

T Transportation Committee
For the Metropolitan Council meeting of September 12,
2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date Prepared: August 28, 2012

Subject: Controlled Access Approval for St. Croix River Crossing Project
(S.P. 8214-114) in Washington County, Review #21015

Proposed Action:

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by MnDOT to reconstruct TH 36/95 in Minnesota and provide a new St. Croix River Crossing, conditional upon any significant changes in the design of the proposed project being subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council prior to construction.

Summary of Committee Discussion / Questions:

MTS Senior Planner Ann Braden presented this item. Councilmember Commers noted that while he realizes the decision has already been made he believes there should be further discussion to see how the project is aligned with the current Council's priorities and Chair Elkins said that he thought the St. Croix River Crossing would have been a good candidate for a toll bridge.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by Duininck and passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Elkins said that this item could proceed to the full Council as a consent item.

T Transportation Committee
Meeting date: August 27, 2012,
For the Council Meeting of September 12, 2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: August 20, 2012
Subject: Controlled Access Approval for St. Croix River Crossing Project (S.P. 8214-114) in Washington County. Review #21015
District(s), Member(s): District 12, Harry Melander
Policy/Legal Reference: Mn. Statute 473.166
Staff Prepared/Presented: Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS 651-602-1754
Amy Vennewitz, Deputy director, Finance and Planning, MTS, 651-602-1508
Connie Kozlak, Manager, Transportation Planning and Programming 651-602-1720
Ann Braden, Senior Transportation Planner, MTS, 651-602-1705
Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by MnDOT to reconstruct TH 36/95 in Minnesota and provide a new St. Croix River Crossing, conditional upon any significant changes in the design of the proposed project being subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council prior to construction.

Background

Minnesota state law (MS. 473.166) requires that the Council approve any controlled access highway in the metropolitan area before construction or right-of-way acquisition begins. This is to ensure that proposed highway projects are consistent with regional policies and plans.

The current project location and design is consistent with that of the 2006 Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS). As shown on the attached figure, this project will construct a four-lane bridge across the St. Croix River, south of the existing 81-year old Stillwater Lift Bridge. The project also includes at-grade signalized intersections for the MN TH 36 roadway approach with pulled back frontage roads, a new interchange between TH 36 and TH 95 in Minnesota, trails and walks throughout the area and new roadways in Wisconsin. The Lift Bridge will be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility.

Construction of the new bridge is expected to begin in 2013 and will take about three years to complete. The approach roadways will also be built during this period. The project is in the 2012-2015 TIP.

Rationale

The design of the project best meets the need to provide safe and efficient mobility while considering the environmental, economic, social and historic

resource concerns present within the project area. The project is consistent with the regional Transportation Policy Plan.

Funding

MnDOT is the lead agency on this project and is coordinating and sharing costs with WisDOT. The estimated project cost is between \$571 million to \$676 million. The cost of the Wisconsin and Minnesota approach roads will be paid for by the respective states.

Known Support / Opposition

After nearly two decades of challenges, extensive public participation, a special stakeholder facilitation process, amendments to the original environmental documents, and development of a \$16.5 million mitigation package, the bridge received Congressional approval that was signed by the President in March 2012.

