

2040 TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN AMENDMENT #2

Overview

Amendment Purpose

This amendment extends the METRO Gold Line alignment to a new terminus in Woodbury.

This amendment also adds lanes along I-94 in Northwest Hennepin County from Dayton Parkway to TH 101. This work will be an extension of a lane addition already in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan's Current Revenue Scenario that goes from Dayton Parkway to TH 610.

Policy Basis

Gold Line Extension and Station Addition

The 2040 Transportation Policy Plan presents policies and plans to guide development of the region's transportation system.

The Plan includes strategies in Chapter 2 that are organized by the Plan's six transportation system goals, including a number of strategies that relate to investment in the transitway system and the coordination of stations with local land use planning, as shown in table 1. These strategies guide the planned investments in transitways that are detailed in Chapter 6: Transit Investment Direction and Plan.

As part of the METRO Gold Line's Federal Transit Administration Project Development phase, the project is conducting an environmental review and supportive planning and engineering work. During this process, the Gold Line project office and the City of Woodbury worked together to incorporate Woodbury's local planning initiatives around proposed Gold Line station areas. The proposed terminus at the Woodbury Theater site was developed during the Pre-Project Development phase and included structured parking. During early design advancement, project partners determined that a parking structure was not the highest and best use of the Woodbury Theater site. As a result, a surface park-and-ride lot and additional terminus station is now recommended to be added to the locally preferred alternative approximately 0.3 miles to the northwest of the Woodbury Theater station along Guider Drive in a vacant parcel along I-494. There will continue to be some Gold Line parking available at the Woodbury Theater site that includes existing express bus parking until the site is redeveloped outside of the Gold Line project. In addition to the changes in Woodbury, METRO Gold Line locally preferred alternative stops in downtown Saint Paul have been upgraded from enhanced bus stops to full-amenity bus rapid transit stations. The change does not affect the LPA routing or number of stops but does affect the number of bus rapid transit stations being constructed, and it fits within the existing project budget through cost savings in the rest of the corridor.

Table 1 – Transportation Policy Plan Strategies related to Transitway Investment

Goal	Strategy Number	Strategy Text
Access to Destinations	C12	“Regional transportation partners will invest in an expanded network of transitways that includes but is not limited to bus rapid transit, light rail, and commuter rail. Transitway investments will be prioritized based on factors that measure a project’s expected contributions to achieving the outcomes, goals, and objectives identified in Thrive MSP 2040 and the Transportation Policy Plan.”
Land Use and Local Planning	F3	“Local governments will identify opportunities for and adopt guiding land use policies that support future growth around transit stations and near high-frequency transit service. The Metropolitan Council will work with local governments in this effort by providing technical assistance and coordinating the implementation of transit-oriented development. The Metropolitan Council will also prioritize investments in transit expansion in areas where infrastructure and development patterns support a successful transit system and are either in place or committed to in the planning or development process.”

The Gold Line Corridor Management Committee recommended this alignment at their September 6, 2018 meeting and the information for this meeting is posted at [METRO Gold Line - Committees](#). The City of Woodbury passed a resolution of support for this change on *(to be completed)* and Washington County passed a resolution of support for this change on *(to be completed)*.

I-94 Lane Addition

The Plan includes strategies that are organized by the Plan’s six transportation system goals, including a number of strategies that relate to investment in the highway system and this proposed amendment, as shown in table 2. These strategies and others guide planned investments in the region’s highways that are detailed in Chapter 5: Highway Investment Direction and Plan.

Table 2 – Transportation Policy Plan Strategies related to this Highway Investment

Goal	Strategy Number	Strategy Text
Transportation System Stewardship	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.”
Access to Destinations	C7	“Regional transportation partners will manage and optimize the performance of the Principal Arterial system as measured by person throughput.”
Competitive Economy	D5	“The Metropolitan Council and MnDOT will work with transportation partners to identify the impacts of highway congestion on freight and identify cost-effective mitigation.”

Highway projects are added to the fiscally constrained Transportation Policy Plan when the following criteria are met.

- The proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives and strategies of the region’s 2040 Transportation Policy Plan
- Documentation is submitted showing how the project can be built with revenues in the fiscally constrained plan (or reasonable proposed additional revenues)
- Air Quality Conformity is maintained
- Public Involvement is conducted

The 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) includes a fiscally constrained list of major projects for investment in the region by 2040, known as the Current Revenue Scenario. All projects that add new lanes to a Principal Arterial Highway are considered major projects under federal guidance. These projects must be identified as funded in a region’s long-range transportation plan (i.e. 2040 Transportation Policy Plan) in order to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and begin construction. Highway projects occasionally change during the project development process, both in project scope and cost. The proposed change being recognized in this amendment is to a project on I-94 between I-494 and TH 101 currently in the TPP and described as a major pavement

preservation project along with a lane addition between TH 610 and Dayton Parkway (previously referred to as Brockton Lane). During the project development process and preparation of an Environmental Assessment for the project, added lanes along I-94 from Dayton Parkway to TH 101 were also found to be cost effective and with this amendment will be added to the project scope. Additional project elements being added to the project scope and cost include a truck weigh station, rest area improvements and increased pavement thickness.

