



**Request for City Council Committee Action
From the Department of Public Works**

Date: October 24, 2006
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Subject: **University of Minnesota Stadium Area Roadway Changes**

Recommendation:

- a. approval of University of Minnesota layout for changes to City and County roadways Huron Boulevard, Oak Street SE, 4th Street SE, University Avenue SE, and Washington Avenue SE, due to the proposed U of M football stadium, and
- b. passage of a resolution of concurrence with Hennepin County to revoke designation as County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 37 for the segments of Huron Boulevard and 4th Street SE lying between University Avenue SE and Oak Street SE, revoke designation as Municipal State Aid 195 for the segment of Oak Street SE lying between University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE, and designate the described segment of Oak Street SE as CSAH 37, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Transportation of the State of Minnesota.

Previous Directives:

December 23, 2005 Approval of the comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed University of Minnesota On-Campus Football Stadium

March 11, 2005 Resolution 2005R-124, authorizing City officials to enter into a Letter of Agreement regarding a proposed University of Minnesota Gopher Football Stadium

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Approved by:

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenter: Steven A. Kotke

Permanent Review Committee (PRC)	Approval _____	Not applicable <u> X </u>
Policy review Group (PRG)	Approval _____	Not applicable <u> X </u>

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase

- ___ Action requires use of contingency or reserves
___ Business Plan: ___ Action is within the plan. ___ Action requires a change to plan.
___ Other financial impact (Explain):
- ___ Request provided to department's Finance Dept. contact when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: The University of Minnesota has been working closely with the Marcy Holmes, Prospect Park, and Como SE neighborhoods, primarily through representation from the neighborhoods on its Stadium Area Advisory Group. The U of M held a meeting about the road layout with affected businesses and other interested parties on October 12, 2006.

City Goals: The city's infrastructure will be well-maintained; people will feel safe in the city; a connected network of transportation options; Minneapolis' neighborhoods will have unique identities and character; plentiful green spaces, public gathering areas

Background/Supporting Information

Introduction and Summary of Current Process

The legislation for the University of Minnesota Gopher Stadium is described in the next section, "U of M Stadium Legislation and Update".

The University of Minnesota is paying all costs for infrastructure improvements related to its football stadium. This includes costs for right-of-way, design and engineering, and construction of public (city and county) and private (U of M) roadways, sidewalks, traffic signals, bike path/trails, sanitary sewers, stormwater management facilities, watermains, street lights, streetscape, and all related infrastructure.

This letter provides an overview of the status of the project, and recommends two items for approval at this time:

- 1) the U of M's roadway layout, and
- 2) concurrence with Hennepin County for request to MnDOT for jurisdictional transfer of a portion of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 37 to existing Oak Street between University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE. Both items are described more fully below.

In the future, recommendations will be brought forward to the City Council regarding requests from the U of M for vacations of city and county right-of-way, accompanied by recommendations regarding dedication of new right-of-way. In addition to action by the City Council, the County Board of Commissioners will also be acting on vacation requests for those roadway segments that are designated as county routes.

Prior to or along with recommendations related to the U of M's vacation requests, staff will also recommend other actions related to impacts of the stadium project, including but not limited to the U of M's proposed event traffic management, several real estate transactions, clarification of ownership and operational and maintenance responsibility for the various infrastructure components, future mitigation responsibility for traffic or congestion problems, and the U of M's support for the city's Granary Road and Kasota Street initiatives including viable connections and bridge(s).

U of M Stadium Legislation and Update

On May 25, 2006, State of Minnesota legislation became effective for a Gophers football stadium at the University of Minnesota (see attachment).

A. The legislation included authorization and funding for related infrastructure improvements. Additionally, the legislation

B) directed the U of M to establish a mitigation fund for the support of community initiatives that relate to the impacts of the operation of the stadium, and

C) also requested that the U of M and the City of Minneapolis with an area advisory group to assess and prepare a report of the impact of the U of M on the surrounding community and the relationship of the community to the U of M.

