



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Monday, July 13, 2015, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

All meetings are held in the City Hall Annex 13th floor

Conference room at 25 West 4th Street in Saint Paul

1. Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Analysis – Joe Morneau, Dakota County Regional Rail
*action item
2. White Bear Avenue Reconstruction – Nick Fischer, Ramsey County Public Works

Upcoming Transportation Committee Meetings

- July 27
- August 10

Meetings are open to the public. The Chair may allow five minutes for informal public comment (from non-committee members) at the beginning of each agenda as needed. Additional time may be allocated for comments or further discussion at the discretion of the Chair. Meetings will be cancelled if there is not a quorum expected, or if there are no agenda items. For additional information on the Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission, please visit our website at bit.ly/StPaulTC or contact Hilary Holmes at hilary.holmes@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-266-6612.

Transportation Committee Staff Report

Committee date: July 13, 2015

Project Name	<i>Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Analysis</i>
Geographic Scope	<i>Downtown Saint Paul to Highway 110, West Saint Paul</i>
Ward(s)	<i>Ward 2</i>
District Council(s)	<i>Districts 3, 17</i>
Project Description	<i>The Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Analysis (AA) evaluation process identified two alternatives, a Robert Street Arterial Bus Rapid Transit and Robert Street Streetcar, which can meet the goals for the project. The steering committee has acted to conclude the AA without selection of a single alternative to allow for additional local land use planning. The City of Saint Paul is being asked for a resolution supporting the evaluation process of the study, the conclusions of the study, and the decision to conclude the AA with two alternatives for further study at a later date.</i>
Project Contact	<i>Joe Morneau</i>
Contact email/phone	<i>Joe.Morneau@co.dakota.mn.us; 952-891-7986</i>
Lead Agency/Department	<i>Dakota County Regional Rail Authority</i>
Purpose of Project/Plan	<i>Technical analysis evaluating numerous potential transitway route alignments and modes for the Robert Street corridor.</i>
Planning References	<i>Comp Plan, Transportation Chapter, Policy T2.9 Work with Metro Transit to study and implement possible corridors for new bus rapid transit, LRT, streetcars, or commuter rail lines serving Saint Paul.</i>
Project stage	<i>Planning</i>
General Timeline	<i>Dakota and Ramsey County Regional Rail Authorities to officially adopt AA in September 2015.</i>
District Council position (if applicable)	<i>unknown</i>
Level of Committee Involvement	<i>Recommend resolution to Planning Commission and to City Council.</i>
Previous Committee action	<i>None</i>
Level of Public Involvement	<i>Five rounds of open house meetings, multiple presentations to community groups, distribution of project updates and documentation through project website.</i>
Public Hearing	<i>No</i>
Public Hearing Location	<i>n/a</i>
Primary Funding Source(s)	<i>Federal Transit Administration; Dakota and Ramsey County Regional Rail Authorities</i>
Cost	<i>\$1,357,500</i>

Staff recommendation	<i>Recommend approval.</i>
Action item requested of	<i>Recommend approval of resolution to Planning Commission and City</i>

the Committee	<i>Council.</i>
Committee recommendation	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>
Committee vote	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>

WHEREAS, the Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority (DCRRA) and the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) serve as co-project sponsors in the conduct of the Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Analysis (AA), formalized through the execution of a joint powers agreement (JPA) in August 2011; and

WHEREAS, in July 2012, the DCRRA and RCRRA commenced an AA compliant with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Starts program; and

WHEREAS, the JPA has defined an oversight structure for the AA that established a Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee co-chaired by the DCRRA and RCRRA and incorporated municipalities and agencies within the study area, including the city of Saint Paul, into the evaluation and decision making processes of the AA; and

WHEREAS, the AA established a study framework based on goals formed by the Steering Committee that guided a technical analysis evaluating numerous potential route alignments and modes; and

WHEREAS, the AA produced a limited number of alternatives for detailed analysis and consideration by the Steering Committee; and

WHEREAS, The AA incorporated numerous opportunities for public and stakeholder involvement throughout the course of the study, including open house meetings, stakeholder presentations, and regular distribution of information on the AA through email and website communications; and

WHEREAS, the AA evaluation process developed and overseen by the Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee identified two alternatives, Robert Street Arterial Bus Rapid Transit and Robert Street Streetcar, that can meet the goals established for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee has acted to conclude the AA without selection of a single alternative to allow for additional local land use planning to better understand and facilitate the potential economic development correlation with a future transit project, allow for the formation of regional policy on the development and operation for the modes under consideration, further consider FTA's requirements for land use planning in cities' comprehensive planning processes, and further coordinate with the City of St. Paul on its streetcar system planning efforts.

