



City Council Memorandum

To: Mayor Hicks and City Council
From: John Hinzman, Community Development Director
Date: December 5, 2016
Item: Resolution: Support of the Adoption of the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan

Council Action Requested:

Adopt the attached resolution supporting the adoption of the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan

A simple majority vote is required.

Background Information:

The Red Rock Corridor is a 20 mile transitway that runs along Highway 61 between Hastings and the Union Depot in Downtown Saint Paul. The Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan creates financial, development, and service plans to provide better transit connections between corridor communities and the regional network.

Please see the attached Executive Summary and www.redrockcorridor.com for further information. **Red Rock Representatives will provide a summary of the report at the City Council Meeting.**

The report was authorized by the Red Rock Corridor Commission, consisting of members from various governmental entities along the corridor. Councilmember Vaughan serves as the City of Hastings' representative on the Commission.

Financial Impact:

Funding for construction activities would likely originate from federal, state, regional, and local sources.

Advisory Commission Discussion:

N\A

Council Committee Discussion:

N\A

Attachments:

- Resolution
- Executive Summary

HASTINGS CITY COUNCIL**RESOLUTION NO. _____****RESOLUTION TRANSMITTING THE CITY OF HASTINGS' SUPPORT OF THE
ADOPTION OF THE RED ROCK CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN BY THE
RED ROCK CORRIDOR COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, the Red Rock Corridor transitway project will provide for transit improvements in the southeastern portion of the Twin Cities; and

WHEREAS, the Red Rock Corridor is approximately 20 miles, and connects downtown Saint Paul with its East Side neighborhoods and the suburbs of Newport, Saint Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and Hastings; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hastings is an active member of the Red Rock Corridor Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Alternatives Analysis Update completed in 2014 identified bus rapid transit (BRT) as the mode best aligned with the needs of the corridor; and

WHEREAS, a 15-month study for the Implementation Plan for BRT service along the Red Rock Corridor has concluded; and

WHEREAS, the final route considered for the Implementation Plan provides direct access to residents, businesses, and jobs in the cities along the corridor; and

WHEREAS, the completed Implementation Plan recommends a phased approach with near-term and long-term strategies to building transit ridership and introducing BRT to the corridor; and

WHEREAS, based on technical information and public engagement, the completed Implementation Plan establishes the near-term goal of supporting improved local and express bus service to help build transit ridership in the southeast metro; and

WHEREAS, based on technical information and public engagement, the completed Implementation Plan establishes the long-term goal of developing BRT in the southeast metro; and

WHEREAS, the completed Implementation Plan contains financial, development and service plans for improving existing transit service and the build out of bus rapid transit; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Hastings supports the findings of the Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Hastings supports station area development within its jurisdiction based on the results of the station area planning and community input from the Implementation Plan and the Metropolitan Council guidelines for development density, level of activity, and design.

Paul J. Hicks, Mayor

ATTEST:

Julie Flaten, City Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above is a true and correct copy of an ordinance presented to and adopted by the City of Hastings, County of Dakota, Minnesota, on the 5th day of December, 2016, as disclosed by the records of the City of Hastings on file and of record in the office.

Julie Flaten, City Clerk

(SEAL)

This instrument drafted by:
City of Hastings (JH)
101 4th St. East
Hastings, MN 55033

Chapter 1: Executive Summary

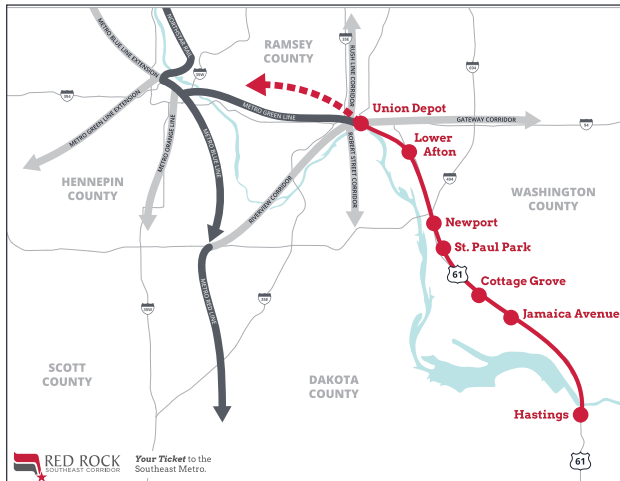


1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The Washington, Dakota, Ramsey, and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authorities completed an Implementation Plan for the Red Rock Corridor. The Red Rock Corridor is a proposed 30-mile transitway that runs along Highway 61 and Interstate 94 between Hastings and Union Depot in Saint Paul with connecting service to Minneapolis (see **Figure 1-1**).

