

Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Meeting Date: May 19, 2022

Date: May 11, 2022

Action Transmittal: 2022-15

Public Comment Report and 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: I-94 Auxiliary Lane in Oakdale and Woodbury

To: Transportation Advisory Board

Prepared By: Joe Barbeau, Senior Planner, 651-602-1705

Requested Action

MnDOT requests an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a project line funding a new auxiliary lane from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury (SP # 8282-132F) and to add a guardrail and noisewall to its associated existing I-94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River (SP # 8282-132).

Recommended Motion

That the Transportation Advisory Board accept the public comments and recommend adoption of an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a project line funding a new auxiliary lane from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 in Woodbury (SP # 8282-132F) and to add a guardrail and noisewall to MnDOT's associated I-94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River (SP # 8282-132).

Summary

This requested action involves adding a new eastbound auxiliary lane to Interstate 94 from the I-494/694/94 system interchange in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury. The freight project element was one of the six freight projects that were found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and it was subsequently amended into the Plan on March 9, 2022. This freight improvement, along with updated guardrail and noisewall, is to be added to an existing pavement preservation project. This is a regionally significant project addition and is therefore subject to a 21-day public comment period. A total of 21 comments were received, some in favor and some opposed.

Background and Purpose

This amendment is needed to update project costs and scope to reflect new added freight funds and scope to the existing I-94 concrete project (8282-132) in Washington County. Because the new funds are from a different funding program, the entire cost and most of the scope update occur in a new project line (8282-132F).

The existing project is funded through the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) while the proposed project is to be funded by the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP), both of which are federal funds not funded through the Regional Solicitation. The freight project was included as a project in the State Freight Plan (Freight Investment Plan) in 2022.

Relationship to Regional Policy

Federal law requires that all TIP amendments meet the following four tests: fiscal constraint; consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan; air quality conformity; and opportunity for public input. It is the TAB's responsibility to recommend TIP amendments to the Council for adoption, provided these four requirements are met. Because the new project element is regionally significant, the request is subject to a 21-day public comment period.

Staff Analysis

The TIP amendment meets fiscal constraint because the federal and state funds are sufficient to fully fund the project. This amendment is consistent with the Metropolitan Council Transportation Policy Plan, which amended in the freight project on March 9, 2022. Public input opportunity for this amendment is provided through the TAB's and the Council's regular meetings along with a 21-day public comment period. The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee determined that the project is classified as an A30 regionally significant project, but because it is not located within the existing air quality maintenance area, a new conformity determination is not required.

Committee Comments and Actions

At its March 17, 2022, meeting the TAC Funding & Programming Committee voted unanimously to recommend adoption of an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a project line funding a new auxiliary lane from I494/I694/I94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 in Woodbury (SP # 8282-132F) and to add a guardrail and noisewall to MnDOT's associated I-94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River (SP # 8282-132) for the purpose of release for public comment. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency pointed out that an air quality conformity determination is not needed because one was done when the project was originally in the TIP (going back to the 2020-2023 TIP), the new project is not as large as the original project, and the project is located away from the existing air quality maintenance area, though the opportunity to mitigate construction and air quality impacts during construction exists.

At its April 6, 2022, meeting, the Technical Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend adoption of an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a project line funding a new auxiliary lane from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 in Woodbury and to add a guardrail and noisewall to MnDOT's associated I-94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River for the purpose of release for public comment. Discussion occurred on the project's relation to safety; the auxiliary lane will address weaving, which is a safety concern.

At its April 20, 2022, meeting, the Transportation Advisory Board voted unanimously to release the TIP amendment request for public comment.

Staff Response to Public Comments

The public comment period ran from April 21 to May 11. As of the deadline, 21 comments were received. Of these comments, 6 were in favor of the request, 14 were opposed to the request, and one was not related to support or opposition of the request.

Council staff recommends acceptance of the public comments and adoption of the amendment for the following reasons:

- The Metropolitan Council wrote a letter of support for this freight project as federal freight funds were pursued for the project. The project scored as the highest freight project in the state and was awarded funding.
- Significant public outreach was completed as part of MnDOT's I-94 East Metro Interchange Study (2019 to 2021). The engagement found strong support for improvements in the project area. The project is supported by the two communities abutting the project (Oakdale and Woodbury) and by Washington County. The project is also supported by the freight community.

