Business Item

Transportation Committee

Item: **SW** 2009-21

Meeting date: January 12, 2009

ADVISORY INFORMATION	
Date:	January 6, 2009
Subject:	Adoption of *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*
District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	MN Statutes Sec. 473.175 and 473.176; SAFETEA-LU
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS 651-602-1754; Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director Finance & Planning 651 602-1058
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt as the final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* the Proposed Final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* dated December 19, 2008 incorporating the changes shown on Attachment A.

Background

The Council, as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, is required by both State and Federal law to prepare and update a long-range transportation plan for the region every four years. The current Transportation Policy Plan was adopted in December 2004 and therefore a new version must be adopted by the Council. Federal law also requires the Council to prepare a plan in conformance with federal transportation and air quality requirements. The plan must follow federal guidance and has been drafted to address the federal requirements. A review by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has indicated that the plan meets air quality conformance requirements.

The Council released the Draft *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* for public review and comment during the fall of 2008. The comments received were sorted and compiled; proposed responses and changes to the Draft *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* were presented to the Council. A Proposed Final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* dated December 19, 2008 incorporating changes was distributed to Council members and posted on the Council's website.

The Proposed Final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* included new language pertaining to potential economic stimulus funding to allow for the funding of up to one of the expansion projects identified in the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* adopted in 2004. Additional opportunity for public comment on this new language was provided. One written comment received from MnDOT clarified that the funded Cayuga bridge project does not include the entire I-35E project (from I-94 through TH36) provided for in the policy plan adopted in 2004. An air quality conformity analysis showed that this project had no significant impact on the regional emissions budget. Therefore, the recommended changes to the Proposed Final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* include this expansion project both as a project to be reassessed and as a project that could potentially be funded with economic stimulus funding.

Attachment A shows the recommended changes to the Proposed Final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* to be incorporated into the final adopted plan.

Rationale

The adoption of the final *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* will meet the federal and state requirements for the region to have a long range transportation plan and will allow for federal funding of planned transportation projects to continue.

Funding

None required.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition.

Transportation Committee

Attachment A

01-12-09

Highways Chapter
Pages 69-70, 81-83, 85

Appendix O
Pages O-1 to O-4

Text changes highlighted in red

This plan identifies three key objectives to mitigate congestion, improve the performance of the Metropolitan Highway System and preserve high levels of regional mobility:

- Increase the people-moving capacity of the Metropolitan Highway System while reducing future demand on the system,
- Manage and optimize the existing system to the greatest extent possible and,
- Implement strategic and affordable capacity expansion projects.

In order to achieve the above objectives, this plan recommends the following strategies:

Encourage the Use of Alternative Modal Options and Changes in Travel Patterns

The use of alternatives to the single occupant vehicle can reduce the number of vehicles that use the highway system while still carrying an increasing number of travelers. In other words, congestion can be mitigated if a greater share of travel on the highway system is accommodated by modes other than the single-occupant automobile.

In addition, changes in travel patterns that reduce peak demand can allow travelers to avoid congestion and help reduce the congestion impact on others. This will also result in a better-managed, more efficient and more effective transportation system.

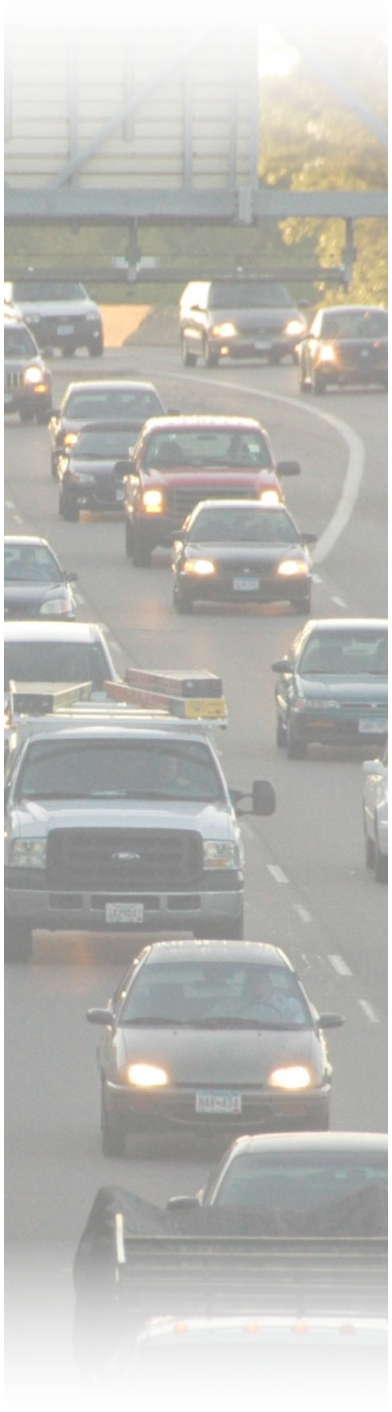
Examples of actions that implement this strategy include, but are not limited to, new transitways, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) and high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, bus-only and priced dynamic shoulder lanes, roadway pricing and other transit advantages and improvements.