Figure 1-1: Project Area



1.2 Purpose of Report

The Implementation Plan builds off the recommendations from the Red Rock Alternatives Analysis Updated (AAU) to create financial, development, and service plans to provide better transit connections between corridor communities and the regional network.

The following sections of the report summarize the individual tasks that form the Implementation Plan.

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Alternative Evaluation
- Preferred Alternative
- Financial Plan
- Phasing Plan

1.3 Project Goals

The following project goals were adopted by the Red Rock Corridor Commission on May 22, 2013 as part of the AAU process to lead planning efforts for the corridor.

1. Provide mode choice and service plan that meets the demonstrated and forecasted needs of corridor communities
2. Cost effectively address transportation problems in the corridor
3. Increase opportunities for community and economic development throughout the corridor
4. Improve quality of natural and built environment

1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Planning for the Implementation Plan involved outreach and coordination with community members, businesses, civic organizations, and others interested in the project. A Business and Civic Advisory Committee was established as part of the project. City and county agencies were also engaged in the process to provide direction on the project and the engagement process.

A **Public Involvement Plan (PIP)** was developed to clarify the goals and objectives for public outreach.

Engagement at Park & Rides



1.5 Alternative Evaluation Overview

Two BRT alignment alternatives were explored beyond the alternatives that were identified in the Alternatives Analysis Update (AAU).

The initial alignment that was identified included a BRT alignment with a highway orientation along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hastings Depot (Alternative 1).

At the onset of the Implementation Plan, it was noted that stations along Highway 61 from the AAU may miss some of the established development along the corridor and stakeholders requested that another route be investigated. Thus, a second BRT alternative was introduced to focus more on the existing density in the corridor that would be more likely to support all-day transit service. The second alternative included stations on the east side of Saint Paul within the Gateway Corridor, into the developed part of Cottage Grove, and

further into Hastings. St. Paul Park did not have a station in the routing recommended in the AAU, so a station in St. Paul Park was added to both alternatives.

The following two project alternatives were evaluated based on projected cost, ridership, and service:

- **Alternative 1:** BRT Along Highway 61 with a Highway Orientation
- **Alternative 2:** BRT Along Highway 61 with a Community Orientation

