisions of these goals as indicated in red in the packets. Ms. Eiler requested that this Commission approve this list of goals and objectives to go forward to the public meetings later this month. Motion by Nelson to approve these six goals and objectives. Seconded by Zeller. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Ms. Eiler continued to review the power-point presentation specifically relating to the public involvement and open houses. Kriesel questioned Wisconsin’s financial involvement, specifically if they are contributing funding to this partnership. Reinhardt also questioned how we are paying for the consultant services and if Wisconsin is funding any part of it. Schoenecker confirmed that, for the purpose of this study, the Gateway Corridor Commission has allocated the entire funds for the project. However, at the next step in the process, this Commission may consider looking at a cost participation piece, and approach Wisconsin to contribute to the funding. Reinhardt suggested that we are laying the groundwork for that now by tracking the time, so we may know what the amount of funding could be at the next level. Schoenecker

indicated that we could only give general numbers as to the portion of time and money that is spent on Wisconsin's piece of the study.

Schoenecker highlighted item number three in regard to the use of social media. He noted that the PAC discussed this at length in their last meeting, specifically the use of the social network Facebook. Schoenecker introduced Bob Hughes from River Falls to discuss this topic. He indicated younger people are the largest growing part of the population that uses mass transit. He also noted that the number one cause of death in young people is car accidents. Therefore, it would be beneficial to encourage the use of mass transit in young people. To do this, we need to get them involved in transit development. He referenced some low cost avenues of public involvement, which included Facebook as well as college campus news releases. Hughes indicated that Facebook is a great avenue to create more involvement with young people at a minimal expense. Additionally, mail distribution through college campuses can be relatively inexpensive. Finally, MPR 89.3 could broadcast these open house meeting details for free or small cost. Schoenecker referred the Commission to agenda #9 Communication Contract where we can discuss this topic further.

Ms. Eiler continued to inform the Commission of information on the PowerPoint presentation. She specifically identified the public involvement information including the dates and locations of the four public open houses, as well as the format that they will use at these open houses. She noted that there will be members of all committees available to answer questions and comments will also be accepted and responded to on the webpage. Giuliani-Stephens indicated that she felt that there should be a distinct time deadline noted on this webpage for the acceptance of questions. Reinke questioned if every question will be answered. Eiler responded that the comments will be grouped by issues and each issue will be addressed and responded to. Schoenecker informed the Members that, at the minimum, there will be an acknowledgement that the comment was received with an attempt to respond to most questions.

Eiler continued the review through the PowerPoint presentation on the Transit Technology Level 1 (Fatal Flaw) Screening. This included an overview of all rail transit technologies available in the United States today. Then they took all these technologies and reviewed them through a screening process. It was then determined that Street Car, High Speed Rail, Heavy Rail Transit, AGT, and Personal Rapid Transit were not compatible with this corridor and it is recommended they not be considered. She requested the approval of these recommended Alternative Technologies: Commuter Rail, Light Rail Transit, Bus Rapid Transit and Conventional Bus. Motion by Reinhardt to approve the Alternative Technologies with an amendment to Conventional Bus to read Conventional/Express Bus. Seconded by Nelson. **Approved.** Motion Carried.

Eiler next reviewed the Initial/Fatal Flaw Alternatives Screening- Evaluation Criteria. This involved:

1. Transportation Mobility
2. Community and Agency Planning: Consistency with Transportation, Land Use and

Economic Development Plans.

3. Cost Effectiveness
4. Natural Environment

Rossbach asked about the definition of 'feasible' for criteria 3a and 3b and suggested that it be modified to reflect Eiler's verbal description of 'comparable to other transit investments in the region.' She asked for the approval of these criteria's for the public comment at the first round of open houses. Motion by Reinke to approve these criteria's. Seconded by Rossbach.

Approved. Motion Carried.

As Eiler resumed her presentation, she reviewed the initial alternatives considered. This involved clarifying the four segments of the corridor, which are:

- 1 -Downtown Minneapolis to Downtown St Paul
- 2 -Downtown St Paul to Woodbury
- 3 -Woodbury to Hudson
- 4 - Hudson to Eau Claire
 - 4 a Hudson to Baldwin
 - 4b Baldwin to Menomonie
 - 4c Menomonie to Eau Claire

This analysis process included working groups of Staff as well as the TAC, analyzing maps and putting all ideas through the criteria standards.

Alternatives:

1. No Build Alternative:
 - Bus shoulder lanes between the two downtowns
 - Central Corridor Light Rail
 - By 2030, all shoulder lanes will be extended through Woodbury
 - Improvements and enhancements to existing Park-n-Rides
 - Lane Controls- including intelligent transportation systems will be used as a regulating lane technique; not a managed lane.
2. Transportation Systems Management Alternative (TSM):
 - This will become the FDA's Baseline Alternative, after approval
 - Includes all no-build components extended to Hudson
 - Express bus service, increase size and number of Park-n-Rides, as well as Central Corridor Light Rail
 - By 2030, spot shoulder lanes will be added where congestion is projected from Hudson through to Eau Claire. No lanes will be added or taken away. Will use existing shoulders for buses and exiting traffic. Intelligent transportation system may be used to assist traffic.
 - Additional shoulders are considered on the I-94 Bridge. If there is no new Stillwater Bridge, projected traffic levels of I-94 Bridge will go from 89,000 in 2008 to 120,000 in 2030. More information will be detailed on this in the next phase.

