


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

 CITY OF DES MOINES OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	Number:	22-367	Meeting:	August 8, 2022
	Agenda Item:	10	Roll Call:	22-1226
	Submitted by:	Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) application to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) for the E University Avenue (IA 163), E 14th Street (US 69) to Easton Boulevard Four-Lane to Three-Lane Conversion.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval and authorization to submit an application to the IDOT for FY2024 TSIP funding for E University Avenue (IA 163) from E 14th Street (US 69) to Easton Boulevard Four-Lane to Three-Lane Conversion project. The IDOT has an annual program to provide funds for traffic safety improvements. The maximum request for funding per project is \$500,000. The deadline for this year's application is August 15, 2022.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated Total Project Costs:

Construction Costs	\$900,000
Engineering Design & Construction Administration <i>(Includes Professional Services Agreement Costs)</i>	\$175,000
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Estimated Total Project Costs	\$1,075,000

Funding Source:

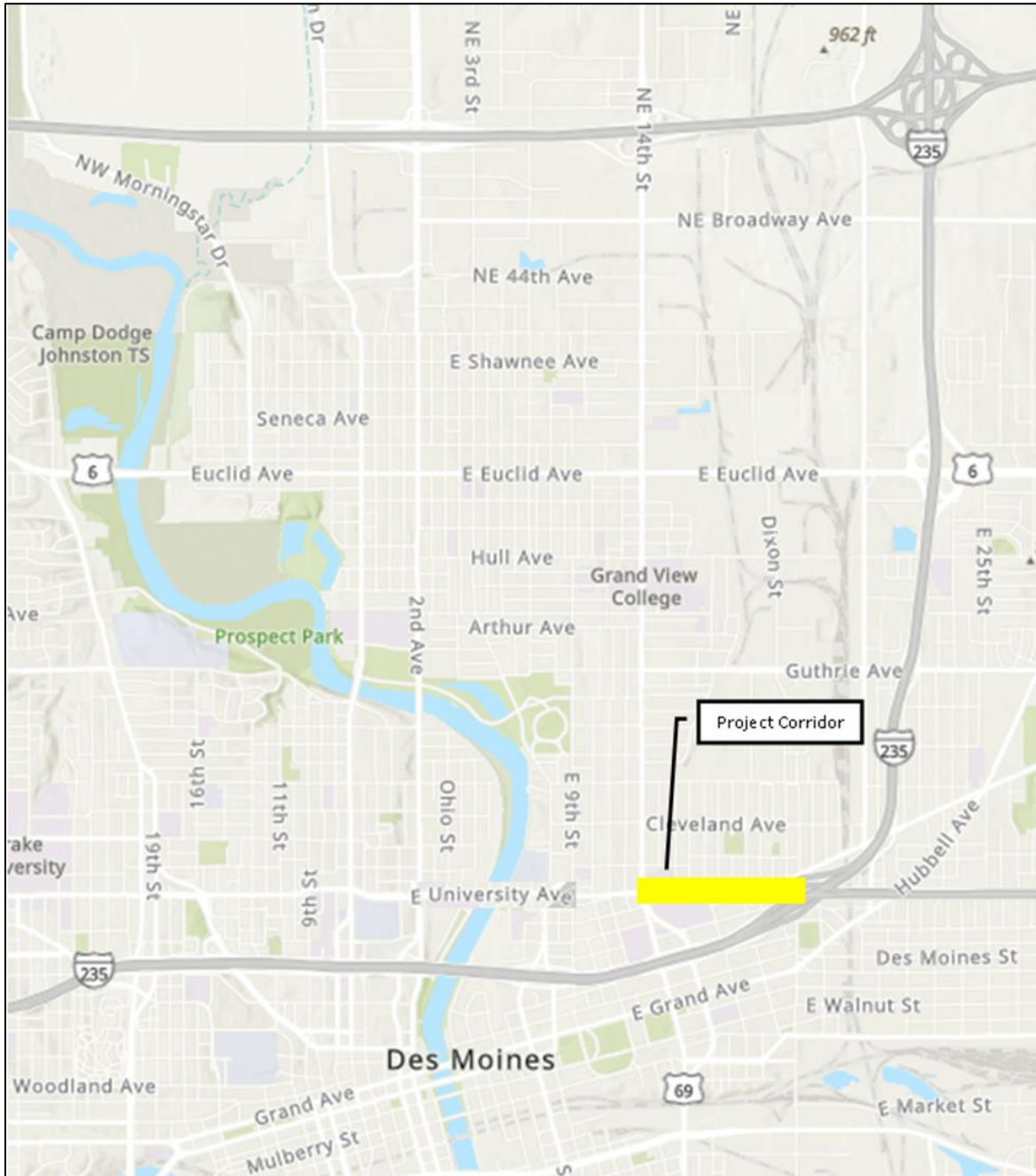
- \$500,000 – Traffic Safety Improvement Program Funding Request.
- \$575,000 (remaining amount pending funding awarded) – FY2023 GO Bond Issuance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The IDOT implemented an annual program beginning in 1988 to provide for statewide traffic safety improvements. These improvements may include roadway construction projects to correct high-crash locations, upgrading of obsolete traffic control devices to comply with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, or traffic studies to determine how to correct a safety problem. Since the program began, Des Moines has been successful in securing funding, including several major intersection improvements, traffic signal upgrades, and other safety projects. Applications are currently being accepted until August 15, 2022, for the next programming cycle.
- Funding requests may be up to \$500,000 per project. Available funding for the Traffic Safety Improvement program varies by year, but past funding ranges have been between \$5 and \$6 million. Historically, the State of Iowa has received applications for more funding than available.
- On April 28, 2022, an East High School student was killed while crossing E University Avenue in the 1600 block.
- City staff attended the Martin Luther King Jr. Park Neighborhood Association Meeting on May 17, 2022, to discuss the potential for traffic safety and pedestrian improvements in the area of E University Avenue and E 14th Street and around the schools.
- City staff met with representatives from Des Moines Public School District (including staff from Operations, East High School, and Hiatt Middle School) on June 6, 2022, to discuss school operations (open campus, start, dismissal), where pedestrians are walking, and potential for traffic safety and pedestrian improvements in the area of E University Avenue and E 14th Street and around the schools.
- City staff also met with staff with IDOT on June 22, 2022, to discuss potential traffic safety and pedestrian improvements in the area in the area of E University Avenue and E 14th Street and around the schools.
- On June 27, 2022, by Roll Call Number 22-1100, City Council approved an amendment to Chapter 114 of the Municipal Code to amend the definition of school district as it pertains to establishing school speed zones, which allowed City staff to extend the school speed limit zone from 200 feet east of the Hiatt School parcel (“schoolhouse” as defined in Code) to 200 feet east of the school property, which includes the stadium. In order to make this change in time for the 2022-2023 school year, the existing “Schol Speed Limit 25 mph When Flashing” assembly for westbound traffic and the “End of School Speed Limit” sign for eastbound traffic will be moved from just east of E. 15th Street to east of McCormick Street. A static “School Speed Limit 25 When Children Present” sign (with no flashing lights) will be erected where the existing flashing assembly is located due to the extensive length of the school speed limit zone. These will be updated to the current standard with speed feedback signs as part of the proposed project described below.
- City staff also recommend the following improvements on E University Avenue, targeting construction in 2024, pending IDOT approval:

- Resurface E University Avenue from east of E 14th Street to west of Easton Boulevard and reconfigure pavement markings to provide a three (3) lane roadway (converting the 4-lane roadway to a 3-lane roadway).
 - Remove existing pedestrian traffic signal in front of Hiatt Middle School (west of E 15th Street) and replace with a new High-Intensity Activated CrossWalk (HAWK) signal located at E 15th Street to align with the west sidewalk along E 15th Street. School District representatives at the June 6, 2022, meeting believe moving the pedestrian signal location to E 15th Street would better serve students and would be better coordinated with future school building improvements at Hiatt Middle School. The signal improvements would include adding a red beacon to the stop sign for southbound E 15th Street traffic so motorists on E 15th Street would not use the HAWK signal to enter onto E University Avenue.
 - Replace the “School Speed Limit 25 When Flashing” Assemblies and “School Speed Limit 25 When Children Present” sign with new “School Speed Limit 25 When Flashing” Assemblies with Speed Feedback Signs to meet the current standard (similar to the assembly on SW 9th Street near Lincoln High School).
 - Modify the medians in the west and south legs of the intersection of East University Avenue and East 14th Street so they are not impeding in the crosswalk and meet Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements.
 - Consider adding pedestrian refuge islands at other locations along E University Avenue such as E 16th Street and in the vicinity of E 17th Street.
 - Filling the sidewalk gap on E. University/IA163 in the vicinity of McCormick Street.
- Members of the Martin Luther King Jr. Park Neighborhood Association have requested a pedestrian signal on E 14th Street (US Highway 69) at Garfield Avenue and on E University Avenue in the vicinity of E 17th Street.
 - Members of the City Council have directed staff to have a High-Intensity Activated CrossWalk (HAWK) installed on E University Avenue at E 17th Street as soon as possible. With public improvement bidding requirements and lead times of seven (7) to eight (8) months for signal equipment and materials to be manufactured, City staff are targeting installation in the summer 2023, pending IDOT approval.
 - IDOT staff indicated resurfacing E University Avenue from east of E 14th Street to west of Easton Boulevard and reconfiguring pavement markings to provide a 3-lane roadway (converting the 4-lane roadway to a 3-lane roadway) could be eligible for Transportation Safety Improvement Program Funding. IDOT has also indicated an interest in participating in sharing the costs for modifying the medians at the intersection of E 14th Street and E University Avenue to provide accessible pedestrian crossings at the intersection.
 - Four (4) lanes to a 3-lane roadway conversion have been successful on roadways with daily traffic volumes of less than 20,000 vehicles per day. E University Avenue between E 14th Street and Easton Boulevard carries approximately 9,500 vehicles per day.
 - The primary benefits of this type of lane reduction are reduction in speeds, approximately 50% reduction in crashes, and improvement in walkability by reducing pedestrian crossing width and increasing the separation between the sidewalk and the vehicular travel lanes.

- Therefore, City staff recommend applying for Transportation Safety Improvement Program Funding for the 4-lane to 3-lane roadway conversion of E University Avenue from east of E 14th Street to west of Easton Boulevard. The estimated project cost for construction is \$1.075 million with TSIP Funds in the amount of \$500,000 being requested. If funding is approved by IDOT, funding would be available for construction starting in 2024.



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

- If approved by the IDOT for funding, project agreements would be presented to City Council for consideration.
- City staff anticipate actions related to construction, including ordering construction.

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