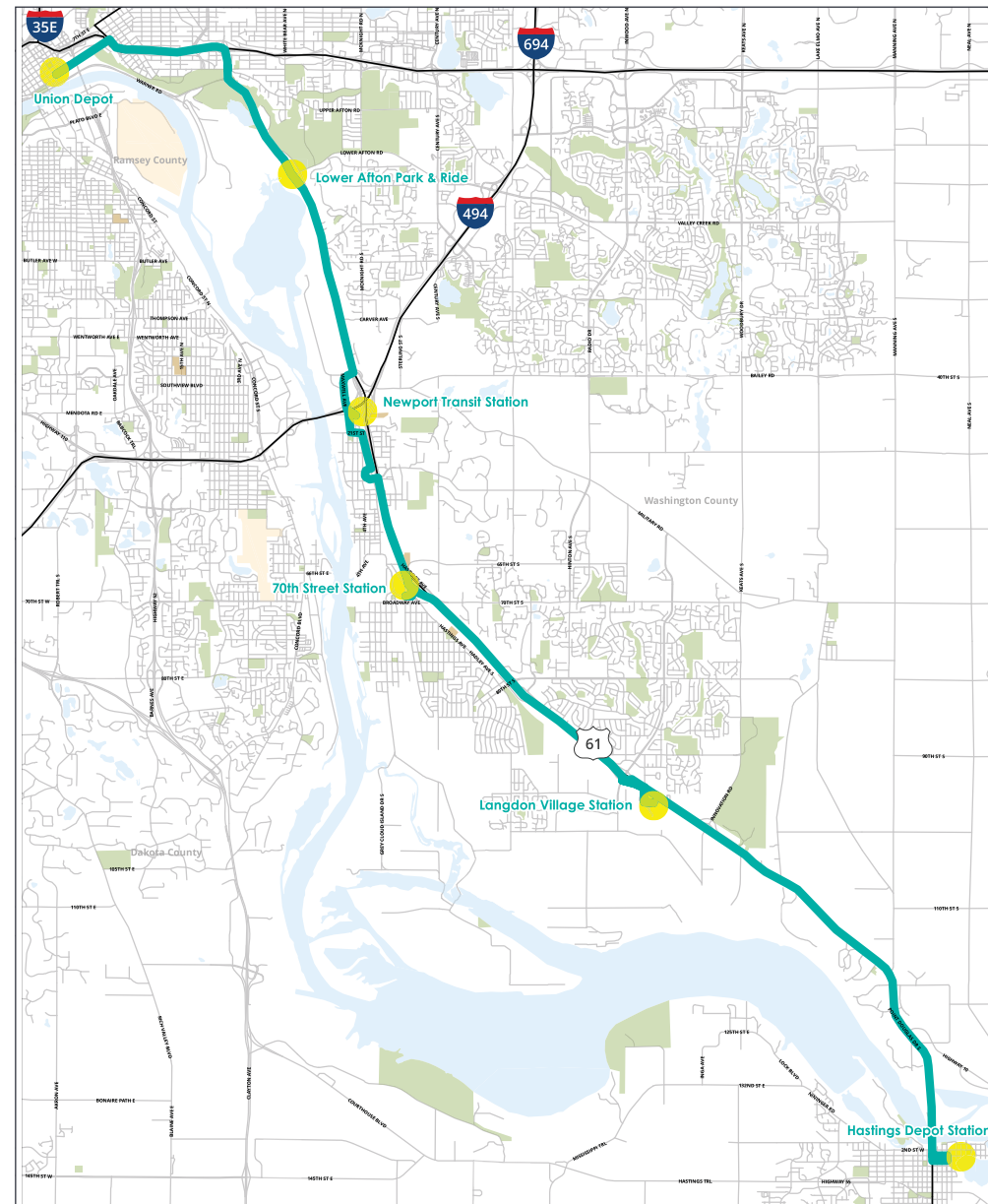
The routes and station locations for the two alternatives are shown in **Figure 1-2** and **1-3**.

1.6 Station-Level Evaluation

During the station-level analysis, it was determined that Alternative 2 would be further evaluated with two options: Alternative 2A and 2B.

- **Alternative 2A:** BRT via 95th Street with stops at the Union Depot, Mounds Boulevard Station, Earl Street Station, Etna Street Station, Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, St. Paul Park Station, 80th Street Station, 95th Street Station, the Hastings Depot, a station along Highway 55 in Hastings, and a station near the Dakota County Offices in Hastings. The Mounds Boulevard, Earl Street, and Etna Street Stations are shared with the Gateway Corridor and utilize the transit-only guideway being developed for that corridor. Parking is assumed at the Lower Afton Park & Ride, Newport Transit Station, 80th Street Station, the Hastings Depot, and the Dakota County Offices Station.
- **Alternative 2B:** BRT with the same stops as Alternative 2A with the exception of a stop at Jamaica Avenue rather than at 95th Street. Additionally, parking is assumed at the Jamaica Avenue station rather than the 80th Street Station for this alternative.