Construct Low-Cost/High-Benefit Highway Improvements

Low-cost/high-benefit projects improve traffic flow by removing bottlenecks, improving geometric design and eliminating safety hazards. Recently, Mn/DOT has implemented with great success some low-cost/high-benefit projects such as the widening of TH 100 at Excelsior Boulevard and the addition of a third lane on I-94 between Century and McKnight avenues. In addition, 20 low-cost/high-benefit projects, already selected by Mn/DOT for implementation, are shown later in this chapter in Table 6-34. Some of these projects entail capacity enhancement and lane additions while others focus on system management. Many more projects of this nature will be identified by 2010 along congested corridors on a system-wide basis for construction.

Reassess the Scope and Cost of Proposed Major Highway Expansion Projects

This plan does include some major highway expansion projects. There are six major highway projects included in the 2009-2012 TIP (Table 6-21). This plan also includes a significant commitment to major bridge replacement projects (Table 6-28) which in many cases entail capacity expansion.



However, the policy plan adopted in 2004 included 14 proposed major highway expansion projects (Table 4-10 of the 2004 plan) totaling over $2.3 billion which are now beyond the fiscal constraint of this plan. This plan emphasizes the need to reassess the scope of these expansion projects by 2010 (as well as TH 169 at I-494 which was included in 2005-2008 TIP) in an attempt to reduce their cost significantly while still achieving substantial preservation, congestion mitigation and safety benefits. Some of these projects may either become low-cost/high-benefit projects or, at least at a reduced scope and cost, may be easier to implement within currently projected highway revenues.

If the scope and cost cannot be reduced significantly, but a project is still deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the system, its implementation would be contingent upon a new federal transportation bill with increased funding, an economic stimulus package or additional state legislative action.

Metro Highway System Investment Strategy

In 2009, the Council and Mn/DOT will develop a Metro Highway System Investment Strategy (MHSIS). This effort will carry out four activities, depicted in Figure 6-22, prior to the 2010 *Transportation Policy Plan* amendment:

- Refine in greater detail the investment vision discussed in this chapter and establish overarching principles that govern future Metropolitan Highway System investments;
- Refine critical highway system preservation and safety needs;
- Prepare federally required Congestion Management Process (CMP) which includes two major components, a Congestion and Safety Management Plan (CSMP) that will include new low-cost/high-benefit projects on a system-wide basis and a Travel Demand Management Strategic Plan (TDMSP); and
- Reassess major expansion projects to determine to what extent projects with a reduced scope and cost can contribute to mitigating congestion and to the efficient operation of the Metropolitan Highway System within financial constraints and estimate additional funding needed to complete them.

In 2009, Congress is scheduled to pass a new six-year transportation bill, providing greater certainty regarding the levels of federal funding states can plan for into the future. Congress may also pass in 2009 an economic stimulus package including significant infrastructure funds to be spent in a relatively short period of time. In that case, the Metropolitan Council with the TAB and Mn/DOT will jointly determine the appropriate use of those funds.

Figure 6-35: Expansion projects will emphasize system optimization

Expansion

This plan supports the implementation of affordable and strategic capacity expansion through the bridge program and low-cost/high-benefit congestion management projects. It also recognizes, however, that because of financial constraints many of the expansion projects proposed in the past need to be reassessed to bring them more in line with projected revenues and Mn/DOT's ability to implement them. This reassessment has to be performed with the recognition that it is not realistic to assume that congestion will be eliminated and that each individual project can be designed as if a congestion-free system can be achieved.

Six major expansion projects from the *2004 Transportation Policy Plan* shown earlier in Table 6-21 are either under contract or are programmed for contract letting in the 2009-2012 period. Those projects included and funded in the currently adopted 2009-2012 TIP are estimated to cost about $770 million.