The I-94 corridor from the Fish Lake interchange (I-94/I-494/I-694) in Maple Grove to TH 101 in Rogers is identified in the TPP’s Increased Revenue Scenario as part of the future regional MnPASS system vision. In these corridors, the TPP prioritizes the addition of MnPASS lanes over traditional general-purpose lanes when adding highway capacity. This project will add a general-purpose lane over a portion of the identified MnPASS corridor and will be designed to not preclude the addition of MnPASS lanes in the future. MnPASS could be accomplished by converting the newly added lanes from TH 101 to TH 610 to MnPASS if needed in the future. As another option, the median ditch contains sufficient space to allow an added future MnPASS lane in each direction within existing right of way and without requiring the replacement of any bridges.

Project Details

The following project description for the METRO Gold Line in Chapter 6 is amended to reflect the new alignment.

METRO Gold Line (Gateway Dedicated BRT)

This project will connect Saint Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, and Woodbury. This project’s locally preferred alternative was adopted as dedicated BRT generally on the Hudson Road – Hudson Boulevard (A-B-C-D3) alignment that crosses to the south side of I-94 at approximately Bielenberg Drive terminating along Guider Drive between Queens Drive and Woodlane Drive. Advanced station-area land use planning, environmental work, and early engineering is ongoing. The project was also approved for entry into the FTA New Starts project development phase in January 2018.

The following description is also amended in Appendix C: Long-Range Highway and Transit Capital Project List:

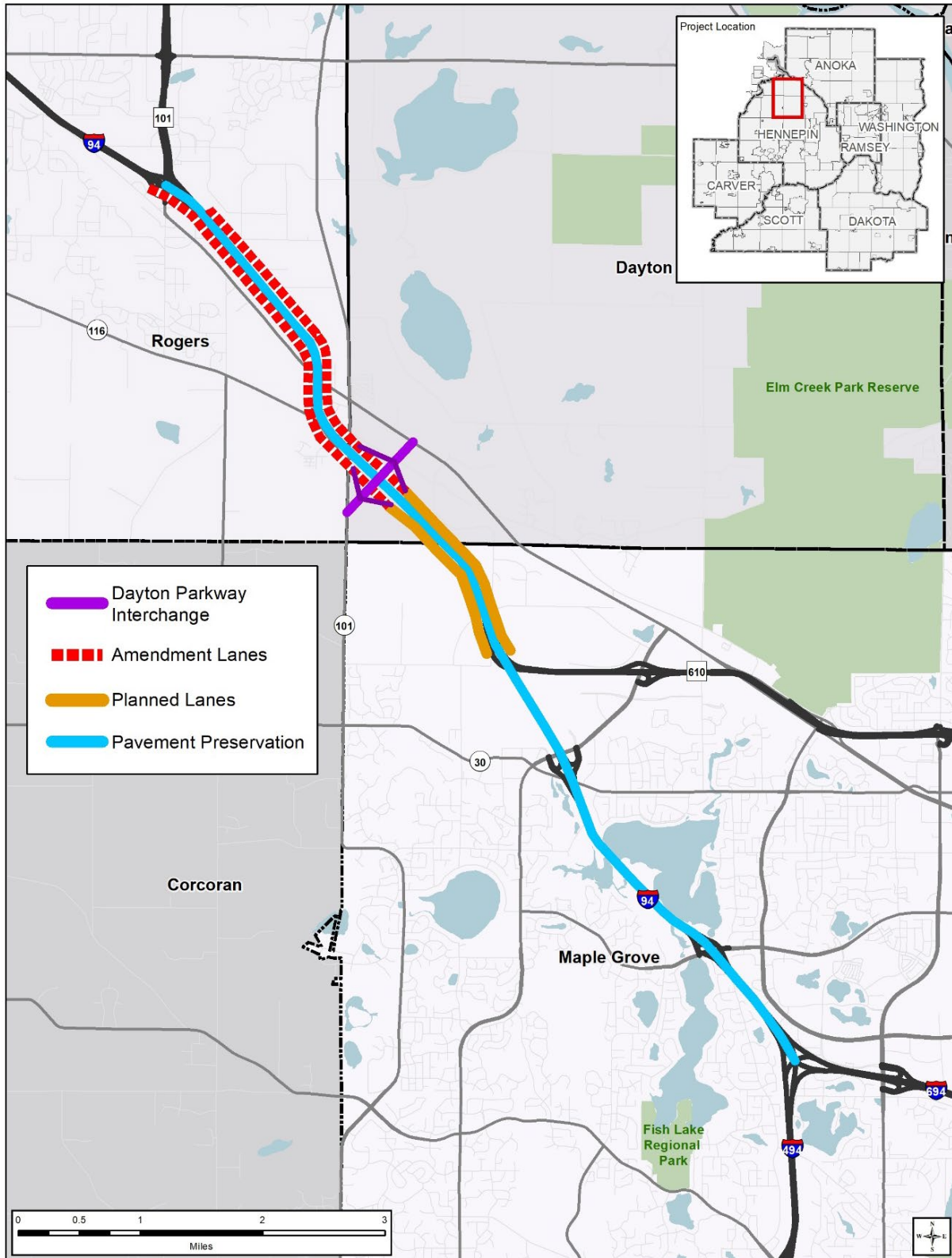
Transit Investment Category	Route	Project Description	Estimated Cost (Year of Expenditure)	Timeframe
Transitway System	METRO Gold Line	10-mile dedicated bus rapid transit line with plans to include 21 new stations from Saint Paul to Woodbury.	\$420,000,000	2018-2027

