

February 9, 2010

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Post Office Box 3368
Mankato, Minnesota 56002-3368

Phone: (507) 387-8600
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Honorable Congressman Tim Walz
Minnesota First Congressional District
United States House of Representatives
1722 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Request for Federal Transportation Authorization Bill Appropriations

Dear Congressman Walz:

The following Federal Transportation Bill Authorization Project Request Forms are attached for your consideration for:

- Mankato Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan
- Madison Avenue Corridor Improvements

Madison Avenue Corridor Improvements

We are requesting \$ 4,931,000 for improvements along Madison Avenue between North 7th Street and CSAH 12 located in the City of Mankato, Blue Earth County, Minnesota, to position the city to serve the multi-modal transportation needs of a growing regional center in southern Minnesota. Improvements to include pavement and median rehabilitation, installation of energy efficient lighting, right turn/transit lanes, transit access points, multiuse trail, and multilane roundabout.

Mankato Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan

We are requesting \$ 1,359,200 for improvements of the at-grade railroad crossing on 3rd Avenue in the City of Mankato, Blue Earth County, Minnesota, to position the city to serve the multi-modal transportation needs of a growing regional center in southern Minnesota.

This request will include grade separation improvements to the at-grade railroad crossing at 3rd Avenue, including new bridge construction, installation of security fencing, sound abatement wall, landscaping, and multi-use trail.

We appreciate your efforts to secure appropriations for these projects and will respond to any added information you may need. If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Hentges, City Manager, at 507.387.8695, or phentges@city.mankato.mn.us.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Brady".

John Brady
Mayor



Minnesota Department of Transportation

District 7

501 South Victory Drive
Mankato, MN 56001-5302

Office Tel: 507-304-6100

Fax: 507-304-6119

February 26, 2010

Honorable Congressman Tim Walz
Minnesota First Congressional District
United States House of Representatives
1722 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for Mankato transportation projects

Dear Congressman Walz,

This letter is to express support for two city of Mankato projects; Madison Avenue Corridor Improvements and Mankato Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan.

Mn/DOT District 7 has been involved with the city of Mankato on both of these projects and is a partner in a multi-modal MATAPS (Mankato Area Transportation Planning Study), which includes support and coordination of these projects. MATAPS partners include the cities of Mankato and North Mankato, counties of Blue Earth, Nicollet and LeSueur, Region 9 Development Commission, Minnesota State University - Mankato and Mn/DOT.

Both projects include strong components of a multi-modal system and safety, and are important to the region in which Mankato serves as the hub. Mn/DOT District 7 has been working with Mankato on the intersection of Madison Avenue and Highway 22 and looking at the potential for a roundabout to improve both mobility and safety. With regard to the railroad mitigation plan, Mn/DOT strongly supports this separation of a rail crossing and the traffic on 3rd Avenue for significant safety benefits. The rail crossing improvement has been a major part of the Mankato Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan for several years. The plan was initiated when the DM&E Railroad made known its plan for expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Swanson".

James Swanson, P.E.
Transportation District Engineer

An Equal Opportunity Employer



Congressman Walz Appropriations Project Request Form Fiscal Year 2011

Please return entire application packet via e-mail to Congressman Walz's office no later than Friday, February 19, 2010. Email all information to Congressman Walz's Outreach Director at matthew.wohlman@mail.house.gov

Forms must be completed using Microsoft Word – no handwritten forms will be accepted.

In addition to this form, a signed request letter (on applicant's official letterhead) from the submitting government unit, company or organization must be included:

- For non-profit groups, the letter should be signed by the CEO or executive director.
- For municipalities, other local units of government and State agencies, the letter should be signed by the most senior elected official (i.e. Mayor, County Board Chair, Sheriff, County Attorney, and Governor).
- The letter and form should be scanned and e-mailed to matthew.wohlman@mail.house.gov. Due to delays in mail processing for Congressional offices, regular mail is regrettably not an option.
- The letter should discuss why the project would be a good use of taxpayer funds, what percentage of funding for the project would come from non-federal sources, how many jobs the project would create, the project's impact on southern Minnesota, the breadth of local support for the project and what the project's specific goals are and how the project's leaders measure progress toward those goals.
- **Project requests that are received after the February 19 deadline or that do not include a signed request letter will not be considered.**
- Any additional letters of support from local officials are also welcome.

In addition, if you are requesting federal funding for multiple projects, you must attach a letter, from the same submitting agent as the letter above, listing all of the project names and funding amounts you are requesting. The projects should be listed in priority order; with the first project being your top priority, and so on.

If you have supporting documentation, including project drawings, economic impact studies, governmental resolutions or other materials that show broad public or coalition support are welcome to be submitted with the application.

Congressman Walz believes that the federal appropriations process should be conducted with the maximum degree of transparency. **Applicants should be aware that our office will release to reporters and post on our website a public list of all requests submitted to the Appropriations Committee, the dollar amount of each request, and the name of the requesting organization.** In addition, our office reserves the right to contact you in the future

and request more information about your project should it receive federal funding, including tracking the project and its economic impact.

