

**ACTION TRANSMITTAL No. 2015-23**

**DATE:** April 20, 2015  
**TO:** Technical Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** TAC Funding and Programming Committee  
**PREPARED BY:** Joe Barbeau, Senior Planner (651-602-1705)  
**SUBJECT:** Scope Change Request for Hennepin County Surface Transportation Program Project

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Hennepin County requests modification to the scope of its Surface Transportation Program-funded project (SP # 027-653-021) in 2016 to change two intersection signals to roundabouts, change bicycle facility termini, change the project termini, and reduce the number of travel lanes.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** Recommend that the Transportation Advisory Board approve the request to modify the scope for the Surface Transportation Program-funded project (SP # 027-653-021) in 2016 to change two intersection signals to roundabouts, change bicycle facility termini, change the project termini, and reduce the number of travel lanes.

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:** Hennepin County received \$7,000,000 (\$7,840,000 after inflation adjustment) Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for reconstruction of CSAH 53 from just west of Washburn Avenue to 16h Avenue in Richfield for FY 2016.

The County is requesting a scope change that would expand upon its original scope. The original scope calls for a four-lane undivided roadway with left turn lanes and channelization only at major intersections. It includes no bicycle facilities and walkways are adjacent to the curb and are not ADA-compliant.

As shown in the attached request, the following changes are proposed:

- Provision of a left turn lane and channelization beyond major intersections. The extension of turn lanes beyond the major intersections is anticipated to improve safety and reduce crash rates currently exceeding critical rates.
- Protected bicycle facilities for the length of the project. The integration of bicycle mode will provide users additional choices, improve user access to existing transit, and improve connections to local and regional trails.
- Improved pedestrian facilities that include; ADA compliance, separation from vehicles, staged crossings, accessible pedestrian signals, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) will enhance the pedestrian safety and experience, and improve routes to existing transit features.
- Boulevards will provide an area for snow storage, signs, and a clear zone for the bicycle facilities.

- Signal to roundabout conversions are anticipated to improve vehicle/pedestrian safety and reduce the number of injury related crashes.
- The total project cost would increase from \$19,700,000 to \$40,000,000. All additional funds would be absorbed by the County.
- The project description would change from “from just west of Washburn Ave to 16<sup>th</sup> Ave in Richfield-Reconstruct” to From CSAH 31 (Xerxes Ave) to Richfield Parkway. The project length would increase from 3.3 miles to 3.44 miles.
- Type of work would change from “turn lanes” to “grade and surface.”

Hennepin County provided the following reasons that the project cost increases so much:

- **An increase in project lane-miles.** The increase in lane-miles is directly tied to proposed safety enhancements that include a center turn lane with median addition between Penn Avenue and 35W, and additional approach reconstruction for the proposed roundabouts.
- **The length and type of bicycle facilities.** The addition of protected bicycle facilities for the entire length of the project vs. bike lanes east of Portland Avenue only. This increased the roadway centerline length of bicycle facility by 2.8 miles and is a safety benefit for all users.
- **The current estimate includes \$4M in City of Richfield utility reconstruction.** This work is for city water main & sanitary sewer. The extent of city utility replacement was unknown at the time of application.
- **The original planning level estimate was lower than more recent bid results.** The application falls in the range of \$1.2M per lane mile. Recent bid results for similar type corridors let by Hennepin County have come in around \$2M per lane mile.

**RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY:** Projects that receive funding through the regional solicitation process are subject to the regional scope change policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the project is designed and constructed according to the plans and intent described in the original application. Additionally, federal rules require that any federally-funded project scope change must go through a formal review and TIP amendment process if the project description or total project cost changes substantially. The scope change policy and process allow project sponsors to make adjustments to their projects as needed while still providing substantially the same benefits described in their original project applications.

A TIP amendment is not needed because the changes, if approved, will be incorporated into the new 2016-2019 TIP. The project will not be authorized prior to approval of that TIP.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:** Staff reviewed the submitted scope change request. The project originally scored 708 points and was ranked second out of seven projects that applied in the “A” Minor Relievers category. Staff review, which included sharing the proposed update with some of the scorers from the 2011 solicitation, examined whether the updated project would have scored well enough to be funded. The most notable scoring change was “Crash Reduction Cost Effectiveness”, which dropped by roughly 50% due to the large project cost increase. The below table highlights all categories:

#	Category	Max	Orig	New	Notes
A	Relative Importance of Route	100	74	74	NOT PROVIDED TO SCORER: Not likely to change
B.1	Crash Reduction	100	80	80	Scorer reports Scores not likely to change.
B.2	Air Quality	100	0	0	Scorer reports scores not likely to change.
B.3	Congestion Reduction	150	75	75	Scorer reports scores not likely to change.
C.1	Crash Reduction Cost Effectiveness	125	125	71	Scorer reports reduction due to increase cost.
C.2	Congestion Reduction Cost Effectiveness	75	0	0	Scorer reports scores not likely to change.
C.3	Air Quality Cost Effectiveness	75	4	4	Scorer reports scores not likely to change.
D.1	Development Framework Planning Area Objectives	100	100	100	Scorer reports scores not likely to change.
D.2	Progress Toward Affordable Housing Goals	50	30	30	Scores were done by assessments; would not change.
D.3	Land Use And Access Mgmt Planning	75	50	50	Scorer reports scores not likely to change
D.4	Access Management Improvements	75	35	35	Scorer reports scores not likely to change
D.5	Integration of Modes	125	125	125	Probably improved for biking, but already at top score.
E	Maturity of Project Concept	100	10	10	Scorer reported no change
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1250</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>654</b>	

The score drops to 654, which is below the 687 that an unfunded project (also sponsored by Hennepin County) received.

No scorer indicated that the project will diminish in quality. The entire scoring reduction is the result of the sharp impact that the cost increase has on the crash reduction cost effectiveness score. Note that denial will leave \$7,000,000 of uncommitted STP funds for 2016.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION:** At its April 16, 2015, meeting, the Funding and Programming Committee unanimously recommended approval of this scope change request. Members cited the difficulty in assigning an updated cost effectiveness score without re-evaluating the costs of competing projects.

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#### ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	4/16/2015
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Approve	