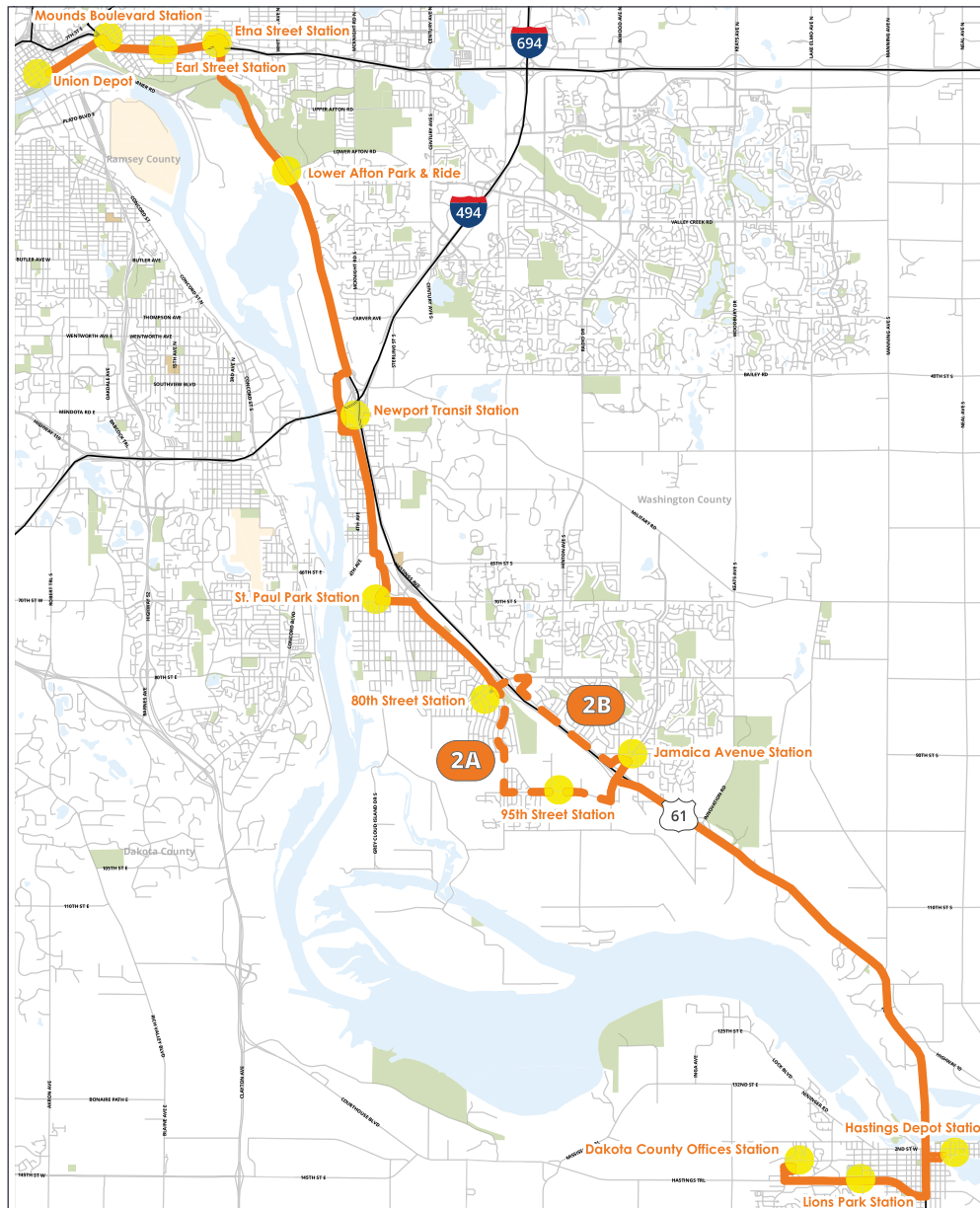
Figure 1-2: Alternative 1





Cottage Grove

Figure 1-3: Alternative 2



The intention behind these alternatives was to investigate the difference in forecasted ridership between serving the predominantly industrial side (west) of Highway 61 compared to the predominantly commercial side (east) of Highway 61 between 80th Street and Jamaica Avenue.

1.7 Preferred Alternative

In January 2016, the RRCC recommended advancing a single preferred alternative for further evaluation based on the goals of the project and public input. The preferred alternative includes BRT service along Highway 61 between Union Depot in Saint Paul and Hasting Depot with deviations from Highway 61 in Newport, St. Paul Park, Cottage Grove, and in Hastings. The portions of this alternative off of Highway 61 aim to serve existing population and jobs that are more likely to support all-day, bi-directional transit service than park-and-rides. The end-to-end travel time to cover the 26.8-mile distance is assumed to be approximately 66 minutes with 124 daily trips.

