

ACTION TRANSMITTAL – 2021-37

DATE: August 25, 2021

TO: Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: TAC Funding and Programming Committee

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SUBJECT: Scope Change / TIP Amendment Request for Hennepin County Signal Revisions and Pedestrian Improvements

REQUESTED ACTION: Hennepin County requests a scope change for its CSAH 35 / CSAH 52 Signal Revisions and Pedestrian Improvements project (S.P. 027-635-038) to remove planned improvements at the CSAH 35 (Portland Ave) and American Blvd intersection. This request is accompanied by a 2022-2025 TIP amendment request.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That TAC recommended that the Transportation Advisory Board approve Hennepin County’s request to remove planned improvements at the CSAH 35 (Portland Ave) and American Blvd intersection from its CSAH 35 / CSAH 52 Signal Revisions and Pedestrian Improvements project (S.P. 027-635-038), along with the corresponding amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: Hennepin County was awarded \$846,000 in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds for the 2022 fiscal year in the reactive category as part of the 2018 HSIP solicitation. The award was to fund signal improvements (signal head replacement, retiming, additional signal heads, confirmation light, and exclusive left-turn phasing) and pedestrian improvements (curb extensions (if feasible), pedestrian ramp upgrades to ADA requirements, accessible pedestrian signals, and countdown timers) at six intersections:

- CSAH 35 (Portland Avenue) and
 - American Boulevard
 - 86th Street
 - 90th Street
 - CSAH 1 (98th Street)
- CSAH 52 and
 - 70th Street
 - 76th Street

The project is intended to address a high share of left-turn crashes at these intersections and improve pedestrian crossing and accessibility. Since this project was awarded funding, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has planned construction for the CSAH 35 and American Blvd intersection as part of the I-494 Corridors of Commerce Project (S.P. 2785-424). This MnDOT-led project is planned for construction in 2023-2025 and will reconstruct the signal and pedestrian facilities at this intersection. The scope change application states that the MnDOT-led project will upgrade accessibility features beyond what is feasible in the county’s project.

The proposed scope change would construct the intersection improvements at the remaining five intersections and remove the planned improvements at CSAH 35 and American Blvd (as illustrated in Attachment 1) to be constructed as part of another project, leaving the full project intact once all projects are completed.

The cost estimate, including local match, at the time of the original application was \$940,000, while the cost shown in the draft 2022-25 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is \$1,015,200. The scope change application shows an updated cost estimate is \$1,650,000. The original HSIP application estimates \$174,000 in costs for the CSAH 35 and American Blvd intersection, accounting for \$156,600 of the HSIP award under the 90/10 federal-local split in the HSIP Program.

Hennepin County requests it retain the full \$940,000 of the HSIP award, noting that the remaining \$804,000 will be covered by local match. The proposed scope change results in a 51% federal and 49% local share if award dollars are retained.

The TIP amendment accompanying this request is to be reflected in the 2022-2025 TIP, which is yet to be approved. Provided a scope change request is approved by TAB, the Council will consider the amendment following federal approval of the 2022-2025 TIP.

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, 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 allows project sponsors to adjust their projects as needed while still providing substantially the same benefits described in their original project applications.

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 adopt and amend the TIP per these four requirements.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Approval/Denial of the Scope Change: Because the county is taking advantage of other projects to construct intersection improvements and the project will be completed in its entirety, staff recommends approval of the scope change request (removal of the intersection improvements identified). A scoring analysis is not needed because there is a 233-point scoring spread between this project and the highest-scoring unfunded project, and further because the request is predicated on the removed improvements being completed through another project.

Funding: Staff provides the following two options:

1. Allow the applicant to retain the full award in recognition that the full project will be built.
2. Reduce the federal award by \$156,600 corresponding to the federal share of the CSAH 35/American Blvd intersection's estimated costs in the original HSIP application.

TIP Amendment: Assuming a scope change is approved, a TIP amendment reflecting the change should be approved as well. The TIP amendment meets fiscal constraint because the

federal funds are sufficient to fully fund the project. This amendment is consistent with the Metropolitan Council Transportation Policy Plan, adopted by the Metropolitan Council on November 18, 2020 with FHWA/FTA conformity determination established on December 4, 2020. Public input opportunity for this amendment is provided through the TAB's and the Council's regular meetings. The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee determined that the project is exempt from air quality conformity analysis.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: At its August 19, 2021, meeting the TAC Funding and Programming Committee unanimously recommended approval of the TIP amendment request with no federal funding reduction along with the corresponding TIP amendment.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE SCHEDULED / COMPLETED
TAC Planning or TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	08/19/2021
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	09/01/2021
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Recommend TIP Amendment & Adopt Scope Change	09/15/2021

Note: Following the Transportation Advisory Board, the amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP will still need to be considered by the Transportation Committee and Metropolitan Council following approval of the draft 2022-2025 TIP.