Table 6-37 includes the remaining expansion projects and two future major river crossings that were recommended for funding by 2030 in the *Transportation Policy Plan* that was adopted in 2004. Figure 6-36 shows the locations of these 14 projects. It should be noted that the I-494/169 interchange project was in the 2005-2008 TIP (an appendix to the *2004 Transportation Policy Plan*) but was removed from the TIP for budgetary reasons.

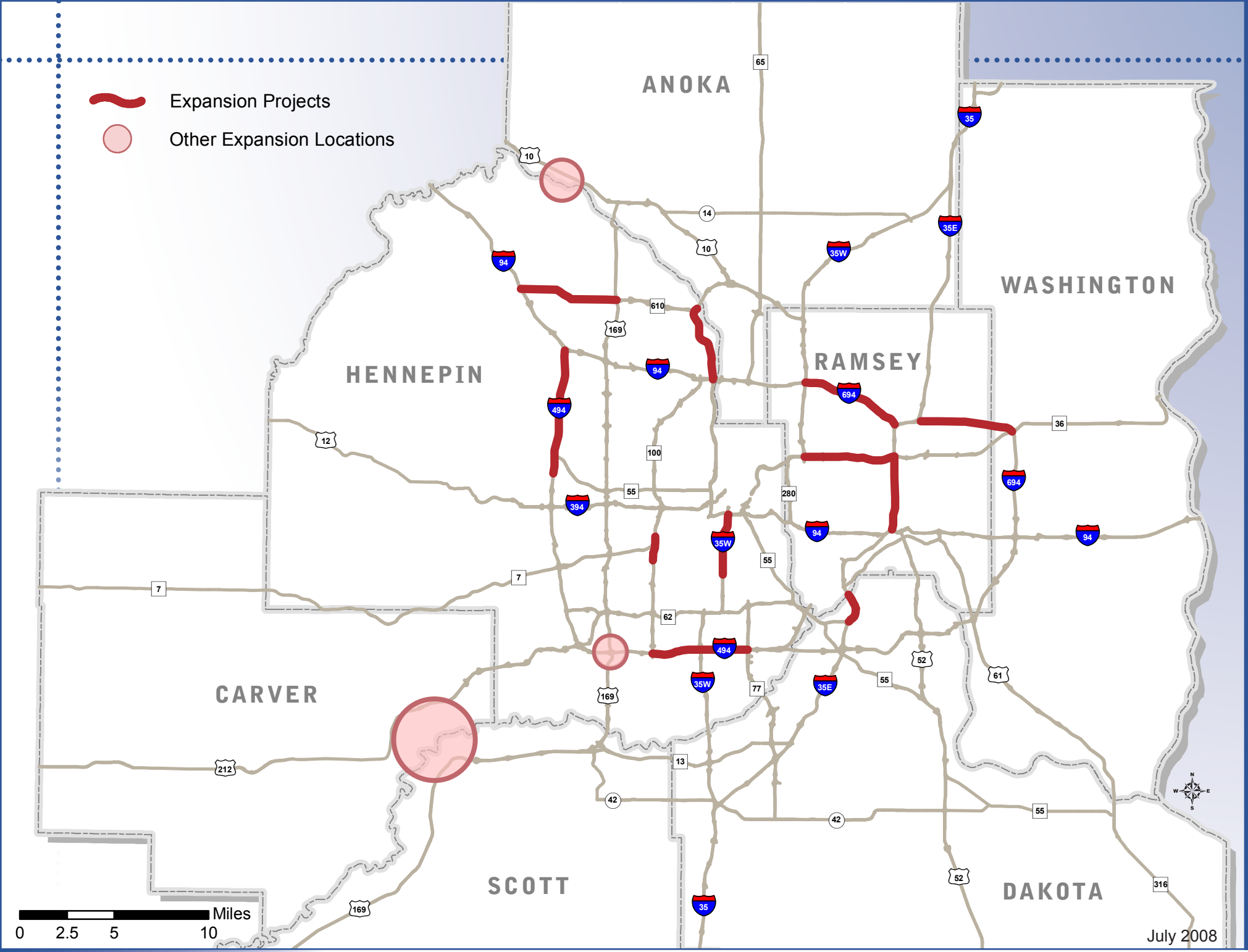


Figure 6-36: Expansion Projects to be Reassessed

Table 6-37: Expansion Projects to be Reassessed

Highway	From	To	Length (miles)	2007 Cost Estimate (millions)	Recommended Facility Improvement
I-35E	TH 110	TH 5	2.3	40	Add third lane
I-35E	I-94	TH 36	4.0	104	Add 4th lane. This lane add is a separate project from the Tier 1 Cayuga Bridge, adjacent bridges and Phalen Avenue interchange project.
I-35W	46th Street	I-94	5.3	402	Add HOV/transit priority lane and Lake Street Interchange. The UPA provides elements of this project.
I-494	TH 55	I-94	5.5	245	Add 3rd lane
I-494	TH 77	TH 100	5.1	1052	Build in accordance with EIS completed in 1997.
I-494 / 169*	Highwood Rd	Valley View Rd	1.0	105	Interchange reconstruction
I-694	I-35W	W. Jct. I-35E	5.6	267	Add 3rd lane
I-694	E Jct. I-35E	TH 36	5.5	113	Add 3rd lane
TH 36	I-35W	I-35E	5.3	119	Add 3rd lane
TH 100	36th St	Cedar Lake Rd.	1.0	130	Add 3rd lane. Elements of the project were completed in 2007; others will be completed with Tier 2 bridges.
TH 252	73rd Avenue	TH 610	2.9	139	Convert to four-lane freeway
TH 610	CR 130	I-94	5.0	210	Complete unfinished four-lane freeway and I-94 interchange
TH 41 - New River Crossing	TH 169	TH 212	3.0	10	Preserve right-of-way after alignment is defined.
New Miss. River Crossing	TH 10	I-94	2.0	10	Preserve right-of-way after alignment is defined.
TOTAL			**53.5**	**$2.946 B**	

** Cost estimates for the I-494 / 169 project are from the 2005-2008 TIP.*

The total cost of these 14 projects exceeds $2.9 billion, a level of expenditure that cannot be supported with projected highway revenues for the 2009-2030 time period. For this reason, all 12 expansion projects, and the right-of-way preservation for the two major river crossings must be reassessed in an attempt to reduce the scope and cost of those projects significantly while still achieving substantial preservation, congestion mitigation, capacity expansion and safety benefits. This analysis should be carried out in a consistent manner for all projects to ensure comparable results. Some of these projects which have been allocated earmarked federal funding will continue to progress as this reassessment takes place.