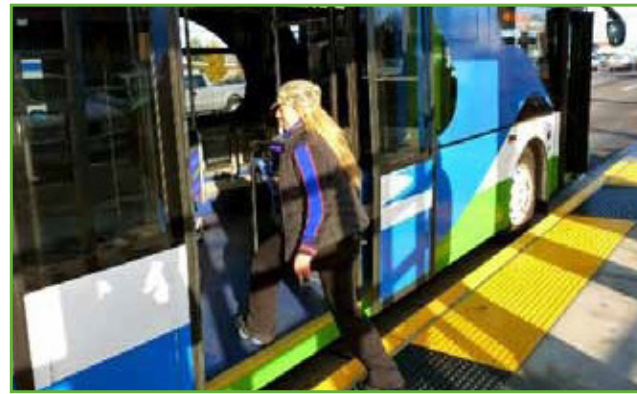
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul supports the evaluation process conducted by the AA and its conclusions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul supports the decision by the Steering Committee to conclude the AA with two alternatives that will be carried forward for consideration in further study at a later date.

STUDY CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

A technical recommendation for Arterial BRT on Robert Street was presented to the Steering Committee in May 2014 and to the public in June 2014. Following the evaluation process, continued interest in the Modern Streetcar alternative was expressed by many project stakeholders due to the expected benefits to local economic development.

The Steering Committee has acted to conclude the AA study at this time without taking action to select a single Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), and is advancing the Robert Street Arterial BRT and Modern Streetcar alternatives for further consideration. This decision was made to allow more time to conduct additional land use planning, to update local comprehensive plans that guide development, and to target capital investments that would encourage additional density within the corridor. Following these local planning processes, the Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority and the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will consider options for further evaluation of the final two alternatives with the intent of selecting an LPA.



HOW CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ROBERT STREET TRANSITWAY?

→ View AA study documents on the project website: robertstreettransit.com

→ Email questions and comments: robertstreettransit@co.dakota.mn.us

→ Contact county staff:

Dakota County
952-891-7986

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
651-266-2760

ROBERT ST

TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES STUDY

RAMSEY COUNTY
Regional Railroad Authority

DCRRA Dakota County
Regional Railroad Authority



FINAL REPORT | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MAY 2015

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The **Robert Street Transitway Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study** was a step forward in advancing a transit improvement project focused on identifying more frequent service and faster transit travel times between downtown Saint Paul and areas within north central Dakota County. The AA phase of development began in mid-2012, and was a joint effort between the Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority and the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. Oversight of the AA was provided by a Steering Committee and guided by a Technical Advisory Committee. Both committees were made up of representatives from local communities within the Robert Street study area and from regional and state agencies.