These items and others are discussed below.

A. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

1. Roadway Layout

1) A significant amount of right-of-way impacted by this project is designated as County State Aid Highway (CSAH), and therefore the U of M's layout is subject to approval by the Hennepin County Engineer with municipal consent by the City of Minneapolis. A small amount of impacted right-of-way is categorized as either Municipal State Aid Street or Local Street. The City Engineer has approved the U of M's layout for the CSAH changes, as well as the changes to Municipal State Aid and local street segments, and by way of this letter is recommending the U of M's layout for approval by the City Council. When the U of M has finished the 100% Plans and Specifications for its upcoming street and other infrastructure work, Hennepin County will submit them to the MnDOT State Aid office for approval.

In 2005, the University of Minnesota presented a concept for roadway realignments and other infrastructure changes in its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Gopher Stadium. In late 2005, the City, along with a number of agencies, and several organizations and individuals, provided comments on the DEIS to the U of M acting as both the proposer and the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU). The Final EIS was published in early 2006. The roadway layout the U of M is implementing is generally consistent with the DEIS concept. Since the time that the legislation was authorized, with consideration for public safety, movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, buses and trucks, and property access, City staff have been working closely with Hennepin County staff, the U of M, and the U of M's consultants to refine and improve the roadway layout. According to the U of M's schedule, construction of the roadway modifications will begin in late winter, and be completed in July 2007, subject to acceptance of quality and workmanship of the public infrastructure by the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

Roadway Layout changes recommended in this letter for approval include the following highlights (illustrated on Attachment -- Map for Approval, entitled University Avenue, Oak Street, Huron Boulevard, October 20, 2006):

A.1.a.) Currently, westbound traffic on County State Aid Highways (CSAHs) 36 and 37 uses University Avenue SE to Huron Boulevard, thence northwest on Huron to 4th Street SE. As proposed, westbound traffic on CSAHs 36 and 37 will use University Avenue SE to Oak Street SE, thence north to 4th Street SE.

A.1.b.) Currently, traffic bound in a northerly//northwesterly direction on Huron Boulevard crosses University Avenue and continues on Huron to 4th Street SE. As proposed,

Huron south of University Avenue will be realigned generally to cross University Avenue in line with 23rd Avenue SE, and most Huron traffic will turn onto westbound University Avenue SE.

A.1.c.) Currently, Oak Street SE between University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE is a Municipal State Aid street, and has a straight alignment. As proposed, this segment of Oak Street SE will be transferred from the Municipal State Aid system to the County State Aid system as part of CSAH 37, and will be laid out in a curved alignment. As proposed, Oak Street SE south of University Avenue SE and north of 4th Street SE will remain part of the Municipal State Aid system, and its right of way and roadway will be modified to align with the new CSAH segment.

A.1.d.) Currently, Washington Avenue SE between Huron Boulevard and University Avenue SE is a two-way roadway. As proposed, this segment will be one-way, eastbound. As a result, westbound traffic that currently uses this segment will continue on University Avenue SE for one additional block and can then turn south (left) onto Huron and then turn west (right) onto Washington Ave SE.

A.1.e.) In addition, changes will be made to University Avenue SE between 25th Avenue SE and Oak Street SE to accommodate the above changes, and notably to address pedestrian safety concerns and enhance streetscape components.

2. Resolution of Concurrence for Jurisdictional Transfer

In order to minimize and expedite the U of M's need for real estate transactions under the actual proposed stadium building site, Hennepin County has been working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation State Aid office to propose transferring the designation of a portion of CSAH 37 as described above in Section A.1.c.), and further described here as follows: CSAH 37 designation would be removed from the combination of a segment of existing Huron Boulevard and existing 4th Street SE lying between University Avenue SE and Oak Street SE, and be transferred to the segment of existing Oak Street lying between University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE. This jurisdictional transfer is consistent with the proposed final realigned street segments when they are completed in Summer 2007. The MnDOT Office of State Aid has expressed willingness to accept this change early upon application by the County, with concurrence by the City of Minneapolis. The U of M will then need to deal with only the City, and not the County too, regarding vacation, easement retention, and acquisition matters for Huron Boulevard (between University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE, and 4th Street SE (between Huron Boulevard and Oak Street SE. (The County will continue to be involved regarding other segments.)