- The freight project was found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and it was subsequently amended into the Plan on March 9, 2022.
- The project was funded out of the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP), which has specific freight requirements and eligibility.
- The freight project will have safety benefits and is expected to reduce crashes in the project area between 15%-25%.

Comments in opposition of the project are important to document as they were conceptually against highway mobility investments. The comments will be pulled forward to other more appropriate Council efforts such as the update of the TPP, where the region's overall approach to highway mobility will be discussed. In addition, the ongoing 2022 Regional Solicitation is another place for these comments since much of the funding in this program is flexible and can be shifted between different modes and project types.

Routing

To	Action Requested	Date Completed / Scheduled
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	March 17, 2022
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	April 6, 2022
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Release for Public Comment	April 20, 2022
Transportation Advisory Board	Review and Recommend	May 18, 2022
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Review & Recommend	May 23, 2022
Metropolitan Council	Review & Adopt	June 8, 2022



Please amend the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to amend project 8282-132 and add project 8282-132F in program year 2023. These projects are is being submitted with the following information:

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION:

	Existing Project (8282-132)	Proposed Project (8282-132F)
Seq #	1678	<u>TBD</u>
State Fiscal Year	2023	<u>2023</u>
ATP/District	Metro	<u>Metro</u>
Route System	I 94	<u>I 94</u>
Project Number (S.P. #)	8282-132	<u>8282-132F</u>
Agency	MnDOT	<u>MnDOT</u>
Description	**AC**B2020**I94, from MN120 in Oakdale to St Croix River in Lakeland – Concrete overlay, TMS, drainage, signing, lighting, guardrail, noisewall, Hudson Frontage Rd resurfacing, median barrier and ADA improvements (AC project, payback in FY24) (<u>Associated to 8282-132F</u>)	**AC**SPPF**I94, from <u>I494/694/94 in Oakdale to Washington County Hwy 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury – Construct eastbound auxiliary lane, (AC project, payback in FY24) (Associated to 8282-132)</u>
Miles	10.53	<u>1.98</u>
Prog	RD	<u>RC</u>
Type of Work	Reconstruction	<u>Reconstruction</u>
Prop Funds	NHPP	<u>NHFP</u>
Total \$	103,784,000	<u>8,000,000</u>
FHWA \$	28,082,000	<u>4,200,000</u>
AC \$	65,323,600	<u>3,000,000</u>
TH \$	10,378,400	<u>800,000</u>

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

1. Briefly describe why amendment is needed (e.g., project in previous TIP but not completed; illustrative project and funds now available; discretionary funds received; inadvertently not included in TIP).

This amendment is needed to update total project costs and scope for newly added freight funds and scope on SP 8282-132F (associated to 8282-132)

2. How is Fiscal Constraint Maintained as required by 23 CFR 450.216 (check all that apply)?

- New Money
- Anticipated Advance Construction
- ATP or MPO or MnDOT Adjustment by deferral of other projects
- Earmark or HPP not affecting fiscal constraint
- Other

X

This project was awarded \$8,000,000 from the 2020 MN Highway Freight award program. This is in addition to Metro’s federal budget authority. Therefore, fiscal constraint is maintained.

CONSISTENCY WITH MPO LONG RANGE PLAN:

This amendment is consistent with the Metropolitan Council Transportation Policy Plan, adopted by the

Metropolitan Council on November 18, 2020 (amended March 9, 2022) with FHWA/FTA conformity determination established on December 4, 2020.

AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY:

- Subject to conformity determination
- Exempt from regional level analysis
- N/A (not in a nonattainment or maintenance area) *

*8282-132F: The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee identified the project as an A-30 regionally significant project. However, given that the project is outside of the existing air quality maintenance area, it is not subject to a conformity determination. 8282-132 is exempt per Project Category S-10. Pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation per Section 93.126 of the Conformity Rules, though the amendment in its entirety is subject to a conformity determination.

PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT

*TIP Amendment: I-94 Eastbound Auxiliary Lane
in Oakdale and Woodbury*



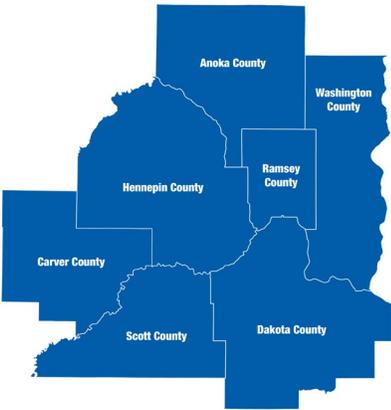
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COUNCIL**

June 2022

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Background

The Metropolitan Council accepted public comments on amending the region's 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The amendment adds to the TIP:

- funding of a new eastbound auxiliary lane from the Interstates 494, 694, and 94 interchange in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury (SP # 8282-132F), and
- a guardrail and noisewall to the associated existing Interstate 94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River (SP # 8282-132).