3. Build Alternatives:

She indicated three types of Build Alternatives:

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Commuter Rail.

a. BRT: She gave an overview of the maps that specifically detailed the route of the bus rapid transit downtown Minneapolis through Hudson all the way to Eau Claire. They would like to consider this route for analysis to see if it will work. The second route option would get off I-94 and penetrate through the cities of Maplewood Oakdale & Woodbury.

b. LRT Alternative: Start in downtown St Paul with a connection between the Union Depot and I-94, from St Paul to Hudson. Included in this option is LRT on the I-94 Bridge. She indicated that further research and study in the next phase of the development will indicate what is possible. Ridership and capital costs will be analyzed to see which segments would be most profitable. The suggestion, at this point, is to go forward to analyze if the LRT can be completed through this corridor.

c. Commuter Rail Alternative: This plan has two alternative routes. A BNSF route north of the Central Corridor and a CP route to the south of Central Corridor, and then the Union Pacific route will go all the way to Eau Claire.

Eiler completed her presentation with a request to the Commission to approve these alternatives. Motion by Zeller to move the approval of the alternatives. Seconded by Reinhardt. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #6. St. Croix River Bridge Presentation

Schoenecker introduced Todd Clarkowski with MnDOT to provide a presentation on the St. Croix River Crossing Project. He presented a PowerPoint presentation which reviewed details of this project. He provided an overview of the projects needs, the protected natural resources, and cultural resources as well as the existing park and recreation. He indicated that the project was conducted by a group of stakeholders which all held an interest in this area. This stakeholder group reviewed many details, and found a new location for the new bridge, south of the existing bridge. The stakeholder group also addressed what to do with the old lift bridge. These options included the creation of a bicycle and pedestrian facility that formed a connection to a Minnesota and Wisconsin trail system.

Legally, he noted, in 2007 the Sierra Club sued the Federal Government in reference to the long-term effect on the river-way. The courts determined on October 15, 2010, that there would be a direct and adverse effect to the scenic and recreational quality of the river-way and therefore the National Park Service cannot approve the project. He noted that this project could still be approved by the Federal Government. We are currently waiting for a congressional action at this time.

He also noted there is a new group formed called the Coalition for the St Croix River Crossing

Project. Mr. Clarkowski indicated that this group could be very instrumental in helping to support this project. Currently, MnDOT is working on the project development per suspension strategies. More information can be found at the project website:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix/index.html>.

Kriesel questioned what the monthly cost increase of the project is as it is delayed. Clarkowski indicated it is a little over two million dollars per month on the \$635 million dollar overall cost, including inflation. Kriesel indicated that the main question for our Commission is what impact will the river bridge crossing have on the I-94 Corridor. Clarkowski introduced Bill Goff with MnDOT who has been involved in the analysis of the impact to the corridor if the river crossing does not go in by the 2030 projection. Goff indicated that they are just wrapping up the I-94/East Metro Corridor Study. This study analyzes existing volumes and 2030 projection. Specifically, he noted that with the new river crossing 108,000 trips per day are proposed across the I-94 Bridge in 2030. Without the new crossing, it is expected to have 122,000 trips per day, which is a 12% increase in traffic by 2030. Additionally, he noted that if the crossing is not built, east of Manning Ave would be operating at over capacity and the volume of 122,000 trips per day is approaching the capacity of the I-94 Bridge.

Kriesel questioned our position on this issue as it relates to our alternative analysis study, and Nelson asked if we should provide a resolution of support. Schoenecker referenced that at this technical level we would need to gather some information from the experts about the assumption of including the crossing or not in our analysis. This can be added to the agenda for next month. Goff indicated that he would forward some detailed maps that may aid in the research of the Commission.

Agenda Item #7. Insurance Coverage for Commission

Schoenecker indicated that we have LMCIT as the current insurance provider and they require us to complete some forms in order for them to provide a quote for insurance. The recommendation from the County Risk Manager is that this Commission does not waive monetary limits on the liability coverage waiver form. Motion by Reinhardt to approve the Insurance Coverage as recommended. Rossbach Seconded. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #8. Recap of 2009/2010 Commission Activities

Schoenecker noted for the Commission Members to review the recap of the 2009/2010 Commission activities included in their packets.

Agenda Item #9. Communications Consultant Contract

Schoenecker referred Members to a memo included in their packets in regard to the Commission's communications needs for 2011. Schoenecker asked for the approval to move forward to enter into a contact with Tunheim, and will include an addendum that could consider including a social media network portion after further review and approval at a later date. Motion by Reinhardt to approve the Communications Consultant Contract. Seconded by Reinke. **Approved.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item #10. Legislative Update

Mike Rogers provided a brief review of the legislative update.

- a. State: Rogers indicated that Governor Dayton recently provided the State of the State Address and clearly referenced the fiscal mess he inherited. He talked about giving the administration a chance for changes and highlighted not only cutting funding but also looking at new revenue streams. He also indicated his interest in additional funding for schools and a desire for a billion dollar bonding bill. In the Legislature, The House approved a bill to cut \$900 million in spending over the next two years, but Governor Dayton wanted to address the whole budget at once.

- b. Federal: The expiration of the continuing resolutions that are funding the government will expire on March 4, 2011. Essentially, Congress will vote to have a continuing resolution through the end of the year. They will take last year's budget and use those numbers to fund government through the end of the year. One consideration would be to go back to 2008 budget levels and not use the 2010 funding levels. Additionally he noted, earmark items, or congressionally directed spending, have been banned from the House and Senate. Transportation side, the Chair John Mica would like to get a six year bill in place that would reauthorize SAFETEA-LU that expired in 2009. Weik noted that she will be in Washington the first week of March, for a 4 to 5 day conference on Legislative Delegation of the National Association of Counties.

Agenda Item #11. Other

- a. Summary of Meetings
Schoenecker informed the Commission there was a request to provide a summary of all meetings in one place for reference. He indicated that we would wait on the discussion of this item for a later date.

Agenda Item #12. Adjourn

Roszbach moved to adjourn. Seconded by Reinke. **Approved.** Motion carried. Weik called the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.