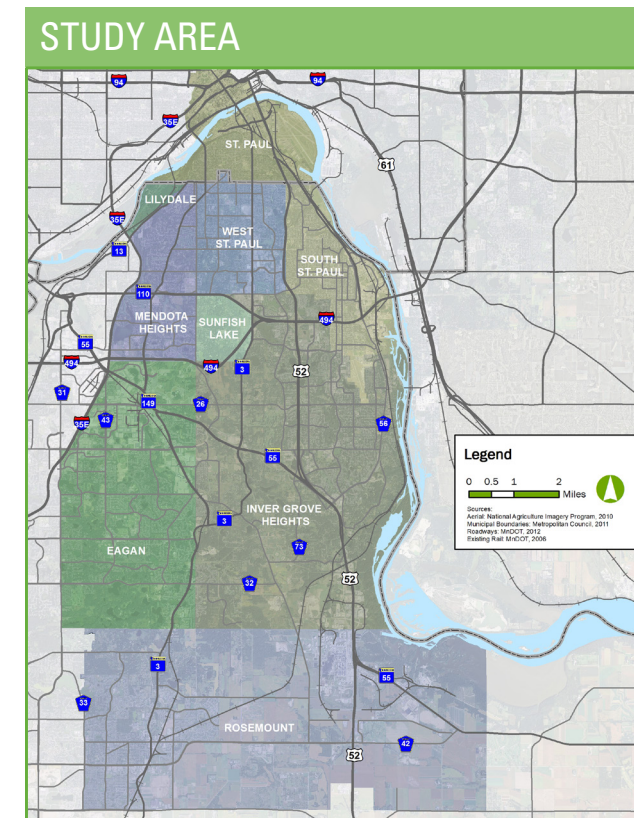
What is the purpose of the Robert Street Transitway?



The purpose of the Robert Street Transitway is to provide the necessary transit infrastructure and service to meet the long-term regional mobility and local accessibility needs between downtown St. Paul and areas within Dakota County.

This project intends to address the following issues:

- Forecasted growth in travel demand resulting from continued growth in population and employment
- Limited transit service and time-efficient transit options
- Needs of people who depend on transit
- Roadway congestion and shift toward multimodal investments
- Regional objectives for growth



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Extensive public outreach was completed as part of the AA study. Open houses were held at five different times during the process, and each round included a meeting in both Saint Paul and West St. Paul. In addition, over 30 individual meetings with neighborhood and business organizations, advocacy groups, and under-represented populations ensured continuous input throughout the process. The feedback collected throughout the study was integrated into the decision-making process for each project stage.

WHAT ALTERNATIVES WERE EVALUATED?

At the beginning of the study, based on the project goals, over 30 potential routes were identified and screened. An initial set of seven mode/alignment alternatives were then advanced based on the results of the screening process. Preliminary evaluation then narrowed the analysis down to three final alternatives:

- Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along Robert Street
- Modern Streetcar along Robert Street
- Highway BRT along Trunk Highway (TH) 52

Service characteristics for the three final alternatives:

ALTERNATIVE	DISTANCE	TRAVEL TIME	FREQUENCY	ESTIMATED WEEKDAY BOARDINGS
Robert Street Arterial BRT	5.8 mi.	30 min.	Every 15 min.	3,100
Robert Street Modern Streetcar	5.4 mi.	29 min.	Every 15 min.	3,000
TH 52 Highway BRT	10.7 mi.	24 min.	Every 15 min.	2,300

HOW WERE THE ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED?

For each of the final alternatives, the following characteristics were defined: alignment, stations, service plans, traffic controls, and operating facilities. The alternatives were then evaluated based on a series of technical evaluation criteria. These measures were developed from project goals and objectives set through public input at the beginning of the AA:

- Goal 1: Improve mobility and accessibility
- Goal 2: Enhance the effectiveness of transit service within the corridor
- Goal 3: Provide cost effective and financially feasible transit solutions
- Goal 4: Support and enhance existing development
- Goal 5: Support healthier communities and sound environmental practices

WHAT WERE THE EVALUATION RESULTS?

→ Goal 1: Improve mobility and accessibility

Key differences between the alternatives:

- Greater overall ridership potential for Arterial BRT and Modern Streetcar compared to Highway BRT
- Better accessibility for Modern Streetcar and Arterial BRT compared to Highway BRT

→ Goal 2: Enhance the effectiveness of transit service within the corridor

Key differences between the alternatives:

- Greater potential of new transit riders for Highway BRT (in part because there is no transit service on TH 52 today)
- Better system productivity, as measured by passengers per revenue hour of service, for Arterial BRT and Modern Streetcar compared to Highway BRT

→ Goal 3: Provide cost effective and financially feasible transit solutions

Key differences between the alternatives:

- Lower capital costs for Arterial BRT (\$29 million) and Highway BRT (\$49 million) compared to Modern Streetcar (\$399 million) [Cost estimated in 2015 dollars]
- Lower operations and maintenance cost per rider for Arterial BRT (\$3.97 per rider) and Highway BRT (\$4.49 per rider) compared to Modern Streetcar (\$8.33 per rider)

	Robert Street Arterial BRT	Robert Street Modern Streetcar	TH 52 Highway BRT via Lafayette
GOAL 1 <i>Mobility & Accessibility Benefits</i>			
GOAL 2 <i>Transit Improvements</i>			
GOAL 3 <i>Cost Effectiveness</i>			
GOAL 4 <i>Community Opportunities</i>			
GOAL 5 <i>Minimize Impacts</i>			
Total			

→ Goal 4: Support and enhance existing communities and planned development

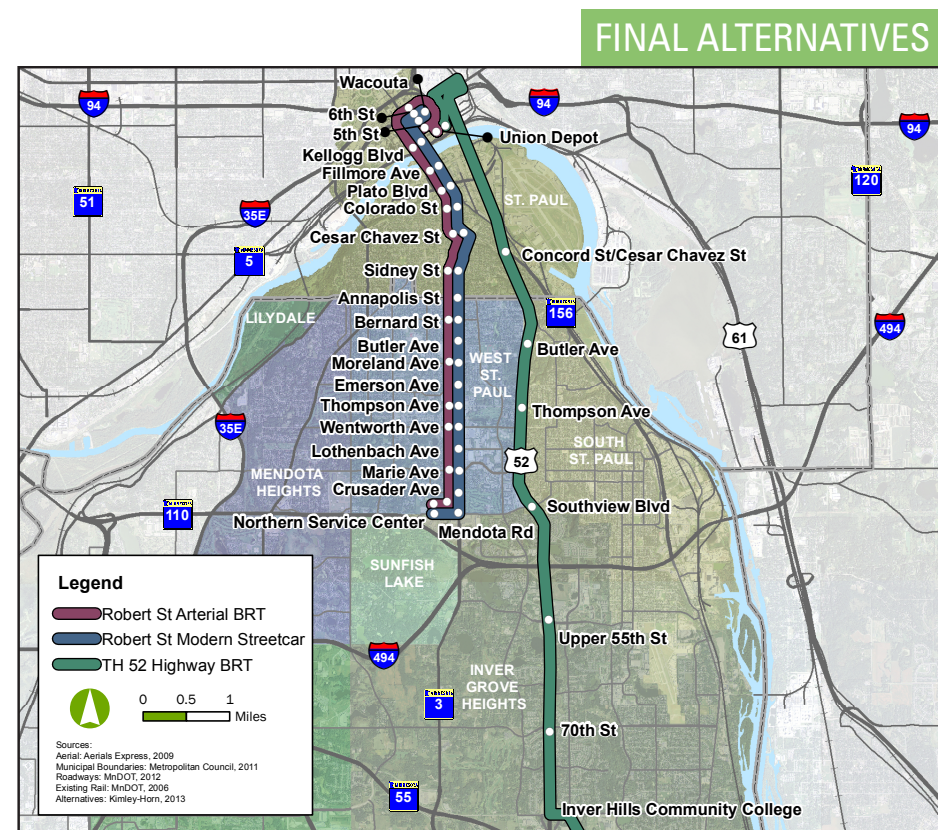
Key differences between the alternatives:

- Greater potential to directly serve planned development/redevelopment and encourage transit-oriented development in areas identified for future development/redevelopment for Modern Streetcar and Arterial BRT
- Greater potential to stimulate real estate development for Modern Streetcar compared to Arterial BRT, based upon additional economic analysis

→ Goal 5: Support healthy communities and sound environmental practices

Key differences between the alternatives:

- Potential for fewer impacts related to private property, traffic congestion, and community resources with Highway BRT



