

**I-35W/I-94 Commons
“Downtown Commons”
Study**

Introduction

- Why do it now?
- Background
- Proposed approach to the problem
- Study details



Upcoming Projects

- Restriping of lanes in tunnel (Mn/PASS)
- I-35W North of 46th St. project
- I-35W Mississippi River Bridge (fracture critical bridge)

Traffic Conditions

- 1 out of 8 trips inside the ring pass through the commons area
- 555,000 vehicles per day - highest volume interchange in the State, more than twice the volume of the second interchange – I-35W/I-494
- Severe congestion – 5 hours per day with speeds at or below 20 mph

Safety Concerns

- Highest crash area in MN
- 3 of the top 4 and 6 of the top 10 crash segments are in the study area
- PM peak hour crash rate 15 times greater than average
- Excluding delay, crashes cost over \$22 million per year
- 4065 reported crashes in 3 years – an average of over 3 per day

Geometric Design Conditions

- Numerous deficient design elements including:
 - Horizontal alignments
 - Interchange spacing
 - Weave distances
- 58 ramps and 12 interchanges in the study area
(in 7.3 centerline miles on I-35W & I-94)

Deficiencies from Draft TSP

- Mobility – High Deficiency
- Safety – High Deficiency
- Infrastructure – High Deficiency
- Rates in the highest category of travel time index in draft TSP

Ideal Timing to Take Action

- Upcoming projects need to be developed with a vision for alternatives within the commons area
- Upcoming projects are early enough in project development to make some modifications
- IRC studies created a blueprint for outstate corridors, maybe Metro corridors should have similar studies completed to develop a vision for Metro freeways

Propose a Corridor Study?

- The study will create an understanding of possible short term and long term improvements
- Will ensure upcoming projects do not preclude longer term improvements to the commons
- Will identify near-term low cost ideas that help ease congestion and improve safety

Study Details

- Select consultant using Quality Based Selection
- Examining and prioritizing existing problems
- Perform a concept development workshop
- Develop concepts
 - 3 scenarios: accommodation, reconstruction, expansion
 - Identify a lower cost, high benefit tweaking project
 - 4 sub areas of study
 - Try to achieve mix-n-match compatibility
 - Ability to enhance transit
- Benefit-cost review of concepts

Study Details

■ Limits

- I-94 between Highway 55 west and Riverside Ave.
- I35W between 28th St. and 4th St. SE.

■ Approach legs, # lanes

- I394 - 6 lane + 3 lane rrvrs
- I94 North - 3 EB, 3 WB
- I94 East - 8 lane
- I35W South - 10 lane
- I35W North - 8 lane

Expansion Scope

- Tunnel
 - restripe to 4-lanes
 - dbl deck per study
- Minimize RoW
- Accept Dgn Exceptions
- Consider Pricing Lane Additions.
- Consider Missing Connections
- Consider Central Corridor Transit
- Consider SW Corridor Transit
- Consider Industry Square Interchange
- Consider I35W North HOV/BRT lane

External Agency Involvement

- Minneapolis, Hennepin County, FHWA, Met Council will be informed and involved in the process
- Mn/DOT will work through a key contact person for each agency
- Full public involvement process will be concurrent with project scoping and environmental document process

Questions ?