

NORMAN POINTE OFFICE DEVELOPMENT CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM 12/18/00 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Memorandum from Jim Gates to Planning Staff regarding the Ring Route

The parallel arterial concept in the 79th/80th Street corridor has been in existence since the late 1960's. This parallel arterial to the principal arterial of I-494 will serve short and medium length trips in a safe and capable manner. This enhances the principal arterial by keeping those short and medium length trips on the parallel arterial. Eliminating the short on and off trips to the principal arterial allows I-494 to handle traffic in a more efficient manner.

Background

A number of activities have occurred that will make the 79th/80th Street corridor even more important than it is today. These activities will dramatically change the travel demand and transportation supply adjacent to the corridor. These activities include:

- _ The Mall of America opened in August of 1992.
- _ The build alternatives for I-494 require utilization of the frontage road (78th Street) space between TH 77 and I-35W for upgrading the freeway.
- _ The build alternatives for I-494 call for the relocation of the half-diamond interchange at 12th Avenue to Portland Avenue and the removal of the interchange at Nicollet Avenue in order to improve the main line operation and minimize short trips on I-494. Traffic on portions of the 79th/80th Street corridor is projected to double or triple from current levels.
- _ During the reconstruction of I-494, the parallel arterial routes, such as the 79th/80th Street corridor, will be extremely important for businesses in the area and continue to serve the short and medium length trips for area residents and property access.

A Transportation Study was started in 1992 and completed in 1993. The City Council acted on the transportation study and ordered the Environmental Assessment of the corridor. The Environmental Assessment was completed in 1995. Since that time, a number of segments have been completed in the 79th/80th Street corridor both east and west of I-35W. One of the key elements for the 79th/80th Street corridor is the bridge over I-35W making the parallel arterial route complete across the northern segment of the City of Bloomington. This bridge over I-35W, connecting 79th Street on the east side of I-35W with 80th Street on the west side of I-35W, is proposed to commence construction in 2001 with use beginning in 2003.

Another element of the parallel arterial to I-494 is the bridge over Normandale Boulevard at 82nd Street. This bridge was open to traffic in 1986. Other segments that have been completed include the segment adjacent to the Target Store between Penn Avenue and Thomas Avenue, the

segment in front of Home Depot on the north side of the 79th/80th Street corridor, and the segment between Nicollet Avenue and Cedar Avenue. Another segment that has recently been completed is 80th Street between 24th Avenue and 34th Avenue. The segment across the Met Center site is programmed in the 2002-2003 timeframe. This segment will be in conjunction with the next phase of the Mall of America.

The I-494 improvement that will construct a third lane between Normandale/TH 100 and TH 212 will involve another segment of the Ring Route from the intersection of Norman Center Drive/Green Valley Drive to East Bush Lake Road. This frontage road relocation is the result of the enhancement of the East Bush Lake Road/I-494 interchange. This interchange will include full access to I-494, both eastbound and westbound, in conjunction with programmed 2003 improvement to I-494.

The City of Bloomington continues to make applications for federal assistance to construct various segments of the 79th/80th Street corridor in the upcoming years. In the past, the City of Bloomington has not assessed for the Ring Route improvement if federal assistance is obtained for the construction of the corridor. Various segments of the corridor have been requested by the adjacent commercial development. They have been willing to pay the assessment for the improvement to have that segment of the Ring Route corridor completed prior to the City obtaining federal assistance to construct the various segments.

The Ring Route corridor will be a very important roadway segment for the area businesses, as well as the area residents adjacent to I-494. One example of such a project, is the parallel arterial in Richfield that will connect to the Ring Route in the City of Bloomington to provide an alternative access from East Bush Lake Road to 34th Avenue on either side of the interstate.

APPENDIX B

Memorandum from Charles Honchell in response to Representative Lenczewski for information concerning 84th Street and Normandale Boulevard

The City, for 10 to 15 years, has had a long-range plan to do a grade separation project at the corner of 84th Street and Normandale Boulevard. Due to the lack of funds, this project has not moved forward to even the hearings stage, let alone the construction stage. This project was part of a tax increment district list of improvements from over ten years ago, and continues to be a part of that program. Unfortunately, when the tax increment district was closed down eight to nine years ago, money for this project had not been accumulated.

The Environmental Impact Statement for the Norman Pointe (Duke-Weeks) development lists this improvement as a needed one, and has alerted residents again to the plans for a grade separated intersection.

It needs to be made very clear that this is not a project at this stage. This is a concept and part of a long-range plan. There are no other City funds, other than some of the tax increment monies, for this \$8-10 million concept. Although some sketches and computer-aided images were produced, there are no construction plans, no plans and profiles, no specifications, and there is no detailed cost estimate.

Construction would only be able to occur after funds were found, Environmental Assessments and/or Environmental Impact Statements were processed, hearings were held on the project,

meetings were held with the neighborhood, and all of the normal things done that would occur prior to going to construction. There are no known State, Federal, County, or even City monies allocated to this project at this point, other than the previously stated tax increment funds.

The one thing that hasn't been changing, except becoming more severe, is the traffic problem and the congestion at that intersection. It is currently estimated that there are approximately 65,000 vehicles per day going through that intersection. With the normal increases that will occur in the future, this will become a more serious congestion problem. To some degree, traffic congestion will even increase the likelihood of people moving through the 84th Street neighborhoods. The reason for that is because, as people reach the intersection and see considerable congestion, they tend to then seek alternate routes to Normandale Boulevard or I-494.

In summary, the request of people to have detailed noise, design, specifications, costs, and a schedule are impossible to provide, because there are none, and it is unknown when they would even occur. Until funding can be secured from some source(s), it will not be possible to move forward. Whenever that does occur, there will be full and several opportunities for the citizens to become involved.

APPENDIX C

Memorandum from Jim Gates in response to resident Kenneth Woodard for information concerning improvements to East Bush Lake Road and I-494

A MnDOT 2003 project will include an eastbound I-494 off ramp to East Bush Lake Road, as well as an improved eastbound on ramp at East Bush Lake Road onto I-494. Also included in the project at this time is an East Bush Lake Road westbound I-494 on ramp as part of the improvement. MnDOT did state that this is proposed at this time. MnDOT representatives stated that the preliminary cost estimate shows a \$6 million shortfall in the budgeted project, therefore, some cuts may have to be found in conjunction with the improvement.

As a result of the eastbound off ramp and westbound on ramp being built to accommodate the I-494 rebuild, the existing segment of Green Valley Drive from the intersection of Green Valley Drive and Norman Center Drive will be impacted with the I-494 2003 project. This relocation impacts the Beaver Brook play lot. The Beaver Brook area is parkland and must be mitigated in conjunction with the improvement. The City of Bloomington and MnDOT are looking for locations to mitigate the play fields.

The relocated Green Valley Drive is to be reconstructed to a four-lane roadway (two lanes in each direction) with a median and protected left turns at the appropriate locations. The intersection of the relocated Green Valley Drive will be along East Bush Lake Road at approximately the midpoint location between West 84th Street and I-494.