Contents

This document describes comments received during this period and is organized in the following sections:

- **Engagement Methods**: a description of how the Council advertised the comment period, comment sources, and the number of comments received.
- **Engagement Themes**: a description of key messages the Council received during the comment period.
- **Comment Summary and Responses**: thematic summaries of comments received, the Council's response to the summarized comments, and any recommended changes resulting from the comments.

Full comments as received are provided in a separate appendix.

Engagement Methods

The amendment was released for public comment on April 21, 2022, and comments were accepted through May 11, 2022. During that time, the amendment was available on the Metropolitan Council's website and through printed copies as requested.

The Council actively promoted the comment draft, including advertising it and the public meeting through social media and other means.

21 commenters participated—both individuals and representatives of organizations. The Council logged 46 comments.

People Engaged

- Web pages
 - 120 people reached
- Facebook post
 - 255 people reached
 - 59 people engaged
- Twitter engagement
 - 6 people engaged

Stakeholders Involved

- 21 stakeholders involved

Methods Used

- Web announcement and web page notice
- GovDelivery email announcement
- Facebook
- Twitter

Comments Received Through

- Email
- Web form

Groups and Agencies Engaged

- Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee
- Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations, Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Saint Paul Port Authority
- Washington County
- City of Oakdale
- City of Woodbury

Engagement Themes

- 14 commenters oppose the TIP amendment. Opposing commenters noted themes including:
 - the contribution of freeway expansion to climate change, air pollution, noise pollution, and/or greenhouse gas emissions;
 - the relationship between car dependency, travel demand management, and freeway space available for freight;
 - the limited efficacy of freeway expansion to reduce congestion and/or improve traffic, and the potential for freeway expansion to induce travel demand;
 - concern about highway width and speed on this section;
 - the construction and maintenance costs and/or efficiency of public funds;
 - preference for investment in transit, pedestrian, and/or bicycle systems;
 - preference for lane reduction;
 - concern for health of nearby residents; and
 - vehicle miles travelled reduction.
- 6 commenters support the TIP amendment. Supporting commenters noted themes including:
 - reduction in idling and emissions;
 - freight capacity and/or mobility benefits in the corridor; and
 - safety benefits.
- 1 commenter did not state a position on the TIP amendment but requested higher freeway speed limits.

Comment Summary and Responses

This section provides a summary of comment topics and respective responses. Summaries are ordered by number of comments then alphabetically.

Climate Change, Emissions, and Pollution

10 commenters oppose the TIP amendment stating freeway expansion contributes to or worsens climate change, air pollution, noise pollution, and/or greenhouse gas emissions. 1 commenter supports the TIP amendment stating the projects will reduce idling and emissions.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. A noise and air analysis was completed as part of the environmental document for this pavement preservation project, which includes a freight enhancement component. The analysis found that criteria air pollutants would be reduced by the project and there would not be a substantial increase in noise levels. It should also be noted that the land uses adjacent to the corridor are primarily commercial and retail uses as opposed to residential uses. It is unknown whether greenhouse gas emissions would increase or decrease due to the project. The Council is starting a Regional Transportation and Climate Change Multimodal Measures this year to better analyze the positive and negative impacts of various transportation projects on greenhouse gases. The results will provide better data to decision makers in evaluating projects.

Freight Capacity and Travel Demand Management

6 commenters support the TIP amendment stating the projects provide freight capacity and/or mobility benefits in the corridor. 3 commenters oppose the TIP amendment stating freeway expansion contributes to car dependency. 2 commenters oppose the TIP amendment stating freight capacity can be improved through reduction in car dependency, conversion of existing travel lanes for freight use, and/or incentivize carpooling.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. This is a freight project that also benefits safety and mobility for all travelers using I-94. The I-94 corridor in the east metro is one of the state's busiest and most important freight corridors. This project was the highest scoring freight project in the entire state. For those travelers wanting to use other modes, the Gold Line is an upcoming transit project that will provide residents with another option to travel along the I-94 corridor.

