Members Present
Chair Adam Duininck
Jan Callison
Steve Elkins
Jason Gadd
Linda Higgins
James Hovland
Brian Lamb
Matt Look
Scott McBride
Peter McLaughlin
Jennifer Munt
Will Roach
Terry Schneider
Jake Spano
Nancy Tyra-Lukens
Marion Green (Alt)
Peter Wagenius (Alt)

Members Absent
Keith Bogut
Dan Duffy
Betsy Hodges
Jeff Jacobs

1. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Adam Duininck called the June 3, 2015 meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 8:35 a.m. at the Sabes Jewish Community Center.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Chair Duininck presented the May 20, 2015 SWLRT Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Jan Callison made a motion to accept the minutes, Mayor James Hovland seconded it, and the motion was then unanimously approved.

Chair Duininck announced the details for the upcoming public hearings on the SDEIS, which will be held June 6, 17 and 18. All CMC members are encouraged to attend. There was a request made to extend the deadline for the comment period 15 days, to July 21, which FTA has agreed to.

3. RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM MAY 20 CMC MEETING
Mr. Craig Lamothe went over answers to the questions from the May 20 CMC meeting. The first question was for the breakdown of the ridership impact. Of the 36,200 average 2040 weekday ridership, the breakdown is 54% for the peak periods and 46% during off-peak periods; 69% is for employment purposes and 31% is for other trip purposes.

For the question of what is the total of deferred or deleted potential cost reductions, Mr. Lamothe stated for deferred, the cost reduction of the items would be $23 - 29M, with the cost to build post project being $27 - 36M. For deleted items, the cost reduction would be $146 - 167M, with the cost to build post project being $168 - 224M. For the question of adding an option with additional reduction in vehicles, Mr. Lamothe stated Metro Transit is currently conducting the operational impact analysis of reducing the fleet below 30 vehicles.

For the question of what is the bus transfer point for 21st Street Station is, Mr. Lamothe stated there is the connection with Route 25 adjacent to the station on 22nd Street. Mr. Lamothe said staff found out the question being asked was meant to be if 21st Street Station was not there, where would the connection be made. Mr. Lamothe said it would most likely be at the West Lake Street Station. Mr. Peter Wagenius asked what is the increased travel time for people on Franklin Avenue to access if the 21st Street Station didn’t exist and the buses had to go to West Lake. Mr. Lamothe said this is being looked at for both Minneapolis and Eden Prairie for the bus connections. This information can be brought back to a future meeting.

For the transfer point at Royalston Station, Mr. Lamothe went over the map, showing the existing bus routes and the connections to the bus rapid transit. If the Royalston Station did not exist, the connections would be made at the Target Field Station or the 5th Street Transit Center. They could also be made along 4th, 6th Street alignment in making connections to existing LRT stations.
Mr. Wagenius said he would like further information on where the passengers would go if Royalston wasn’t there. Commissioner Higgins reminded members that Royalston is a critical connection and is important to north Minneapolis, as well as the Penn and Van White Stations.

For the question of how many businesses are impacted by the OMF, Mr. Lamothe stated there would be six businesses being relocated. Commissioner McLaughlin asked if a reduction in the footprint of the OMF could result in a reduction in the impacted businesses. Mr. Jim Alexander responded that the west edge of the building would be shifted slightly to the east for 5 bays rather than 6, allowing space for full build out of 6 bays in the future. This adjustment would not reduce the number of businesses requiring relocation.

On reducing the 3% finance assumption question, Mr. Lamothe said this is currently under analysis. We have asked FTA whether we can drop it to 2%, and are waiting for their concurrence.

4. POTENTIAL COST REDUCTION EVALUATION
Chair Duininck reminded members that the goal is to find cost reductions of $341M, along with keeping the project federally viable in maintaining the ridership numbers, which are around 30,000 per day. We want to accomplish these goals in keeping consensus from all the partners. We need to start narrowing down the options so the project office has some direction of running models and narrow the ideas for the options at the next meeting.

Mr. Lamothe went through some last minute corrections to the scenario sheets, which the CMC members made on their handouts. Mr. Jim Alexander reported that this list of potential cost reductions have been compiled, and meetings were held with project partner staff on May 11, 15 and 18. Items were added with the stakeholder input and analyzed based on the criteria presented previously. This list was then presented to the CMC on May 20, CAC on May 26 and the BAC on May 27. Staff then developed the initial cost reduction scenarios and discussed them with project partner staff on May 27 and June 1.