Figure 1-4 shows the proposed preferred alternative service plan.

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Similar to other transitways in the region, the service for the Red Rock BRT was modeled as follows:

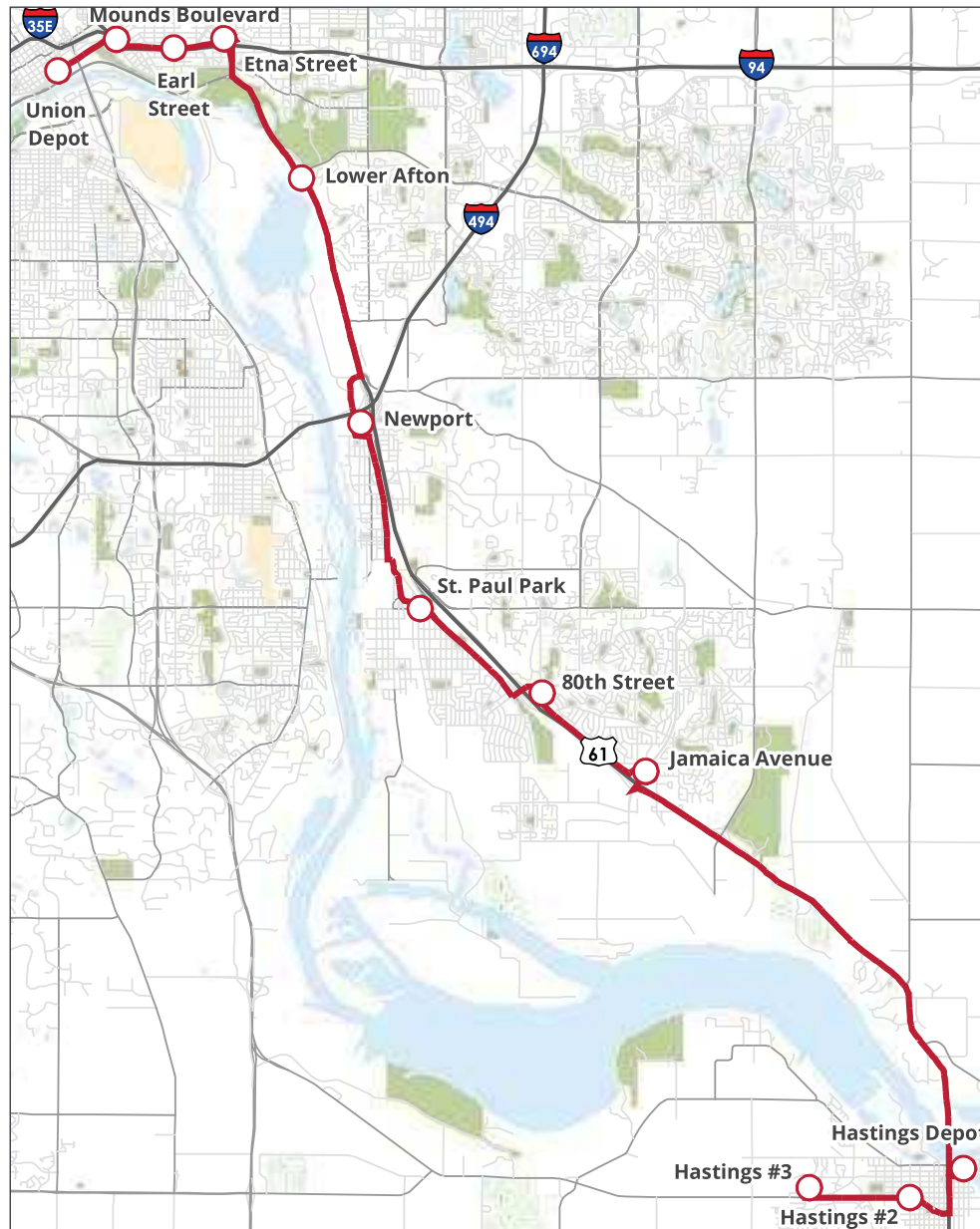
Weekday Service

- Frequency
 - 15 minutes (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
 - 30 minutes (5:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.; 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.)
- Service Hours
 - 19 Hours