Congestion, Traffic, and Induced Demand

6 commenters oppose the TIP Amendment stating freeway expansion does not reduce congestion, freeway expansion does not improve traffic, and/or freeway expansion induces demand.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. The project is intended to focus on a specific freight bottleneck in the eastbound direction of I-94 only. Current congestion in the eastbound direction spills back into the I-94/494/694 system interchange area causing safety issues for trucks and passenger vehicles. A MnDOT analysis shows that this project will greatly decrease delay now and into the future. The corridor serves 11,000 heavy commercial vehicles per day and over 100,000 total vehicles, so the safety and travel time benefits will be realized by many users. The Council plans to have a broader conversation about highway mobility investments and the region's overall approach as part of the upcoming update to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. We encourage you to continue to be part of this regional conversation.

Safety

4 commenters support the TIP Amendment noting safety benefits. 1 commenter opposes the TIP Amendment stating concern about highway width and speed on this section.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. Based on MnDOT's I-94 East Metro Interchange Study that was completed between 2019 and 2021, crashes in this project area are expected to be reduced by 15-25% as a result of the project. Current congestion in the eastbound direction spills back into the I-94/494/694 system interchange area causing many safety issues that will be alleviated once the project is complete.

Economy

3 commenters support the TIP amendment noting that the corridor hosts one of the highest values of freight goods movements statewide.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. The proposed project is located on a Tier 1 freight corridor as identified in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Truck Highway Corridors Study. The corridor is one of the state's busiest freight corridors with 11,000 heavy commercial vehicles on this section of I-94 each day.

Stewardship of Public Funds

3 commenters oppose the TIP amendment stating freeway expansion is expensive, increases maintenance costs, and/or is an inefficient use of public funds that could be better spent elsewhere.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. MnDOT's monetized benefits of the project equate to a 5 to 1 benefit to cost ratio for the project. The \$8 million freight award is part of a larger \$112 million pavement preservation project that will occur at the same time. The coupling of a major preservation project with other improvements directly aligns with the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan's strategy A2:

Regional transportation partners should regularly review planned maintenance preservation and reconstruction projects to identify cost-effective opportunities to incorporate improvements for safety, lower-cost congestion management and mitigation, MnPASS, strategic capacity, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

This approach also aligns with the highway system investment principles described in the Highway Investment chapter of the 2040 TPP:

“Since most of the total funds available are being used on preservation of the system, these preservation projects should be used as the catalyst to address other identified safety, mobility, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian needs. Integrating these other needs with preservation projects minimizes cost, reduces inconvenience to the traveling public by coordinating separate needs into one construction project, and addresses multiple policy objectives.”

Transit and Active Transportation

3 commenters oppose the TIP amendment and call for investment in transit, bicycle, and/or pedestrian systems instead.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. This freight project is being funded through a federal freight program with specific freight requirements. We agree that higher levels of investment are needed for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems across the region. One such investment is the Gold Line, which crosses over the project area and will provide another option to travel through the I-94 corridor. As part of the broader Gold Line planning, significant bicycle and pedestrian investments, several funded through the Transportation Advisory Board's Regional Solicitation funding process, will also be constructed.

Lane Reduction

1 commenter opposes the TIP amendment stating a preference for lane reduction.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. There are many places across the metropolitan area where reducing lanes make sense. In fact, the Transportation Advisory Board and the Metropolitan Council funded several of these lane reduction or "road diet" projects as part of the 2020 Regional Solicitation. In this specific location on I-94 there are 11,000 heavy commercial vehicles per day and over 100,000 total vehicles. Reducing lanes would not be a viable solution (nor likely be approved by the Federal Highway Administration) as it would cause greater spillover congestion into the system interchange area and significant safety concerns. There would also be negative impacts due to increased congestion in the I-94 corridor and along parallel routes in the communities abutting the project as users find other less congested routes.

Health

1 commenter opposes the TIP amendment stating freeway widening shows a lack of concern for health of nearby residents.

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. Significant public outreach was completed as part of MnDOT's I-94 East Metro Interchange Study (2019 to 2021). The engagement found strong support for improvements in the projects area. In addition, the freight project is supported by the two communities abutting the project (Woodbury and Oakdale), as well as Washington County. A noise and air analysis was completed as part of the environmental document for this freight project. The analysis found that criteria air pollutants would be reduced by the project and there would not be substantial increases in noise levels. It should also be noted that the land uses adjacent to the corridor are primarily commercial and retail uses as opposed to residential uses.