Mr. Alexander stated there has been a new CMAQ grant award for the Beltline park and ride for $7M, with a $1.75M match for this from the city of St. Louis Park. This amount could be deducted from the $1.994B estimate. Commissioner McLaughlin asked if the $341M is an estimate at a low, mid or high end. Mr. Alexander said that we are targeting a reduction of $341M or more and noted that this estimate is based on the plans, and we are focusing on the low end value of the cost reduction items as we look at the reductions to get to the $341M as the cost reduction items are conceptual in nature and the actual cost is less certain.

Commissioner Jan Callison asked if these numbers include the two items where analysis is pending, the finance saving charges and the additional reduction to vehicles? Mr. Alexander stated those two items are under evaluation and not included.

Councilmember Jake Spano said the Beltline park and ride was originally a surface lot and is now reconfigured to be a structure facility. With the new, scaled back plan, he asked if the original cost of a structured park and ride was then deducted? Mr. Alexander stated the $1.994 estimate did include a park and ride structure at Belt Line.

Mr. Alexander went over the scenarios. Scenario A, which ends at Southwest Station, has a capital cost savings range for total reduction of a low end of $300M and a high range of $337. For Scenario B, ending at Golden Triangle Station, the low end for reduction is $384M with a high end of $391M. The summary of A includes all the park and rides and stations. This scenario would not leave the project viable for federal New Starts funding, due to the new ridership reduction. For scenario B, ending at Golden Triangle Station, this would achieve the goal to reach the $341M, but it does not geographically distribute cost reductions across the alignment. It was agreed that these scenarios do not achieve the goals of the project.

For scenario C, ending at Town Center Station, per the PE Plans, without the stakeholder component input, we would need an additional $108M to achieve the $341M. Chair Duininck mentioned that the policy makers will need to decide on the stakeholder components at the next meeting.

For scenario D, this would also be ending at Town Center Station located approximately 1,500 feet to the east of
the current plan location, shifting to the northwest quadrant of Flying Cloud Drive and Eden Road. Without the stakeholder category, the low end is at $264M and the high end is $280M.

Mayor Hovland asked between Scenarios C and D, is there much change in ridership? Mr. Alexander said he doesn’t believe there is much change in ridership. The ridership model does not pick up that additional 1,500 feet. Mayor Hovland asked Mayor Tyra-Lukens about Scenarios C and D as they are relevant to the transit dependent population. Mayor Tyra-Lukens provided a handout on this issue. The Town Center and SouthWest Stations serve the highest percentages of minorities, second only to the Royalston Station. These stations serve people with stressed means along with the senior population. The distance between walking between Scenarios C and D is not a great distance. The issue is the lack of parking in both of these scenarios, with no opportunity for future parking ramps.

Mr. Wagenius asked about the reverse direction as well, for people living elsewhere and are employed at Eden Prairie Town Center. What is the walk distance of Scenario C versus D. Mr. Alexander doesn’t have this readily available, but it will be provided. Mr. Lamothe said the 10 minute walk shed for the station in Scenario D does get you to the front door of the regional mall.

Mr. Will Roach stated that the Business Advisory Committee likes the idea of scenario D, and feels there are benefits with D from the business perspective.

Mayor Hovland asked what the ridership impact numbers are if we move it from SouthWest Station back to Town Center, and would it affect our FTA rating. Mr. Lamothe stated that moving the end point from SouthWest Station to either Town Center Station options would be about 2,200 less riders, which is a rough estimate. The analysis we have done to date shows that if we are at $1.65B project, we need to be between 29,000 – 30,000 riders on the low end. We have modeled scenario D with all the other cuts in play, and it puts us down to about 23,000 daily rides. Once we get further guidance on the stakeholder components, further modeling will be run on a narrower set of options.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked if the project has 23,000 riders per day, what FTA category does that put us into. Mr. Lamothe stated that from 3 of the 6 project justification criteria, CEI, congestion relief and mobility improvements, we would go down one notch in rating in each of these criteria. Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked if we end at Town Center and have to put additional parking at Golden Triangle, does that add back any costs for improved access to the Golden Triangle Station? If we introduce additional parking in that area, how do we handle the traffic patterns in that area? Mr. Alexander said there is an allowance set aside for traffic mitigation.