Weekend Service

- Frequency
 - 30 minutes (7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.)
- Service Hours
 - 17 Hours

Figure 1-4: Preferred Alternative Service Plan



1.8 Ridership and Cost Estimation

SUMMARY OF CAPITAL AND OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) COST ESTIMATES

The total capital cost is estimated to be \$44.3 million and the total O&M cost is estimated to be \$7.9 million for the preferred alternative, as shown in **Table 1-1**.

Table 1-1: Summary of Capital and O&M Costs¹

COST CATEGORY	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE COST (2015\$)
Total Capital Costs	\$44.3 M
Total O&M Cost	\$7.9 M

RIDERSHIP PROJECTIONS

The ridership projection for the preferred alternative is 2,200 by 2040.

Key ridership information is summarized in **Table 1-2**. Year 2024 was selected as an interim year to evaluate additional local and express service within the corridor, as well as an interim build option for the Full Build BRT, since ridership for this year was required for a grant application for interim service.

Table 1-2: Ridership Results Summary

YEAR	ALTERNATIVE	EXISTING EXPRESS ROUTES	BRT	TOTAL
2024	No Build	1,350	-	1,350
	Interim BRT	1,270	1,550	2,820
2040	No Build	1,650	-	1,660
	Preferred Alternative	1,600	2,200	3,800

¹All cost estimates presented were calculated using 2015 dollars



1.9 Phasing Plan

PHASE I: NEAR-TERM (2016-2020)

The first phase towards full BRT implementation is to increase local and express bus service. This includes:

- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and increase local and express bus service
- Work with corridor cities and counties to update comprehensive plans with increased population and employment density within station areas
- Work with Metro Transit to implement 30-minute service throughout most of the day between Saint Paul and Cottage Grove (Route 363, see **Section 4.6**)²
- Work with Metro Transit and the City of Hastings to determine when express bus service from Hastings (such as Route 367) or local service within Hastings is a viable option

PHASE II: LONG-TERM (2020-2040)

If Route 363 is implemented, the second phase towards full BRT implementation would be based on how Route 363 performs. The next steps in this phase include:

- Implement the corridor city and county comprehensive plans with a focus on development within and around station areas
- Update forecasted ridership based on comprehensive plan updates
- If Route 363 is implemented, monitor ridership; work with Metro Transit to identify potential service improvements to reach 1,200 passengers per day
- Work with Metro Transit to maintain and/or increase express bus service between the Red Rock Corridor cities and downtown Minneapolis (such as Route 367)

²In July 2016, a Regional Solicitation Application was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for Route 363. If the grant application is successful, the service would be implemented for a three-year term starting in 2020.

- Replace Route 363 with an Interim BRT service when it reaches an estimated 25 passengers per in-service hour
- Continue to invest in station area development

- Advocate for funding for mobility improvements along the corridor. This includes advocating for sustainable federal, regional, and local funding sources
- Continue to monitor transit needs and performance in the corridor to determine the timing for implementation of additional transit services, alternative modes, and capital improvements

1.10. Recommendations and Next Steps

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Based on the current ridership projections and cost-effectiveness of the project, a phased Implementation Plan is proposed to move forward with the development of BRT in the Red Rock Corridor.

FUNDING CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evaluation of the funding sources, the following conclusions can be made about potential revenue sources to support the capital costs of a new BRT line in the Red Rock Corridor:

- Seek multiple sources to fund the Red Rock Corridor prioritized investments
- Invest in a series of small improvements to implement the project over time in order to efficiently leverage funds from multiple sources
- Consider local opportunities to help fund small investments towards full BRT build out
- Reevaluate funding sources and competitiveness as project needs arise

NEXT STEPS

In conjunction with the actions and improvements in each of the phases, there are other broad and ongoing strategies that should be pursued. They are:

- Advocate for integrated multimodal investments including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements that support mobility throughout the Red Rock Corridor