3. Vacations of Public Streets, Alleys, Utility Easements

Vacations are not addressed in this letter, except for the following information: The U of M has made application to the City to vacate a number of segments, and is making application to Hennepin County to vacate a number of segments, to accommodate infrastructure realignments, stadium construction, and stadium operations. In Winter/Spring 2007, a Public Hearing on the vacation requests will be held before the City Planning Commission, and recommendations will be made to the City Council. Recommendations for acceptance of new right of way necessitated by roadway realignments and vacations will also be made at that time.

4. Relationship to the proposed Central Corridor Light-Rail Transit (LRT)

The location of the University of Minnesota's planned football stadium is in conflict with the alignment of the Central Corridor LRT as proposed in the Central Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Metropolitan Council, which is the lead agency for the Central Corridor, is aware of the conflict and is also aware of an alternative alignment suggested by the

U of M. In order to preserve LRT alignment options, City staff will be recommending retention of some right-of-way, property and/or easements until such time as the Central Corridor LRT alignment is determined. These recommendations will be made at a later date, as part of the actions related to the U of M's applications for street vacations.

5. Future Mitigation for Unforeseen Traffic Concerns, and Additional Potential Agreement Items

The U of M's traffic modeling, described at length in the Gopher Stadium EIS, predicts successful traffic management after the stadium is built, during non-major events and daily conditions. Public Works personnel and the Hennepin County Engineer have determined that the traffic modeling approach and results are satisfactory. However, traffic modeling can never be completely predictive of future conditions. Therefore there may be traffic concerns that arise once the new roadway system and stadium have been put in operation. Staff from the City, the County and the Metropolitan Council are working with the University of Minnesota to identify additional traffic analysis to be undertaken by the U of M after the stadium and roadway system have been put into operation, and to frame the U of M's role in partnering with these governmental agencies on appropriate mitigation steps, for example, acquisition/dedication of additional rights-of-way. Throughout discussions, it has been clear that all parties are committed to successfully managing movement of people by multiple modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and by car, truck, bus, and if achieved, LRT. The City is drafting a proposed memorandum of agreement among the various parties to address these and other issues and will bring it forward to the Transportation & Public Works Committee at a later date.

B. MITIGATION FUND

The Mitigation Fund Task Group of the Stadium Area Advisory Group (SAAG) is discussing and resolving the purpose and scope of the fund, determining asset management and duration of the fund, and identifying direct mitigative effects of the stadium. The Task Group will be drafting an implementation plan for submission to the SAAG in April 2007.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT REPORT

The Neighborhood Impact Report is not addressed in this letter, except for the following information:

1. The legislation directed that the Neighborhood Impact Report shall address (but not be limited to) the following:
 - Public safety, transportation, and housing quality, availability, and affordability;
 - Improved coordination among the U of M, area resident and business representatives, and the City;
 - Strengthening neighborhoods, commercial areas, and economic development;
 - Best practices for building stakeholder partnerships, and
 - Recommended short- and long-term solutions, including projected costs and benefits.

2. A presentation of the draft Neighborhood Impact Report to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee is planned for November 14, 2006.

Attachments

- Minnesota SF No. 2460, Bill for Gophers Stadium
- Map for Approval, entitled University Avenue, Oak Street, Huron Boulevard, October 20, 2006
- Additional Context Map, entitled Figure A, University of Minnesota Proposed Roadway Layout Stadium Opening Day, October 20, 2006

Cc: Kathleen O'Brien and Brian Swanson, University of Minnesota
All Council Members
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