ROBERT ST

TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES STUDY

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS UPDATE JUNE 24, 2015

JOE MORNEAU ◉ DAKOTA COUNTY TRANSIT OFFICE

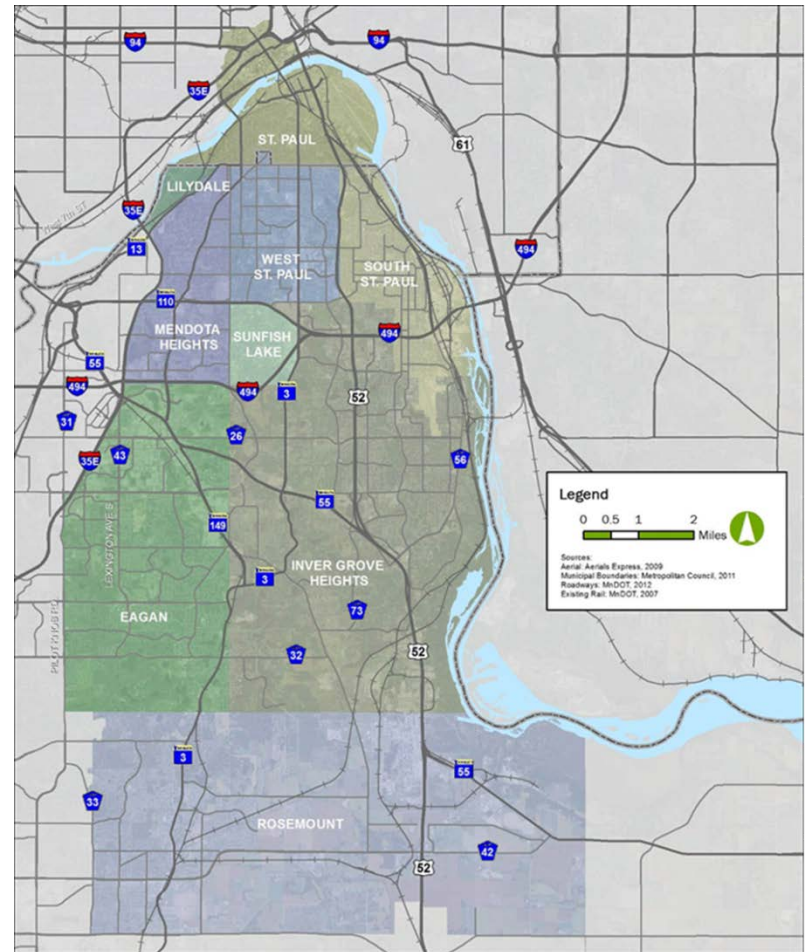


DCRRA Dakota County
Regional Railroad Authority



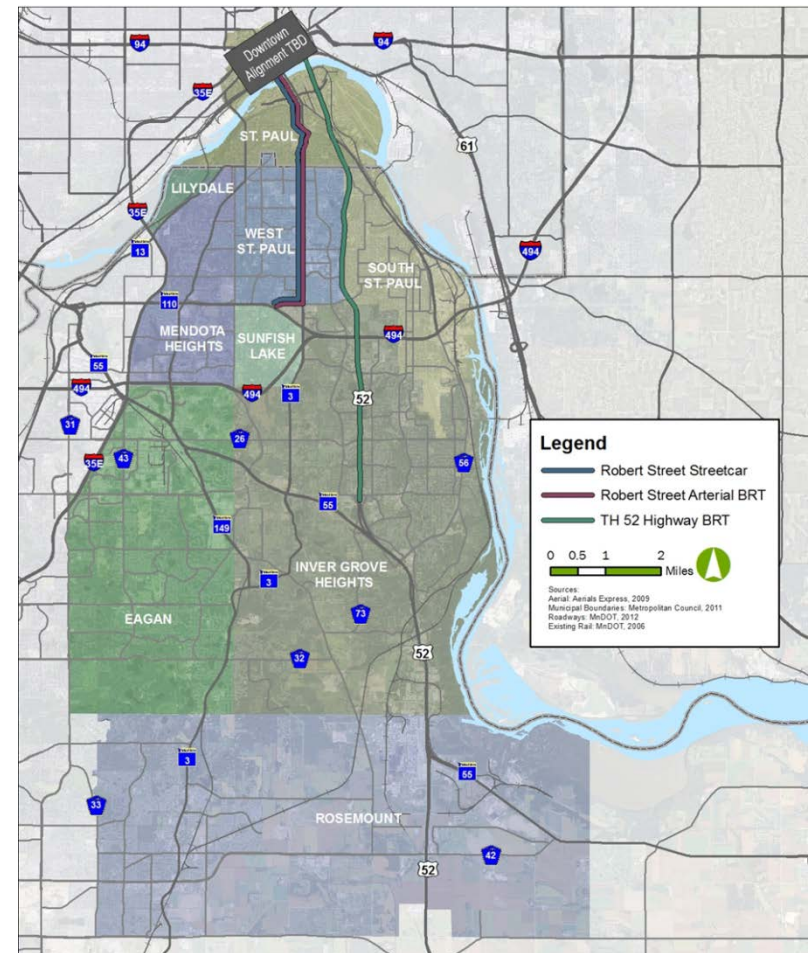
AA STUDY PROCESS

- Study co-led by Dakota and Ramsey Counties' Regional Railroad Authorities
- St. Paul involvement through Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee
- Study area: downtown St. Paul and northern Dakota County



FINAL ALTERNATIVES

- Robert Street – BRT (in traffic lane)
- Robert Street – streetcar (in traffic lane)
- TH 52 – BRT (in shoulder lane)



TECHNICAL EVALUATION

Evaluation Results

	Robert Street Arterial BRT	Robert Street Streetcar	TH 52 Highway BRT
GOAL 1 Mobility & Accessibility Benefits			
GOAL 2 Transit Benefits			
GOAL 3 Cost			
GOAL 4 Opportunities			
GOAL 5 Impacts			
Total			

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

COST

- Streetcar: \$399 Million
- BRT: \$29.2 Million

RIDERSHIP ESTIMATE

- Approximately 3,100 per weekday for both modes

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Higher impact expected with streetcar

AA PROCESS RECAP (CONT'D)

POST EVALUATION

Continued interest in streetcar alternative

- Supportive of both cities' objectives for development

Need for additional land use planning to leverage transit investment

- Considerable changes in comprehensive plans and capital investments

Steering Committee recommendation to conclude AA without an LPA

- Engage in further evaluation of Robert Street alternatives as warranted

NEXT STEPS

Revisit local planning efforts

- Understand extent of changes desired, and how transit can assist