Speed Limits

1 commenter did not state support or opposition for the TIP amendment, but they requested raising the freeway speed limit to 80 mph in rural and urban areas. This commenter stated this would increase capacity, reduce congestion, and reduce "policing for profit."

Council Response

Thank you for your comment. We will pass on your comment to MnDOT, the agency responsible for setting the speed limit on the freeways. It should be noted that the statutory maximum speed limit on freeways is 70 mph (MN Statute 169.14).

Vehicle Miles Travelled Reduction

1 commenter opposes the TIP amendment stating freeway expansion conflicts with Metropolitan Council goals to reduce vehicle miles travelled.

Council Response

At this time, the Metropolitan Council does not have a formal goal to reduce vehicle miles travelled. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has proposed a statewide vehicle miles traveled reduction goal as part of the updated Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan. The public comment period for this plan will take place this summer and the plan is anticipated to be approved by the end of 2022 or early 2023. Upon adoption, the Council will work with MnDOT and other stakeholders to consider whether to adopt a regional vehicle miles travelled reduction goal for the metro area. The ongoing Metropolitan Council Regional Travel Demand Management Study will also inform this conversation.

This specific I-94 project was one of six freight projects that were found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and was subsequently amended into the TPP by the Metropolitan Council earlier this year (March 9, 2022). In MnDOT's application for the freight funding, the Metropolitan Council provided a letter of support for the project. Additional letters of support came from the City of Woodbury, City of Oakdale, Washington County, and the freight community.



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Name, Organization	Full Comment
Erik Davis	<p>I oppose this proposal; adding lanes to major disruptive highways in the city is a retrograde move that completely fails the future reality test: Do they know anything about the well-studied consequence of expanding highways? Please look for examples. You will find that expansions do NOT improve traffic (just look at Houston’s Katy Highway, e.g). do the proposers think climate change is real? Do they understand that combustion engines are disappearing, and that electric will be unable to replace them?</p> <p>Go ahead: destroy that more of our city for no actual benefit, and fail to plan for our actual futures. We avtely expect anything else at this point.</p>
Craig Foster	<p>I do not believe we need to widen the highway here. It already feels like one of the most dangerously wide highways in the state, with people speeding way over the limit. It will decrease safety and increase pollution and promote more living in unsustainably far out suburbs for more people, when we have a climate crisis and we should be looking to reduce the impact of roads on our built environment. The highway works as is, and highway expansions are unconscionable with the future we are looking toward.</p>
Coleman Barton	<p>No new lanes on 94. Not for just a little bit. It doesn't work in any sense. If you're looking to help the environment and hit emissions targets, as well as make life better for Minnesotans, especially those who live close to the highway, all your effort should be looking to reduce lanes. I cannot believe you're still trying to widen the highway after all the data we have with similar projects. Look at the health data and environmental data of people living within a mile of highways. Look at what happens when you add lanes. And if we are only looking at it in a vacuum without any concern for people who live near by (which obviously is historically the case. Embarrassing.), adding lanes doesn't work. Induced demand is real and proven time and time again in other cities and in our cities. Why would you think this time will be different? Like this is the secret configuration? I've seen the future, it's not. Do something radical that will help and reduce lanes. Think of the people who call this place home and not people trying to get through here as fast as possible. Do the hard work even if it's unpopular at first. It's worth it. Thank you.</p>
Sarah Tittle	<p>Stop letting corporations and the oil industry destroy our planet. No new fifth lane.</p>
Dena Coffman	<p>Are you kidding me we have 7 years left to solve climate change (if that) and you guys wanna add another lane to a highway? Grow up</p>

