

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: March 14, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of March 23, 2022

Subject: Metro Freeway Project Approval: Minnesota Highway 13 and Dakota Avenue

District(s), Member(s): 4 – Barber

Policy/Legal Reference: Mn. Statute 473.166

Staff Prepared/Presented: Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Finance & Planning (651-602-1508)

Tony Fischer, Highway Planning Analyst (651-602-1703)

Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (Review # 22733-1)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by the Minnesota Department of Transportation to consolidate access along Highway 13, construct a grade separated interchange at Dakota Avenue, and modify frontage roads, 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. This request covers the construction of an interchange along with access and frontage road changes at Highway 13 and Dakota Avenue.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is leading this project to improve mobility and safety for all users of the highway, including freight, while also ensuring access to communities and businesses and enhancing walkability and bikeability across the corridor between TH 169 in Shakopee to Nicollet Avenue in Burnsville.

This project is one of many improvements in the past and anticipated in the future for the Minnesota Highway 13 corridor between Highway 169 and Nicollet Avenue. The remaining improvements have not been fully defined due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential for changing travel patterns, traffic volumes, and funding availability.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation completed a Hybrid Environmental Assessment for the proposed project that was approved on May 27, 2021. A Findings of No Significant Impacts was issued in October 2021.

Rationale

This project is included in the current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and the region's 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program. It is consistent with regional policy, and it most directly advances the Transportation Policy Plan goals of Safety and Security, Access to Destinations, and Competitive Economy. The Minnesota Highway 13 and Dakota Avenue interchange was approved by the joint Metropolitan Council/Minnesota Department of Transportation Interchange Review Committee.

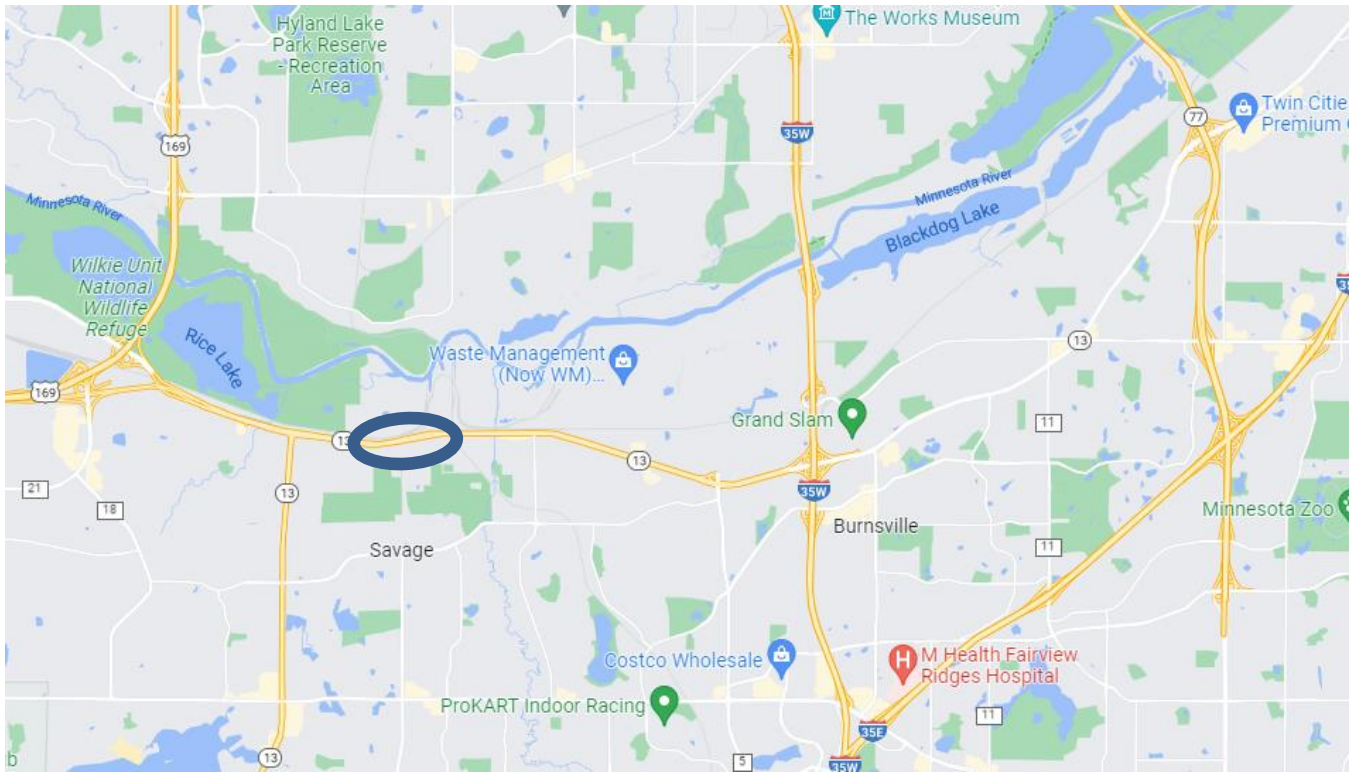
Thrive Lens Analysis

This project supports a competitive economy by providing more reliable freight movements to the Ports of Savage on the Minnesota River, one of just two remaining riverports in the metropolitan area and which is an important intermodal operation for domestic and international agricultural exports and construction aggregate to local and regional construction markets. This project supports multimodal access to destinations by mitigating congestion along the corridor to improve vehicle mobility and improving multimodal safety and access, especially while crossing the corridor. This project will also support a safer transportation system by eliminating conflict points along Highway 13.

Funding

The project is estimated to cost \$33 million. The project is fully funded with local, county, state and federal funds, including \$5.75 million of federal funds awarded through the Regional Solicitation in 2018.

Figure 1: Context of Project Area



Source: Google Maps

Figure 2: Highway 13 and Dakota Avenue Interchange in the City of Savage



Source: MnDOT