If low-cost/high-benefit solutions can be found for some of these major capacity improvements, once the reassessment is completed, they should be included in the CSMP project list. On the other hand, if a larger project is still considered necessary for the efficient operation of the Metropolitan Highway System but projected revenues are still insufficient for its construction, the implementation of such a project by 2030 would be contingent upon either increased federal funding for infrastructure investments or additional state legislative action.

New/Rebuilt Interchanges

Improvements to existing interchanges and new interchanges are identified on an ongoing basis to improve highway operations and address safety concerns. Those improvements should be considered only when they are consistent with Mn/DOT's *Transportation System Plan* (TSP), this policy plan and the interchange procedures and criteria discussed in Appendix E. Construction of those improvements should not negatively affect safe operations on the main roadway.

Non-Mn/DOT Principal Arterials

At present, there are three principal arterials in the seven counties that are not under Mn/DOT jurisdiction: Dakota CSAH 42, Anoka CSAH 14 and Shepard Road. These metropolitan highways should be under Mn/DOT jurisdiction.

Potential Economic Stimulus Funding

Recent changes in the national economy have led to calls for Congress to adopt an economic stimulus package that would include funding for transportation infrastructure. How this region would respond to any such additional federal funding was raised during the public comment period on the draft plan.

For the region to have maximum flexibility to take advantage of this potential funding source, the Council has taken the necessary procedural steps to allow any one of the 12 major expansion projects (shown in Table 6-37, excluding the new river crossings) from the *Transportation Policy Plan* adopted in 2004 to be funded. Air quality conformity analyses were conducted adding each of these projects individually to the fiscally constrained plan and all were found to be in conformance. The results of the air quality analyses and the MPCA review letter are available in Appendix O.

These projects are being included in this plan contingent upon additional federal funding being available. If no additional funding is received, these projects are beyond the fiscally constrained plan.

In keeping with the overall direction of the plan, the Council continues to support reassessing these projects before they are constructed. If there are ways that the scope and costs can be reduced, while still meeting the critical preservation, safety and mobility needs in these corridors, this will benefit the entire region.