Name, Organization	Full Comment
Andrew Kuledge	Do NOT expand lanes. We have too many and too wide of lanes already. Wasteful, inefficient use of public funds. Adds to more reckless driving that air, microplastic, and noise pollutes. Absurd we are considering expanding vehicle lanes in this climate emergency.
Sean Indrelie	No new lanes for private automobiles. This will not reduce traffic, it will create more traffic, entrench car dependency, and raise carbon emissions. Invest in transit, cycling and walking instead. What a waste.
Philip Schwartz	I do not support freeway expansion and lane additions. We need to move past this. I could explain why adding lanes is bad, but hopefully as transportation professionals you're already well aware of the climate, safety, health, societal, and economic harms caused by car dependency.
William Curran-Groome	Adding traffic lanes flies directly in the face of the Metropolitan Council's adopted goals to reduce VMT, noise pollution, air pollution, and CO2e emissions. The Met Council should not pursue this project and instead should use valuable staff time focusing on reducing climate emissions and promoting transit service and connectivity.
Schurkey Swanke	<p>Minnesota Interstate highways, from border-to-border, inclusive of populated areas, NEED TO HAVE THE SPEED LIMITS RAISED.</p> <p>EVERY mile of interstate highway should be posted at least 80 mph, higher would be nice. Why there is a speed limit AT ALL on rural Interstate highways is a mystery to me.</p> <p>You would instantly gain roadway capacity, reduce congestion, and eliminate a fair amount of predatory "Policing for Profit". A triple-win for We the People.</p>
Audrey Hendrickson	As we should all know by now, increasing the number of interstate lanes does not improve traffic and comes at a great expense that could be better spent elsewhere.
Jesse Lorenz	Do not add more highway lanes. We are in a climate emergency. Additional highway lanes will create more traffic. This ought to be well understood by civil engineers by now. Here is a primer on induced demand: https://cal.streetsblog.org/2022/03/02/induced-demand-is-hard-to-explain-but-its-crucial-to-get-it/
Ian Collis	No more highway expansion in the Twin Cities. We should expand our public transit speed, reach, and level of service. If we take off more and more cars from the highway, there will be additional space for trucks and vans. There would also be lower long-term maintenance costs.
Justin Heideman	Don't widen the freeway. We don't need more lanes. More lanes mean more traffic because of induced demand. They also mean more financial and maintenance obligations going forward. Say no!

Name, Organization	Full Comment
Alicia Valenti	Please stop building new freeways. We are in a climate crisis and cannot afford to continue adding roadway capacity if we want to have any hope of slowing global warming. Each new lane-mile contributes to increased VMT, GHG emissions, and particulate pollution, which runs counter to adopted and proposed state climate goals and strategies. If freight capacity is needed, an existing lane should be converted to serve freight traffic or a similar change should be made; this would improve freight operations and the reduction in general traffic lanes would help incentivize people to choose more sustainable modes than driving alone, e.g. carpooling when traveling along this segment.
Kathryn Sarnecki, Saint Paul Port Authority	Creating an auxiliary land on I-94 will be a huge benefit to the movement of freight in the Twin Cities. It comes with the increased benefits of reduced idling and emissions and a safer transportation network.
Deb DeLuca and Jason Craig, Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee	<p>Dear Transportation Advisory Board Members,</p> <p>On behalf of Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC), we are submitting this letter of support for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metro District’s application to amend the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program by adding the I-94 Construction Project from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 in Woodbury. The I-94 corridor in this area represents a key connection between the Twin Cities region and Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. The freight that moves along this corridor is vital to the supply chain for a wide variety of businesses and manufacturers. This is the highest freight truck traffic corridor in the state and is important to the private sector members of the MFAC. The project will increase safety by addressing a steep geometric curve and provide needed strategic capacity to alleviate an ongoing state freight bottleneck that was identified in the MnDOT 2020 Freight Bottleneck Report analysis. Shippers and carriers have discussed with the MFAC long term congestion issues with slowdowns and difficult travel times through this corridor that are impacting the supply chain.</p> <p>For these reasons, we recommend that the Metro Council approve the amendment and allow the project to proceed. Thank you for your consideration, please feel to reach out to the MFAC members if you have questions.</p> <p>Sincerely, Deb DeLuca and Jason Craig Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee</p>

Name, Organization	Full Comment
Wayne Sandberg, Washington County	<p>Dear Mr. Barbeau,</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed 2022-2025 TIP Amendment for the Minnesota Department of Transportation's 1-94 Auxiliary Lane project in Oakdale and Woodbury. The county has reviewed the proposed TIP amendment and found it to be consistent with the 2040 Washington County Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies.</p> <p>Washington County understands that amending this project will include adding a new eastbound auxiliary lane to Interstate 94 from the 1494/ 694/94 system interchange in Oakdale to County State Aid Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury. The project will also add a guardrail and noisewall to MnDOT's associated 1-94 maintenance project located between Oakdale and the St. Croix River.</p> <p>The county supports this TIP amendment as it will bring significant safety and mobility benefits to the project area. Washington County appreciates MnDOT's commitment to safety and continued investments in the 1-94/694/494 interchange area.</p> <p>Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP amendment. Please contact me if you have any questions.</p> <p>Sincerely, Wayne Sandberg Public Works Director/County Engineer</p>