In addition, it is possible that public hearings will be held to give you an opportunity to testify on behalf of your project. If a public hearing is scheduled, you will be given notice at least seven business days before the hearing, to give you time to prepare.

Please note the following:

- The federal appropriations process is lengthy and is poorly suited for projects that require a specific amount of funding by a date certain. If you have such a project in Minnesota's First Congressional District, our office can help you find other funding options, such as federal grants. Please contact our office for assistance.
- Due to limitations enacted by the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Walz may not be able to request every project that is submitted. As a result, submitting this form does not guarantee that your project will be requested or that funding will be secured. In addition, Congressman Walz will review every application and look to secure funding for projects that have strong local support, create jobs in southern Minnesota and/or have a transformative impact on the region.
- Congressman Walz does not submit requests on behalf of for-profit companies.
- Congressman Walz does not consider requests that are not based in Minnesota's First Congressional District or that do not have a significant impact on the First District.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an appropriations request to both Minnesota Senators, as well.
- After submitting this form, Congressman Walz's staff will likely need to contact you with time-sensitive questions about your project. Please be ready to respond quickly to any questions that may arise.

PART 1 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

1. Please initial to acknowledge the following:

- **The appropriations process is lengthy and uncertain and is unsuitable for projects that require funding by a date certain.**
- **Submitting this project request does not guarantee that the request will be submitted to the Appropriations Committee or that it will receive funding.**
- **No requests on behalf of for-profit corporations will be submitted.**
- **Only projects based in Minnesota's First Congressional District or of clear benefit to Minnesota's First Congressional District will be submitted.**
- **None of the funds received through this appropriations request will be used to lobby federal officials.**

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PART 2 – GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Name of Project:

Mankato Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan Improvements

1b. Is the project located in Minnesota's 1st Congressional District?

Yes – City of Mankato, Blue Earth County

1c. Please indicate all other Members of Congress you are submitting this request to (NOTE: the more support for a project, the better). If you are not submitting this application to Minnesota's U.S. Senators, please explain why:

Senator Franken
Senator Klobuchar

2. Summarize your project in 3-4 sentences. If you secure federal funds for this project, how long will it take for the project to be completed?

Grade separation improvements to the at-grade railroad crossing located at 3rd Avenue, including new bridge construction, installation of security fencing, sound abatement wall, landscaping, and multi-use trail will take one to one and a half years to complete.

3. How much are you requesting in federal earmark funds in FY2011?

\$1,359,200

4. What is the total project cost? What is the exact percentage breakdown of funding for the project (i.e. what percentage of the total cost will come from the federal government, state government, local governments, private sector, etc.)? Has all non-federal funding already been allocated? If not, what is the likelihood that non-federal funds will not materialize?

(note: some funding agencies require non-federal project funding matches)

Total project cost is estimated at \$1,699,000 and the city of Mankato is willing to allocate 20% local share to complete this project. Funding has not been allocated as of yet, but if appropriations are awarded to this project, funding will be allocated through a mix of GO Bonding and MSAS funds.

5. a) If you receive this funding, will the project be completed or self-sufficient? If not, why not?

b) When do you anticipate that this project will be completed or self-sufficient?

c) For how many additional years do you anticipate asking for funding?

- a) Yes
- b) EOY 2011
- c) None

6. Have you received federal funding for this project in the past? Please list the fiscal year and funding level.

a) was the funding received through a grant?

b) if the funding was received through an appropriations bill, please list which bill provided

funding and at what level.

c) list the source of all non-earmark federal money the project has received (i.e. from the ARRA, formula funds, etc.).

No

7a. Which Appropriations bill should your project be funded within?

- Agriculture
- Commerce, Justice, Science
- Defense
- Energy and Water
- Financial Services
- Homeland Security
- Interior and the Environment
- Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
- Legislative Branch
- Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs
- State and Foreign Operations
- Transportation and Housing and Urban Development

Transportation and Housing and Urban Development

**7b. Which department, agency and account should your project be funded within?
(For example: USDA's CSREES account; HUD's EDI account; FHWA's TCSP account.)**

FHWA TCSP program

8. Please confirm that your project is eligible to receive funds by contacting the relevant federal agency. Please list the name, title, agency and contact information of the person with whom you confirmed your project's eligibility below.

Lisa Bigham
Mn/DOT District 7 Planning Director
501 S Victory Drive, POB 4039
Mankato, MN 56002-4039
Phone: 507.304.6195
Fax: 507.304.6119

9. What specifically would this funding be used for? Please be specific: construction, environmental impact statement, staff salaries, etc.

Engineering and Construction

10. Has this project been authorized in federal law? If so, please provide authorization bill.

The project has not been authorized by federal law. It has been identified as a viable alternative of the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the Surface Transportation Board for the DM&E Railroad.

11. (Transportation requests only) Is this project in the STIP? Is it supported by MnDOT? Please attach a letter of support from MnDOT for the project.

This project is not in the STIP. Mn/DOT supports this project (letter attached).

12. (Transportation requests only) Matching funds of at least 20% of the total project cost are required for transportation projects. Matching funds cannot be federal funds. Please provide the source and amount of matching funds.

Yes – 20% local funding.