Chair Duininck asked for feedback on the corridor wide reductions and the operations reductions. Mayor Schneider feels that with the D scenario, the corridor wide and operation reductions need to be included. All of those items including landscaping, artwork, and OMF need to be part of the mix, with the focus on which stations or park and rides are deferred.

Councilmember Jason Gadd agrees that the corridor wide issues seem to be very fair and equitable. With the OMF, this is a delicate area to Hopkins and the tax base being taken away along with the businesses being relocated. The biggest concern is that we have something at the OMF that can be developed around. He wants to make sure the cuts at the OMF, such as going to wall-less storage building still give the capability. We are agreeing with the changes to the OMF to move forward because it is best for the line. He encourages all CMC members to look at it this way, what’s best for the entire line, not just their own cities.

Mr. Alexander went over the list of potential stakeholder options for consideration. These include reducing the LRV fleet from 32 to 30; a corresponding reduction in the storage capacity of OMF; deleting park at rides at various station locations; and taking the joint development at Blake off as a project cost.

Commissioner McLaughlin asked about the increase in cost at the OMF. Are there other items besides the contaminated soils? Mr. Alexander stated we learned there is a flood potential at the site and that a culvert is needed. There is also the contaminated soil which needs mitigation; and the OMF building size increased, with
the additional storage required. We are working with Operations staff on fine tuning this. Commissioner Higgins asked if there is enough storage for the entire fleet in the building? Mr. Alexander said yes. Commissioner Higgins asked for other options rather than putting all the vehicles in the building every night? Couldn’t they store some at Target Field Station or someplace along the line for the short time at night? Mr. Alexander said this was discussed, and storing on the line is not a practical option. The vehicles are brought in for cleaning and inspections daily. Also the operators need to get back and forth to the trains. Mr. Lamb also stated there is a little capacity at Hiawatha to accommodate SWLRT vehicle storage.

Commissioner Callison feels the two stakeholder options of reducing the LRV fleet and reducing the OMF vehicle storage should be added in as reductions we are agreeing to at this point on both Scenarios C and D. Mayor Schneider concurs with this. He asked if staff looked at a shift in location whether the contaminated soil could be avoided. Commissioner McLaughlin asked how would the OMF look as currently budgeted is compared to Hiawatha or St. Paul OMF? Mr. Alexander stated that the building façade is currently being designed. Once it is complete, these drawings will be shared with CMC.

Commissioner McLaughlin is supportive of having additional analysis done to see if the number of vehicles could be reduced further.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked as we look at deletion of park and rides, and deletion or deferral of stations, have we done an analysis to see what the cost per rider would be? Mr. Lamothe stated we have added a new ridership column in the scenarios, and could add another column that does the calculation for cost per rider. For scenario C or D, we need to look at raising the ridership by about 6,000, which needs to be kept in mind when looking at the list.

Mr. Alexander continued reporting on the stakeholder options for consideration, including deferring or deleting Royalston, Penn and 21\textsuperscript{st} Street stations.

Mr. Wagenius asked what the ridership number would be at Royalston if Bottineau LRT was not going to happen? Mr. Lamothe said this is currently being analyzed and we will report back on this. The model is being run for opening day of SWLRT, which Bottineau would not be in place by. Mr. Wagenius asked what portion of the number of people transferring from Bottineau LRT to SWLRT had already transferred from a bus to Bottineau before a second multiple transfer would be forced? Mr. Lamothe said this is also being analyzed. Mr. Wagenius asked how many stops are there along the 5, 19, 22, future C and D line, but are not within walking distance of either SWLRT or Bottineau? Mr. Lamothe said we can bring the answer back as well. Mr. Wagenius handed out copies of the map that shows the routes along the Royalston area.

Mayor Schneider provided a handout that shares his thoughts objectively that doesn’t impact either Royalston or the Penn stations, but focuses on starting with Option D, and picks and chooses different items to get to the $341M.