Name, Organization	Full Comment
<p>William Gardner, MnDOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations</p>	<p>Dear Chair Hovland,</p> <p>The reason I am writing you today is in support of the proposed I-94 Project from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 in Woodbury that has been requested to be amended into the 2022-2025 Metro Council Transportation Improvement Program. This project is of particular benefit to regional and statewide freight movements.</p> <p>This project was recently selected in the second round of the Minnesota Highway Freight Program (MHFP) competitive solicitation in 2020 for funding and scored as the highest scoring freight project statewide. This program uses a quantitative scoring and selection methodology that evaluates criterion including freight flow volumes, freight safety, freight connections, project readiness, environmental justice outreach and other factors. According to the data we have collected this corridor sees an average of 9,000 heavy commercial average annual daily trips per day. This segment of roadway carries the highest volume of truck traffic in the state and is a vital connector between the Twin Cities and other national freight corridors.</p> <p>In addition, according to information gathered from the USDOT Freight Analysis Framework and other data we have collected this interstate corridor route also hosts one of the highest value of freight goods movements statewide. The ongoing gaps with America’s national supply chain require solid, stable and well-maintained transportation network to ensure that goods, services and manufacturing supplies move smoothly.</p> <p>The proposed project includes safety improvements that are necessary to address truck roll over crashes that have been occurring at the I494/I694/I94 Interchange. These crashes are an ongoing concern to the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s goal of Towards Zero Traffic Deaths.</p> <p>In closing I write to request that you amend this project into the 2022-2025 Metro Council Transportation Improvement Program and provide any ongoing support for the project moving forward.</p> <p>Sincerely, William Gardner, AICP Director, Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations</p>

Name, Organization	Full Comment
<p>Christina Volkers, City of Oakdale</p>	<p>Dear Transportation Advisory Board Members,</p> <p>On behalf of the City of Oakdale, I am submitting this letter of support for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metro District’s application to amend the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program by adding the I-94 Construction Project from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury.</p> <p>The city provided a letter of support to MnDOT’s federal freight grant application in September 2020. This letter reaffirms the city’s support for the project. The proposed improvements are identified as a top transportation priority in the City of Oakdale’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan (specifically; Transportation Goal 3, Policy 1).</p> <p>As stated in our September 2020 Freight Grant Support letter, the I-94 improvements are critical to the economic health and welfare of the City of Oakdale and vital to the many commuters and freight dependent businesses that rely on this corridor every day. Current travel times through this stretch of I-94 are extremely unreliable and crash rates are significantly above statewide averages. These existing conditions area only expected to worsen over time through the year 2040 as the City of Oakdale and the entire Twin Cities east metro continues to grow.</p> <p>For these reasons, we recommend that the Metro Council approve the amendment and allow the project to proceed and we also reaffirm City of Oakdale support for the project.</p> <p>Sincerely, Christina M. Volkers</p>
<p>Clinton Gridley, City of Woodbury</p>	<p>Dear Transportation Advisory Board Members,</p> <p>On behalf of the City of Woodbury, I am submitting this letter of support for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metro District’s application to amend the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program by adding the I-94 Construction Project from I-494/I-694/I-94 in Oakdale to Washington County Highway 19 (Woodbury Drive) in Woodbury.</p> <p>The city provided a letter of support to MnDOT’s Federal Freight Grant application in September 2020; This letter reaffirms the city’s support for the project. The proposed improvements are identified as a top transportation priority in the City of Woodbury’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>As stated in our September 2020 Freight Grant Support letter, the I-94 improvements are critical to the economic health and welfare of the city and vital to the many commuters and freight dependent businesses that rely on this corridor every day. Current travel times through this stretch of I-94 are extremely unreliable, and crash rates are significantly above statewide averages. These existing conditions area only expected to worsen over time through the year 2040 as the City of Woodbury and the entire Twin Cities east metro continues to grow.</p> <p>For these reasons, we recommend that the Metro Council approve the amendment and allow the project to proceed and we also reaffirm the city support for the project.</p> <p>Sincerely, Clinton P. Gridley</p>