



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

Date: August 4, 2009

To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

Subject: **Lowry Bridge Final Plan Approval**

Recommendation:

1. Passage of a Resolution approving Hennepin County's final design plans for the Lowry Avenue Mississippi River Bridge.
2. Authorize the appropriate City Officers to execute a Cooperative Agreement with Hennepin County for the construction of the Lowry Avenue Mississippi River Bridge pending satisfactory review by the City Attorney's Office.

Previous Directives:

February 6, 2009: Council Action (Petition No 273273) approval and submittal of the City's comments to Hennepin County's Lowry Avenue Bridge Reconstruction Project's Environmental Assessment Worksheet.

March 6, 2009: Council Action (Petition No 273330) approval of the preliminary layout for the Lowry Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi River, between 2nd Street North on the West and Marshall Street on the east, as provided by Hennepin County.

Prepared by: Ole Mersinger, Project Engineer 673-3537
Don Elwood, P.E., Director, Transportation Planning & Engineering, 673-3622

Approved by:

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

Presenters: Ole Mersinger, Project Engineer
Hennepin County Transportation Department Staff

Reviews

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Approval NA	Date
Civil Rights Approval	Approval NA	Date
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Approval NA	Date

Financial Impact

No financial impact

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: Hennepin County is leading and coordinating the Public communications for this project with the City and Neighborhoods

City Goals: A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME, CONNECTED COMMUNITIES:
the city's infrastructure will be well- maintained, people will feel safe in the city
Comprehensive Plan: Implements the transportation policies set forth in the city's comprehensive plan
Zoning Code: Not Applicable

Background/Supporting Information:

The Lowry Avenue Bridge is situated at the border of four city neighborhoods; McKinley, Hawthorne, Bottineau, and Marshall Terrace. Originally named the 32nd Avenue Bridge, the first crossing was opened in 1905 and connected 25th Street Northeast and 32nd Street North. In 1915 the thoroughfare was officially named Lowry Avenue. Responding to the area's increasing economic needs, which included heavier vehicles above and the introduction of barge traffic below, the City of Minneapolis substantially, reconstructed the bridge in 1958. During a 2004 County repainting effort, inspectors discovered one of the piers had shifted nearly 11 inches. The bridge was closed for inspection and stopgap measures were subsequently instituted. The measures instituted included a more rigorous inspection regimen and the bridge was reopened the following year. The County's goal was to keep the bridge operational until its replacement could be constructed. Unfortunately, the bridge experienced an increased rate of movement in 2008 and was permanently closed to all traffic on April 25th the same year.

The Lowry Avenue Bridge Project is an initiative of Hennepin County. The County has been actively working on this project since it was identified by the County Board of Commissioners in its 2005 Capital Improvements Program. The primary goal of the project is to reconstruct the Lowry Avenue crossing of the Mississippi River. The proposed design provides a safe and efficient means of transporting people, goods, and services across and upon the Mississippi River between North and Northeast Minneapolis while balancing economic responsibilities and the community's desire for an area-defining bridge.

The County made extensive efforts in garnering input from residents and businesses during the preliminary design. The Project Advisory Committee, composed of leaders from the four neighborhood organizations and business community, met numerous times over the course of the preliminary design to discuss options and alternatives. In all, the County has engaged local residents at 14 project and open house meetings. Local, state and federal elected officials have been continuously updated and have given their support for the project as well.

In order to facilitate reconstruction, the County awarded a contract earlier this year for bridge removal. On June 21st, 2009, the deficient Lowry Avenue Bridge was imploded and subsequently removed from the site.

Layout

The Lowry Avenue Bridge Project consists of two phases. Phase 1 is the replacement of the Mississippi River crossing between a point roughly 350 feet west of the west bank of the Mississippi River to the west and Marshall Street (County State Aid Highway 23) to the east. Phase 2 continues to the west to Second Street and involves replacing the retained section with a bridged section.

The new main span structure is a 450-foot long steel through-arch. The approach spans are post-tensioned concrete box girders. The entire bridge is load path-redundant and will not be fracture critical. The arch was chosen not only for its inherent beauty but for its practicality. The arch requires fewer piers and so reduces the environmental impact on the river resource. The public has indicated a strong preference for the proposed bridge type. The preferred alternative

was determined through coordination with the Project Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, public opinion surveys, and federal, state and local elected officials. The County was directed to provide a replacement that was as unique and area-defining as the current structure.

The new typical roadway section includes two 11-foot lanes in each direction, a 6-foot wide center median, two 4-foot shoulders, and two 12-foot wide multipurpose sidewalks. These dimensions comply with all applicable state and federal roadway design standards. Traffic analysis indicates a four-lane section is necessary through this segment of Lowry Avenue. This matches the approach roadway in each direction and will alleviate the traffic congestion on either end of the bridge. Under Phase 1, this section will be striped for one lane in each direction to accommodate the west interim connection.

The engineering plans for the new bridge have been completed and are anticipated to be approved by MnDOT and FHWA by August 10th, 2009. Hennepin County is requesting final municipal approval of Phase 1 of the Lowry Avenue Bridge Replacement Project.

Schedule

The anticipated Phase 1 reconstruction schedule includes river bridge construction beginning in October 2009 and a reopening of the crossing in November 2011. Phase 2 is currently in design. The implementation schedule has not been determined at this time until project funding is identified. Hennepin County is currently exploring funding options to complete Phase 2.

Purpose of Letter

The purpose of this letter is give final approval of the engineering plans and to authorize entering into a construction cooperative agreement with Hennepin County. The City will not have any financial obligations for the construction of the bridge. However, the cooperative agreement will cover certain force account work completed by the city that will be reimbursed by Hennepin County and certain maintenance activities associated with infrastructure ancillary to the bridge.

Attachments: Hennepin County Transmittal Letter
Bridge Images

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