Mr. Wagenius asked whether the ABRT C and D line were factored into the Royalston ridership number as indicated in a May 20 email from Sophia Ginis. Mr. Lamothe stated that the walk connection to Royalston Station was not coded into the modeling. Mr. Wagenius asked if the law or policies require us to include BRTs, and which BRTs, in the ridership model? Mr. Lamothe will check with staff and report back. Mr. Wagenius asked for further clarification about how the ridership model incorporated people at Royalston. And why does the ridership model show ABRT going to the Interchange? Mr. Lamothe said it shows ABRT making connections elsewhere that would be picking up riders that were previously using the 5, 22, 19 and other routes that were making direct connections to Royalston. The Royalston analysis is under review and we will be prepared to have it complete by the June 24 CMC meeting. Mr. Wagenius asked if the ABRT C line is going to connect at the Interchange. He states that the Metro Transit website is not clear on this. Mr. Lamothe said these comments will be taken under review and come back with a response.

Commissioner Callison supports preserving Royalston Station, and this is an important station. She would not like to see staff spend a lot of time on this if Royalston is not on the table for deletion.
Mayor Schneider also supports preserving Royalston and Penn Stations. His written comments do defer the 21st Street Station and also stops at the Town Center Station at Flying Cloud Drive. Mayor Schneider asked about the Beltline conversion from a structure to surface parking. This would be a $6.25M savings, and seems like a realistic objective. Earlier on there was a $2.8M savings for Beltline to use HCRRRA property, which is not included in our numbers. Mr. Alexander indicated the CMAQ grant was predicated on a structure. Mr. Lamothe said to reduce the 2020 capacity at Beltline and reducing from a structure to surface parking would be a $2.8M savings to the project, but would also be having St. Louis Park forego the CMAQ award they just received, and not leveraging that amount.

Mayor Schneider asked why the high cost of $25M for the Shady Oak Park and Ride? Mr. Lamothe said this is also the acquisition and relocation that would be needed. There are about 20 – 25 relocated businesses in this building. Mayor Schneider feels it’s important for the park and ride to be there, and staff should try to figure out how to get a park and ride with less expense than $25M. This area is critical for these residents in the area. Mayor Schneider asked if the HCRRRA property is available to use for the Beltline Station park and ride? Mr. Lamothe will look into this and get back to CMC.

Councilmember Spano asked about using the HCRRRA property for the Beltline Station park and ride, and feels this is something we should pursue. This would free up the property on Highway 25 and Beltline for economic development. Councilmember Spano said by moving this to the south there would be vehicle congestion crossing the LRT and freight rail tracks. It was noted that Three Rivers Park District has expressed concerns for trail users’ safety crossing Beltline. They planned on doing a joint trail bridge with Met Council’s component. This is a corridor wide issue with trail users. He looks to Hennepin County to help with some of this funding.

Councilmember Gadd said the Shady Oak Station and park and ride is the western access point for the ridership and feels is key when moving forward. His concern is mainly on safety and if this park and ride is eliminated, the station platform will be behind a warehouse area, with no access from Excelsior. With the downtown Hopkins station, there also is CMAQ money awarded, along with the local match. Adding this in allows for the park and ride structure with minimal costs to the project. Councilmember Gadd is advocating no deferral or removal of the Royalston Station, as this is too important of a station.

Mr. Wagenius stated his comments are not only to defend the Royalston Station. His point is that is casts serious doubt on the ridership model which underlies all of the decisions, including Penn and 21st. To force transfers is unacceptable. The only alternative to 21st St. Station as a bus transfer point has been West Lake, which is a significant extra distance to go.

Commissioner McLaughlin stated that the exercise was to put all the potential cost reductions on the list. He suggests eliminating from this list any further consideration of the CP rail swap and the elimination of the Kenilworth tunnel. There is no one advocating for these two and he suggests removing from the list.

Mr. Alexander continued on with the list of stakeholder options for consideration, which include: deletion of vertical circulation at West Lake and the various bike trail structures at Louisiana, Beltline and Penn and a couple ped underpasses under roadways at Opus Station.

Commissioner Higgins stated she feels the North Cedar Lake Trail bridge seems like a logical one to delete. We could deal with the safety issue on that trail by putting gate crossings in. She is also in favor of keeping Penn Station and feels this would be a trade off for keeping it.