Appendix O: Conformity Documentation of Potential Economic Stimulus Projects

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) 40 CFR PARTS 51 and 93, requires the Metropolitan Council (the Council) to prepare a conformity analysis of the region's *Transportation Policy Plan* (the Plan). Based on an air quality analysis, the Council must determine whether the transportation plan conforms to the requirements of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) with regard to National Ambient Air Quality Standards for mobile source criteria pollutants. Specifically, the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area is within an EPA-designated carbon monoxide (CO) maintenance area. Appendix F describes the procedures used to analyze the fiscally constrained *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* and lists findings and conclusions supporting the Metropolitan Council's determination that this Plan conforms to the requirements of the CAAA.

Due to recent changes in the national economy Congress is considering adoption of an economic stimulus package that would include new funding for transportation infrastructure. In order for the region to have maximum flexibility to take advantage of this potential funding source, the Council has taken the necessary procedural steps to allow any one of the 12 major expansion projects from the plan adopted in 2004 to be funded. These projects are being included in the plan adopted in January 2009 contingent upon additional federal funding becoming available. If no additional funding is received, these projects will not part of the fiscally constrained plan.

Air quality conformity analyses were conducted by adding each of these 12 projects individually to the fiscally constrained plan to verify that the plan, including that project, would not result in emissions exceeding the current regional CO budget. The documentation of these air quality analyses and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's review letter of the results are available on the following pages.

The analysis described in this appendix has resulted in a Conformity Determination that the plan adopted in January 2009 with the addition of any one of the projects will meet all relevant regional emissions analysis and budget tests.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North | St. Paul, MN 55155-4194 | 651-296-6300 | 1-800-657-3864 | 651-282-5332 TTY | www.pca.state.mn.us

December 8, 2008

Ms. Arlene McCarthy
Metropolitan Transportation Services
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan Modification

Dear Ms. McCarthy:

I have completed my review of the above referenced document submitted by the Metropolitan Council (Council) in support of its 2008 modification of the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (Plan). The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality Conformity Consultation Committee, with representatives from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Council, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) met on November 25, 2008, to discuss the proposed changes to the draft 2008 Plan in response to potential economic stimulus legislation targeting transportation infrastructure. Only one of the eleven projects selected from the Plan may be constructed with a decision to be made on a later date depending on the size of the stimulus package and other considerations.

At this meeting, the committee directed the Council staff to analyze these eleven projects individually. As part of this plan modification, the Council prepared a quantitative analysis of carbon monoxide (CO) emissions resulting from the addition of each of the eleven projects. Each project was added to the baseline network and modeled for years 2015, 2020, and 2030. (No modeling was performed for 2009, since all of the modeled projects would be constructed after that date). The regional model highway assignment was run, and the results were combined with MOBILE 6.2 emissions rates to produce tons –per-day estimates of CO emissions for each scenario. I have examined the document for conformance with a check list of requirements from the joint Transportation Conformity Rule of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The analysis in the document shows that daily CO emissions in tons/day for the milestone years of 2015, 2020, and 2030 are below the regional CO motor vehicle emissions budget revised by the MPCA in 2005 even with the addition of any one of the projects listed in Table I of the document submitted by the Council. Based on this information, the MPCA has determined that the addition of any one of the projects listed in Table 1 of the conformity document meet all relevant regional emissions analysis and budget tests as described herein. Therefore, the 2008 Plan modification conforms to the relevant sections of the federal transportation

Conformity rule and to the applicable sections of the Minnesota State Implementation Plan for Air Quality.

I appreciate the opportunity given to review this document as part of the EPA Transportation Conformity rule consultation process, and for the great work done by the Council's staff by completing this analysis in a timely fashion. I also appreciate the cooperation of the interagency consultation group with their immediate assistance in resolving all policy and technical issues with respect to the Plan's Air Quality Conformity determination.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 651-757-2347 or via e-mail at innocent.eyoh@pca.state.mn.us.

*MPCA is in the middle of changing phone services and phone numbers, my new number is 651-757-2347. You may still reach me from my old number until December 15.

Sincerely,

Innocent E. Eyoh

Innocent E. Eyoh
Principal Transportation Planner

cc: Jonathan Ehrlich, Met Council
Patricia Bursaw, MNDOT
Brian Isaacson, MNDOT
Susan Moe, FHWA
Michael Leslie, EPA
J. David Thornton, MPCA
John Seltz, MPCA
Frank Kohlasch, MPCA

IE:rlr

Metropolitan Council

Memorandum

DATE: December 1, 2008

TO: Interagency Air Quality Conformity Work Group

FROM: Jonathan Ehrlich

SUBJECT: Air Quality Conformity Analysis for 2009 TPP Modification

The analysis described in this memorandum has resulted in a Conformity finding that the addition of any one of the projects listed in Table 1 meet all relevant regional emissions analysis and budget tests as described herein. The *Transportation Policy Plan* conforms to the relevant sections of the Federal Conformity Rule and to the applicable sections of the Minnesota State Implementation Plan for air quality.

