

Rush Line Corridor Alternatives Analysis Fact Sheet

June 2009



Corridor

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The Corridor

The 80-mile Rush Line Corridor begins at the Minnesota's Union Depot in downtown St. Paul and generally follows Highway 61 and Interstate 35/35E north through Ramsey, Anoka, Washington, Chisago, and Pine Counties to Hinkley.

The Issue

The Rush Line Corridor links urban, suburban and rural communities that are experiencing significant growth. The Rush Line Corridor population is expected to increase by 43 percent between the years 2000 and 2030, an increase of more than 158,000 people. The Corridor is also expected to experience 40 percent job growth during the same time, an increase of more than 76,000 jobs. Large portions of Interstate 35E and US Highway 61 already experience congestion, a number of interchanges are experiencing capacity constraints, and congested periods are becoming longer. Expanding transportation choices along the corridor will improve the mobility of area residents, access to employment and education, and the reach of local transportation services.

The Project

The Rush Line Corridor Alternative Analysis is exploring possible rapid transit alternatives which would meet the mobility needs of the growing corridor. As part of the process, Light Rail Transit, Bus Rapid Transit, and Commuter Rail were evaluated for possible implementation in the corridor.

Alternatives were assessed using the following categories:

- **Transportation and Mobility**
 - Ridership
 - Capital Costs
 - Operating and Maintenance Costs
 - Cost per New Transit Rider
- **Economic Opportunity and Investment**
 - Population within half-mile of stations
 - Employment within half-mile of stations
 - Transit Oriented Development Potential
 - Economic Development Potential
- **Communities and Environment**
 - Transit Dependent Population
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Natural Environments
 - Vehicle Miles Traveled and Carbon Dioxide Emissions
 - Multimodal connectivity
 - Right-of-way restrictions
- **Public Perception**

Study Recommendations

This Study is recommending that two transit options be further evaluated in an Advanced Alternatives Analysis:

- **Bus Rapid Transit along I-35/35E from downtown Saint Paul to Columbus/Forest Lake**
- **Light Rail Transit along the Ramsey County right-of-way from downtown Saint Paul to White Bear Lake**

(The Rush Line Corridor Implementation Program is presented on the back)

Contact

Mr. Mike Rogers, Project Manager
 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
 Ramsey County Government Center, 50 West Kellogg Boulevard, Suite 6560, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
 www.rushline.org | 651-266-2760

- Support bus service within the Corridor:
 - Demonstration service to St. Paul
 - Route 288 to Minneapolis
- Add and expand park-and-rides
- Develop preservation guidelines and policies with municipalities
- Coordinate with other projects on Corridor needs (i.e. Lafayette Bridge reconstruction and Union Depot)
- Support interim trail use of County Regional Railroad Authority (RRA) rights-of-way
- Complete an Advanced Alternatives Analysis
- Engage communities north of Forest Lake/Hugo/Columbus
- Collaborate on the implementation of a comprehensive transitway system
- Develop branding
- Support increased transit funding
- Identify and implement public/private partnership opportunities
- Complete Short-Term projects
- Support making demonstration service permanent
- Add and expand park-and-rides
- Identify new project opportunities
- Develop/implement preservation guidelines and policies with municipalities
- Coordinate with other projects on Corridor needs (i.e. Lafayette Bridge reconstruction, Union Depot)
- Support interim trail use of County RRA rights-of-way
- Integrate the results of the Advanced Alternatives Analysis into the Transportation Policy Plan and municipalities' comprehensive plans
- Identify station locations and complete station studies
- Initiate/complete environmental documentation and engineering for a single preferred alternative
- Monitor the Federal Transit Administrations New Starts program
- Engage communities north of Forest Lake/Columbus
- Collaborate on the implementation as a comprehensive transitway system
- Support increased transit funding
- Identify and implement public/private partnership opportunities
- Complete Mid-Term projects
- Identify new project opportunities
 - Corridor Extension Study
- Add and expand park-and-rides
- Support bus service north of Forest Lake/Columbus
- Develop/implement preservation guidelines and policies with municipalities
- Coordinate with other projects on Corridor needs
- Support interim trail use of County RRA rights-of-way
- Construct the Locally Preferred Alternative
- Identify opportunities to focus development at stations
- Monitor the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts Program
- Engage communities north of Forest Lake/Columbus
- Collaborate on the implementation as a comprehensive transitway system
- Support increased transit funding
- Identify and implement public/private partnership opportunities

Open for Service



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