Mayor Hovland stated if we keep Royalston and Van White, we would help provide people in north Minneapolis to get to jobs in the Golden Triangle. In regards to Penn, it seems like an obvious bus route from north Minneapolis down to Penn. With Van White and Royalston both available, could we defer Penn? Commissioner Higgins stated that for Bottineau and SWLRT, there is no bus connection to Penn stations. They are the most logical way for people in north Minneapolis to get to the jobs on the SWLRT line. Penn is a major thoroughfare, more so than Van White. Penn Station is important as it is a major connection to 394 and north Minneapolis. With the trail at grade with gates, that would cut a majority of the cost and allow us to keep Penn Station. Commissioner McLaughlin agrees the saving from the bike bridge would help.
Commissioner Greene also would like to evaluate this for what the equity and ridership goals are for other stations. She asks Metro Transit where the connections are going to be? Mr. Lamb stated that looking at the service plan for north Minneapolis; the vast majority of customers are going towards the major destination of downtown Minneapolis. Metro Transit is trying to balance how Penn Avenue’s advantage versus disadvantage to the overall customers is. There are two major east/west connections we are looking closely at, Glenwood Avenue and Highway 55 and how they figure as connecting points. We intend to restructure the 9 line to make sure we accommodate access to whatever stations are along the corridor. The Penn Avenue station is not critical to timely connections to the Green Line. Commissioner Higgins feels that once the SWLRT is running and people are going to the jobs in this corridor, the movement may change from going downtown to go elsewhere. With the Penn connection, it saves people from going downtown for their connections. Mayor Schneider stated that he prefers to preserve the Penn Station. Penn Station has more opportunities to provide more flexibility for passengers.

Commissioner McLaughlin asked what would we be losing if we took out the vertical circulation? Mr. Alexander stated that the plan now has an elevator on both sides of the bridge at West Lake to get down to the station platform. Under this item, those vertical circulation pieces would come out. An at-grade crossing has been discussed with staff, which would require gates, but there would also be access on adjacent private property to address. The number only includes the deletion of the elevators and stairs, not the addition of the crossing. Mr. Lamb said the current plan would be to add a bus stop on the bridge for a vertical connection. If the vertical connection wasn’t here, the bus stop would be kept off the bridge, which would move people further away from the station.

Mr. Wagenius stated he is in favor of keeping the elevators, due to the presence of freight. The cost of $5 - $6M for the vertical circulation, and it would cost us 1,370 riders. With the version where freight is not in this area, then the elevators would not be required. With freight there, the elevators are needed. The City of Minneapolis and Met Council staff has agreed that the elevator is necessary because of the presence of freight.

Commissioner Matt Look said he would like to see the Met Council/MnDOT list the best recommendation for the cuts. If we are going to defer any of the items, he feels we should go for the whole project on the front side, as the deferments would otherwise need to be paid for locally. As we advance in engineering, perhaps have tighter controls of engineering so we don’t use the $400M contingency dollars for it, and instead use the contingency to bring the total cost down.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens appreciates Mayor Schneider’s plan for meeting the cost goals. There are still some issues there and she would like to leave SouthWest Station in, at least to continue design on the station and see where we end up with contingency. We are already dropping access to about 5,000 jobs within Eden Prairie by dropping the Mitchell Station. A lot of service will be lost to our transit dependent population within Eden Prairie and the connectivity if SouthWest Station is eliminated. Would hope we can continue design on SouthWest Station.

Councilmember Spano said if we move the Beltline park and ride facility over to the HCRRA property, this would save $2.8M. In doing so, this would increase some safety issues of crossing the rail lines. Could a portion of the $2.8M be devoted to working with Hennepin County and Three Rivers Park District on the grade separation at Beltline?

Councilmember Munt said that the Community Advisory Committee has not made recommendations yet, but will have two meetings before the CMC makes a decision. The CAC will be meeting on June 9 and 30 so they can better understand the cost reduction measures and guidance given to staff. The CAC will look at the cost reduction numbers and will adopt a definition of equity that they will use as a lens as they make their decisions. This input will then be provided to CMC.

