

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: October 24, 2016

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 26, 2016

Subject: Interstate 35W and Lake St. Controlled Access Request

District(s), Member(s): District 7 and 8, Gary Cunningham and Cara Letofsky

Policy/Legal Reference: Mn. Statute 473.166

Staff Prepared/Presented: Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Finance and Planning, MTS, 651-602-1508

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (Review #21604-1)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for improvements to the I-35W corridor in Minneapolis including a new southbound exit to Lake Street; a new northbound exit to 28th Street, a new 12th Street transit ramp, and extended MnPASS lanes. This request is subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

Background

Minnesota state law (MS. 473.166) requires that the Council approve any controlled access highway in the metropolitan area before construction or right-of-way acquisition begins. This is to ensure that proposed highway projects are consistent with regional policies and plans.

Beyond the project elements described above, the larger project also includes a Lake Street multimodal transit station and associated bicycle/pedestrian connections, improvements to Lake Street, pavement replacement, numerous bridges, stormwater treatment, and noise walls (see Figure 1). If approved, construction is proposed to begin in 2017 and conclude in 2021. An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) were completed for the project, and both received a negative declaration and a Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) was signed by the Federal Highway Administration on August 23, 2016.

Rationale

The project is identified in the Current Revenue Scenario in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) and has successfully completed the MnDOT/Metropolitan Council Interchange Review Process.

The benefits associated with the project include improved transit service, enhanced livability, new transportation opportunities via new freeway connections, and improved community connections along bridges spanning the freeway corridor.

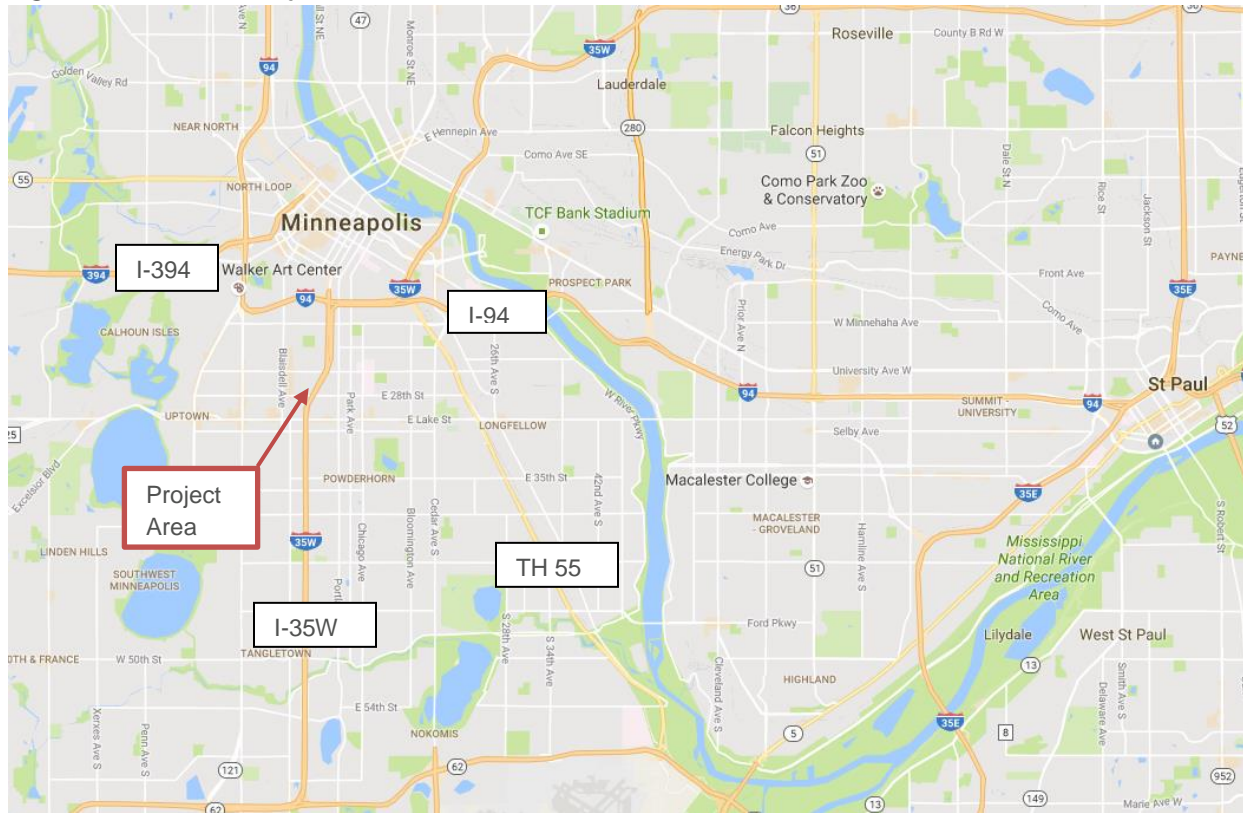
Funding

The estimated project cost is \$294,000,000 and is funded through a variety of sources including federal funds through the Regional Solicitation and state funds through the Transportation Economic Development (TED) program. In addition to MnDOT, Metro Transit, Hennepin County, and the City of Minneapolis are also contributing funding.

Known Support / Opposition

The Environmental Assessment for the project documents the environmental impacts and mitigation measures for the project and included extensive public outreach. Additional public involvement activities will be completed prior to the start of construction to inform area businesses of construction staging, closures, and detours.

Figure 1: Context of Project Area



Source: Google Maps