The following project description and map for the work along I-94 reflects the extension of the proposed lanes along I-94.

Added lanes along I-94 from TH 610 to TH 101

Located in Northwest Hennepin County, this corridor connects the Twin Cities metropolitan area to Greater Minnesota. It serves as both a major freight and recreational corridor for the state. The project includes long term pavement preservation between I-494 and TH 101 and added lanes, between TH 610 and TH 101 (see Figure 1). The project is anticipated to begin construction before the end of 2019.

Figure 1: Project Area and Major Elements



The following project description is stricken and added to Chapter 5, Table 5-10: Highway Strategic Capacity Enhancements 2018-2025.

Amendment Language	Road	Location	Project Description
Stricken	I-94	Brockton Lane to TH 610	Auxiliary Lanes
Added	I-94	TH 101 to TH 610	Added Lane in Each Direction

The following description is stricken and added to Appendix C: Long-Range Highway and Transit Capital Project List

Amendment Language	Highway Investment Category	Route	Project Description	Estimated Cost (Year of Expenditure)	Timeframe
Stricken	Regional Mobility	I-94	Auxiliary lanes Brockton to 610	#N/A	2018-2021
Added	Regional Mobility	I-94	Added Lane in Each Direction from TH 101 to TH 610	\$12,700,000	2018-2021

Impacts to the Plan

Transportation Finance

The change to the METRO Gold Line project is cost-neutral and does not affect the Plan’s finances.

The I-94 project changes do not reflect a change in overall regional revenues, but the increased cost is accommodated through the flexibility across time of bond funds. In the short term fiscal constraint is maintained by delaying \$100 million set aside in SFY2021 for the Rethinking I-94 project due to a lack of project readiness. MnDOT will maintain this funding commitment for I-94 at the time it is best suited for delivery.

Environment and Air Quality

The METRO Gold Line project is currently listed in the list of regionally significant projects in Appendix E: Additional Air Quality Information. This does not change. It is located within the carbon monoxide (CO) maintenance area and the Plan is subject to Clean Air Act Conformity determination.

The I-94 change is reflected in the list of regionally significant projects described in Appendix E: Additional Air Quality Information. It is a Horizon Year 2030: Strategic Capacity Enhancements project. It is located within the carbon monoxide (CO) maintenance area and the Plan is subject to Clean Air Act Conformity determination.

Clean Air Act Conformity Determination

The Minneapolis-Saint Paul region is within an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- designated limited maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO). A map of this area, which for air quality conformity analysis purposes includes the seven-county Metropolitan Council jurisdiction plus Wright County and the City of New Prague, is included in Appendix E of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. The term "maintenance" reflects the fact that regional CO emissions were unacceptably high in the 1970s when the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) were introduced but were subsequently brought under control. A second 10-year maintenance plan was approved by EPA on November 8, 2010, as a "limited-maintenance plan." Every Transportation Policy Plan or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) approved by the Council must be analyzed using specific criteria and procedures defined in the Federal Transportation Conformity Rule to verify that it does not result in emissions exceeding this current regional CO budget.

The analysis described in Appendix E has resulted in a Conformity Determination that the projects included in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, as amended, meet all relevant regional emissions analysis and budget tests. The 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, as amended, conforms to the relevant sections of the Federal Conformity Rule and to the applicable sections of Minnesota State Implementation Plan for air quality.