Mayor Hovland provided his preferences for the recommendations, which are: Scenario C and D, ending at Eden Prairie Town Center. Not interested in deleting or deferring Royalston and would like to keep 21st Street Station. He is uncertain about Penn Station, possibly leaning towards deferral. He is sensitive to the Shady Oak park and ride being maximized to its capacity, which is important for Hopkins and Minnetonka. Mayor Schneider’s list is
good except he doesn’t agree with the deletion of vertical circulation at West Lake Street Station, as he feels this is important due to heavy ridership. He feels that through Hennepin County and Three Rivers Park District, the problem can be solved at Beltline. Reducing the landscaping and art furnishings seems like a good reduction. Operationally, if there are further fleet reductions that make sense he would agree with.

Commissioner Callison stated that this latest list does not include the two analysis pending items which have significant dollars. One is the interest rate; and the other is additional fleet reduction.

Councilmember Elkins suggested additional funding for park and ride related items using either CMAQ or livable communities grant money. Commissioner McLaughlin also mentioned pollution cleanup money as an additional revenue source.

Chair Duininck said there will be a menu of choices brought to the next CMC meeting, with the impact of the ridership and cost effectiveness index.

5. CONSTRUCTION COST REDUCTION EVALUATION

Ms. Joan Hollick reported that as part of the project options workplan, we have engaged our peer review consultant, HNTB, to review unit cost and quantity estimates that make up the projects overall construction cost estimate carried in the $1.994B cost estimate. This review was focused on guideway, stations, support facilities, site work and systems. A database of cost data from 17 completed FTA construction projects dating back to 2010 was used to compare against the cost estimate. This cost data was then averaged and escalated to a 2014 base year to be comparable with SWLRT. The construction cost estimate comparison was reviewed, with the construction total being in the range of the FTA capital cost database range. In summary, the consultant found that the SWLRT construction cost estimate was at an adequate level of detail for this phase of the project and falls within the range of constructed LRT projects.

6. TRANSIT OPTIONS REVIEW

Mr. Mark Fuhrmann reported that this is the third of four reports being prepared. The fourth report is the Transit Capacity Analysis, which is underway and will be reported at the next CMC meeting. The Transit Options Review was for us to look at LRT as it was budgeted, and compare with a no build, an enhanced bus, and Bus Rapid Transit in this corridor. The model uses the approved alignment for the LRT and BRT options. For the enhanced bus option, this is bus service operating on the street network. This comparison uses generally the same length, number of park and rides and stations, as well as frequency of service. In summary, what was found was that LRT serves the most rides, also the congestion relief was best with LRT in place. LRT does require the higher capital and operating investments, but in terms of cost efficiencies, LRT is the most cost efficient of the modes. This concludes our analysis and summary report to the CMC. We will provide this report to Met Council on June 10.

Mayor Schneider asked if BRT qualifies for the same level of federal funding as LRT? Mr. Fuhrmann said yes, it would qualify under the New Starts program. We currently have a medium high rating for economic development and we would be at least one notch lower for BRT. Mr. Wagenius stated that the Transit Options Review does make sense as it is the cost effective way to move people at this capacity. He feels further work is needed, as the May 22 letter from Senator Dibble and Representative Hornstein asked for additional detail. SWLRT may be done in phases, and what would the numbers be if LRT went to Shady Oak and stopped in phase 1, with BRT connections to the remainder of the alignment in Eden Prairie. He would like the response that is given to Senator Dibble and Representative Hornstein shared with CMC. Chair Duininck said once the response is put together it will be shared with CMC. Mr. Fuhrmann stated that with LRT travel time, it is 37 minutes; for BRT it would be 43 minutes to Target Field and 50 minutes through downtown. This factors into the ridership modeling.

7. PROJECT OPTIONS WORK PLAN DELIVERABLES SCHEDULE

Mr. Lamothe reported on the upcoming meetings, which are the Community Advisory Committee meeting on June 9 and 30; the Business Advisory Committee will meet on June 17. These committees will provide feedback to the CMC for the June 24 meeting. The CMC will meet next on June 24. There will then be a July 1 CMC
meeting, where we anticipate a recommendation on project scope and budget. This will then go to the Met Council’s Committee of the Whole as information on July 1, and back to the full Met Council for action on July 8.

8. ADJOURNMENT
Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Hoffner, Recording Secretary