- Need for a broader (not solely transit) perspective on desired land use, development, and transportation characteristics for area

Streetcar policy and plans

- Regional policy currently under consideration by Metropolitan Council

Longer term - updated evaluation

- Based on comprehensive plan changes, population projections
- Revisit technical evaluation process

THANK YOU

JOE MORNEAU

952-891-7986

JOE.MORNEAU@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US

Transportation Committee Staff Report

Committee date: July 13, 2015

Project Name	White Bear Ave Reconstruction
Geographic Scope	White Bear Ave Reconstruct between I-94 to Beech St
Ward(s)	Ward 7
District Council(s)	District 1
Project Description	Reconstruction and left turn lane installation at Old Hudson Road
Project Contact	Nick Fischer
Contact email/phone	Nicklaus.fischer@co.ramsey.mn.us 651-266-7119
Lead Agency/Department	Ramsey County
Purpose of Project/Plan	Reconstruction of the roadway due to deteriorating pavement.
Planning References	County Transportation Improvement Program
Project stage	<i>Design Phase</i>
General Timeline	Construct in the spring of 2015
District Council position (if applicable)	
Level of Committee Involvement	Inform
Previous Committee action	None
Level of Public Involvement	Multiple public meetings
Public Hearing	No
Public Hearing Location	NA
Primary Funding Source(s)	County, Federal, and City of St. Paul
Cost	<i>\$3.9 million</i>

Staff recommendation	<i>Describe, if any</i>
Action item requested of the Committee	<i>State intended action for committee to take, e.g., "Recommend approval of x" or "Advise staff on which projects to apply for from the grant program"</i>
Committee recommendation	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>
Committee vote	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>