Emission Test

In 2010, the EPA approved a limited maintenance plan for the maintenance area. Under a limited maintenance plan, the EPA has determined that there is no requirement to project emissions over the maintenance period and that "an emissions budget may be treated as essentially not constraining for the length of the maintenance period because it is unreasonable to expect that such an area will experience so much growth in that period that a violation of the CO NAAQS would result." No regional modeling analysis is required; however, federally funded projects are still subject to "hot spot" analysis requirements.

Transportation Control Measures

Pursuant to the Conformity Rule, the Council certifies that the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan as amended conforms to the State Improvement Plan and does not conflict with its implementation. All Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies that were the adopted Transportation Control Measures (TCM) for the region have been implemented or are ongoing and funded. There are no TSM projects remaining to be completed. There are no fully adopted regulatory new TCMs, nor any fully funded non-regulatory TCMs that will be implemented during the programming period of the TIP. There are no prior TCMs that were adopted since November 15, 1990, nor any prior TCMs that have been amended since that date. Details on the status of adopted Transportation Control Measures can be found in Appendix E of the 2040 TPP.

See the attached letter describing the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's review of the amendment's Air Quality Conformity determination.

Equity and Environmental Justice

This amendment will not result in any significant changes in accessibility to jobs and other community amenities (shopping, colleges and universities, hospitals, and libraries) for the Current Revenue Scenario for both people of color and the total population.

Performance Outcomes

The added lanes along I-94 from Dayton Parkway to TH 101 insignificantly change projected long-range performance outcomes for the Current Revenue Scenario as shown in Table 2. Unlisted performance outcomes have no or negligible change due to the amendment.

Table 2 – Updated Performance Measures

Performance Measure	Description	2040 Current Revenue Scenario (as amended)	Change from Previous 2040 Current Revenue Scenario
Vehicle Miles Traveled	Total vehicle miles travelled in the MPO region	85,077,424	0.03%
On-Road Mobile Source Emissions (Table 13-6)			
Amount of Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Oxides, Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), and Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂), emissions	CO (Pounds)	288,376	-28
	Nitrogen Oxides (Pounds)	16,523	-4
	SO ₂ (Pounds)	340	0
	VOCs (Pounds)	5,840	-1
	CO ₂ Equivalent (Pounds)	49,032,116	5,732

Public Engagement

The Council released the proposed amendment to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan for public comment on Feb. 27, 2019, held a public hearing on April 2, 2019 and closed the public comment period on April 12, 2019.

People engaged	More than 300
Stakeholders involved	4
Meetings/interactions	1
Communities and interest groups engaged	I-94 Corridor Coalition Ramsey County City of Fridley Resident of Shoreview
Methods used	Web announcement and web page notice GovDelivery email announcement Facebook Twitter Star Tribune classified advertising Public hearing
Comments received through	Email Public hearing

Comments

There were five total comments received.

- Two comments in support of the I-94 highway project
- Two comments in support of the Gold Line extension project
- One comment requesting clarification on how the Council prioritizes Bus Rapid Transit investments submitted by the city of Fridley (see response below)

Response to comment regarding Bus Rapid Transit investments:

Transitway investments are prioritized and funded through a few different processes. Generally, the first step is a regional system study identifies the transitway as a potential high-ranking investment. These Council-led regional system studies happen in partnership with our regional partners. Past studies include Transit Master Study (2008), the Arterial Transitway Corridors Study (2012) and the Highway

Transitway Corridor Study (2015). These studies identified high-ranking potential transitway investments that merited additional corridor study and analysis.

Corridor studies for bus and rail dedicated transitways, like the Gold Line, are typically led by counties since these transitways are funded primarily through county transportation sales taxes and competitive federal funding. Metro Transit leads arterial bus rapid transit corridor development studies and identifies funding sources for building out these corridors. These sources include state bonds allocated to the Council, Regional Solicitation funds, Metro Transit federal formula funds, and Council regional transit capital funds. However, these funding sources are competitive and limited, and to date, the Council and Metro Transit have only been able to fund or partially fund three of the highest-ranking corridors from the Arterial Transitway Corridors Study.

That study identified a potential transit line intended to serve Fridley called the Central Avenue arterial bus rapid transit line. This project remains in the Transportation Policy Plan's "increased revenue" scenario for transitway projects for future development and implementation should funds become available.

Since many years have passed since Metro Transit completed the study and changes have happened in the 12 corridors studied, the corridor prioritization warrants a fresh look, along with other growing priorities for improved bus service in the region.

Metro Transit is beginning a bus network plan this year that will prioritize bus improvements through 2040. That plan includes looking into the next arterial bus rapid transit lines that should be implemented after the partially funded D Line, B Line, and E Line already prioritized in the Transportation Policy Plan. Metro Transit is currently planning the engagement process for city and county partners, transit riders, and the other regional stakeholders and will reach out in the next few months.