On November 25, 2008, the Interagency Air Quality Conformity Work Group, with representatives from the Metropolitan Council, Mn/DOT, MPCA, FHWA, and EPA, met and discussed proposed changes to the draft *2009 Transportation Policy Plan* in response to potential federal economic stimulus legislation targeting transportation infrastructure. With a decision to be made at a later date based on the size of stimulus legislation and other considerations, exactly one of eleven projects listed in Table 1 may be constructed. The committee directed council staff to analyze these eleven projects individually.

TABLE 1: POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL PROJECTS	
1	I-35E: TH 110-TH 5
2	I-35W: 46th St to I-94
3	I-494: TH 55 to I-94
4	I-494: TH 77 to TH 100
5	I-694: I-35W to I-35E
6	I-694: I-35E to TH 36
7	TH 36: I-35W to I-35E
8	TH 100: 36th St. to Cedar Lake Rd
9	TH 252: 73rd Ave to TH 610
10	TH 610: CR 130 to I-94
11	TH 169: I-494 Interchange
12[1]	I-35E: TH 36 to I-94

Quantitative analysis of CO emissions resulting from the addition of each of the projects listed in Table 1 was prepared. Transportation and emissions forecasting procedures, consultation procedures, and other assumptions may be found in Appendix G of the Draft 2009 Transportation Policy Plan.

Each project was added to the baseline network and modeled for years 2015, 2020, and 2030. (No modeling was performed for 2009, as all of the modeled projects would be constructed after that date). The regional model highway assignment was run, and results were combined with Mobile 6.2 emissions rates to produce tons-per-day estimates of CO emissions for each scenario. While each scenario was

1. I-35E from TH 36 to I-94 project was added to Dec 1 memo in response to Mn/DOT comment on Dec 29, 2008

modeled separately and represents a single project, the modeling is based on county-wide average speeds and should not be seen as sufficient for project-level environmental analysis.

ESTIMATED FUTURE EMISSIONS IN THE TWIN CITIES CO MAINTENANCE AREA

The EPA, in response to a MPCA request, redesignated the Twin Cities seven-county Metropolitan Area and Wright County as a maintenance area for CO in October, 1999. A 1996 motor vehicle emissions budget (MVEB) was revised in January 2005 in a revision to the SIP. The SIP amendment revised the MVEB budget to a "not-to-exceed" threshold of 1,961 tons per day of CO emissions for the analysis milestone years of 2009, 2015, 2020, and 2030. The results of the emissions analysis are shown below.

TABLE 2: CO EMISSION BUDGET CONFORMITY TEST (Short Tons/day)

SCENARIO		2009	2015	2020	2030
TPP BASELINE	ACTION	1,408	1,210	1,161	1,199
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		751	800	762
I-35E: TH 110-TH 5	ACTION		1,211	1,163	1,201
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	798	760
I-35W: 46th St to I-94	ACTION		1,211	1,162	1,200
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	799	761
I-494: TH 55 to I-94	ACTION		1,211	1,163	1,201
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	798	760
I-494: TH 77 to TH 100	ACTION		1,211	1,163	1,200
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	798	761
I-694: I-35W to I-35E	ACTION		1,211	1,163	1,201
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	798	760
I-694: I-35E to TH 36	ACTION		1,211	1,164	1,201
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	797	760
TH 36: I-35W to I-35E	ACTION		1,211	1,163	1,200
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	798	761
TH 100: 36th St. to Cedar Lake Road	ACTION		1,211	1,162	1,200
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		750	799	761
TH 252: 73rd Ave to TH 610	ACTION		1,212	1,163	1,202
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		749	798	759
TH 610: CR 130 to I-94	ACTION		1,212	1,163	1,202
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		749	798	759
TH 169: I-494 Interchange	ACTION		1,210	1,161	1,199
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		751	800	762
I-35E: TH 36 to I-94	ACTION		1,210	1,161	1,199
	CO EMISSIONS BELOW MVEB		751	800	762