



FACT SHEET – Madison Beltline Study November 2006



Purpose & Need

- The purpose of this study is to:
 - Identify existing and future safety and operational issues along the Beltline.
 - Develop short-term improvements to address areas of concern.
- Implementation of the recommended short-term improvements will help maximize the capacity and extend the service life of existing Beltline infrastructure.
- This is a Wisconsin Department of Transportation study that the Badger Transportation Group has been hired to conduct. The Badger Transportation Group is comprised of Earth Tech and HNTB Corporation, two local full-service engineering and planning firms that have joined forces to provide the needed expertise for this project. They have also enlisted the services of DAAR Engineering and other experts.

Location & Facility Description

- The corridor includes the Beltline from the U.S. Highway 14 (University Avenue) interchange in Middleton to the Interstate Highway 39/90 interchange, and extending east to the County Highway N interchange in the Town of Cottage Grove.
- The corridor includes 18 interchanges, as well as several at-grade intersections in the segment east of Interstate Highway 39/90.
- The U.S. Highway 14 (University Avenue) to U.S. Highway 151 (Verona Road) segment is a four-lane rural cross-section freeway that was constructed in the early 1960s. The U.S. Highway 151 to Interstate Highway 39/90 segment is a six-lane urban cross-section freeway that was constructed in the mid-1980s. The Interstate Highway 39/90 to County Highway N segment is a four-lane expressway that was constructed in the early 1990s.
- The Beltline serves Madison-area commuters and local commerce, but it also links Dane County to the state and national transportation system.
- A total of four federal highways (USH 12, USH 14, USH 18, USH 151) are routed on the Beltline. All four routes run concurrently on one segment -- Verona Road to Park Street. This segment is the busiest along the Beltline, and traffic volumes reach about 120,000 vehicles per day.
- Rapid traffic-volume growth and outmoded design features have resulted in operational and safety problems in recent years.

The Madison Beltline Study Corridor



Major Activities

- This one-year study is focusing on safety and operational issues, and will recommend and prioritize improvements to minimize crashes and improve traffic flow. Major capacity improvements are not part of the project.
- The study is making use of state-of-the art techniques that are data-driven and rooted in proven best practices. Study aspects include:
 - Engineering evaluations of existing infrastructure design and condition shortcomings
 - Travel-demand forecasts (future traffic-volume forecasts)
 - Analysis of Beltline operational shortcomings and crashes
 - Recommendation and design of short-term safety and operational improvements
 - Screening of potential environmental constraints related to improvements
 - Communication of the study's results and recommendations to the public, local governments, and other interested parties and agencies

Expected Outcomes, Resources

- Some of the types of improvements that could be recommended include: extending turn lanes, adding ramp lanes and extending ramp lengths, installing ramp meters, adjusting signal timing at ramp ends, adding lighting, upgrading intersections near the highway corridor, and trimming overgrown vegetation.
- No local funds will be used to conduct the study.
- The cost of any short-term improvements will be estimated for each improvement identified and developed as part of the study.
- Motorists may notice study teams observing Beltline operations and inspecting infrastructure in coming months. Such activity is related to this current study of potential short-term improvements and not to a more significant effort.
- This study will be driven by data that is being gathered and analyzed. Recommendations will be determined only after that analysis is completed in mid- to late 2007.
- The study will not consider major capacity improvements (e.g., added travel lanes) to the Beltline.
- The study will not examine the potential need for a beltline or parkway route north of Madison or a bypass to the south.

Timeline

- The initial data-gathering stage of the study is underway, and various aspects of it, as outlined above, will be conducted concurrently.
- The final report of the study is expected to be completed and publicly communicated in mid- to late 2007.

For More Information, Contact:

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