13. (Army Corps of Engineers requests only) Is funding requested for a study or construction? Please provide the Congressional Authorization for this project (Public Law# and Section).

Not applicable.

PART 3 – PROJECT INFORMATION:

1. What is the justification for the project? Why is it a good use of taxpayer funds? (ie: Why is the project needed? What problem will it solve? What gap will it fill?)

It will provide a safer railroad crossing and intersection, noise mitigation, and accommodations for rail, vehicle, and pedestrian traffic on a shared corridor through two residential areas and Mankato's downtown commercial center. It is part of a long-range safety plan which includes up to 15 improvement projects on the rail-line corridor. Each can be accomplished independently as funding is available.

2. How many jobs will this project create in southern Minnesota?

19+

3. How will the project transform southern Minnesota? (ie: Will it bring cutting edge technology to the state? Lead to new businesses or commercialization opportunities? Help Minnesota compete for government and industry contracts? BE SPECIFIC.)

Between 1999 and 2008, transportation studies took place to identify and propose the types of treatments to be applied to each of the 15 improvement locations. Additionally, the environmental assessment for the complete mitigation plan was completed by the DM&E Railroad with support of the Federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) in 2008. As proposed in our mitigation plan, phased construction would begin in 2010 with proposed completion at all 15 locations in 2020. To date, the City has secured funding to move ahead in 2011 with a safe whistle-free crossing at Pine Street and 5th Avenue, along with a programmed closure to take place at 1st Avenue concurrently. Once all of the identified projects are completed, overall safety and mobility will be improved by reducing traffic conflicts along the rail corridor, danger will be eliminated by improving blind sight distance lines and removing awkward turning movements, upgrades to common-use sections of rail line will increase transportation efficiency and provide a whistle-free corridor, security will be provided with the installation of fencing around the rail line, timing delays will be reduced at the switchyard with crossing improvements at the north end of the city, opportunities for economic development will be enhanced, and freight costs can be kept competitive with other areas, while improving service and timing.

There are existing conflicts between rail and traffic operations due to the location of the rail switching yard, and it is anticipated that train counts on the rail corridor and traffic counts will continue to increase along the 3rd Avenue corridor, a primary feeder to heavy industrial properties located north of the proposed project. We are therefore proposing to construct a bridge overpass on 3rd Avenue across the two mainline tracks, with bridge approaches on Pine Street and Brooks Street, one block to either side of the existing at-grade rail crossing. Vertical clearance between the proposed bridge and the mainline rails requires fill to be brought within the narrow right-of-way to minimize impact on the abutting properties. Sound abatement walls and security fencing will mitigate noise created by rail operations from encroaching into residential and commercial properties and provide security and peace of mind for the railroad to complete its operations safely without operational conflicts. Additionally, we propose to construct a multi-use trail along the south side of the rail corridor from 3rd Avenue to the north, which will be separated from the tracks by the security fence and a landscaped buffer.

The completion of this project will have long-term outcomes by providing solutions to long identified problems in our regional transportation system by us and our supporting partners in the region. The Mankato Area Transportation and Planning Study documents articulate and support the Railroad Corridor Mitigation Plan and these solutions and the long term outcomes have been studied, which further support our and our partners' cause. Should this appropriation request be granted, it will have both short-term and long-term outcomes, with the long-term outcomes facilitating safe rail operations for the railroad owners/operators while providing a safe 3rd Avenue corridor for the industrial properties located to the north and the traveling public.

4. What are the primary project objectives? List your top 3-4 project objectives and describe your plans to achieve these objectives. In addition, please explain how you will measure progress toward these objectives and hold your organization accountable for meeting them.

Safety: Each intersection installation will provide a safer crossing situation than is presently available.

Whistle-Free: The grade separation and multi-gated crossings provide the opportunity for a whistle-free train circulation at each intersection throughout the city. The objective to accomplish these in a priority order will continue to generate construction jobs over the multi-year duration of the project.

Fencing and Landscaping: These provide security and attractive residential and commercial atmosphere for the citizens and the two Class 1 railroads.

5. What other partners (universities, businesses, groups) are involved in this project?

Blue Earth County and Mn/DOT.

The City has had good support from neighborhood groups to accomplish a whistle-free corridor and business support for improved shipping conditions from local grain processors. The obvious support would be the Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad, with which we have previously had a community partnership agreement, but have no current documents in place.

Note: Please attach any additional information you think would be useful in describing your project.

PART 4 – CONTACT INFORMATION:

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|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Requesting Organization (if this is different than the organization that should actually receive federal funds to execute the project, please also specify which organization should be the recipient of federal funds): | | City of Mankato | | | |
| Address: | 10 Civic Center Plaza, POB 3368 | | | | |
| City: | Mankato | State: | MN | Zip | 56002-3368 |
| | | | | | |
| Point of contact at organization for Rep. Walz's staff to contact with questions | Jeffrey Johnson | | | Title: | City Engineer |
| Phone: | 507.387.8640 | Fax: | 507.387.8642 | Cell: | 507.995.6389 |
| Email: | jjohnson@city.mankato.mn.us | | | | |

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|--|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
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| Contact information for head of organization for Rep. Walz to contact | Patrick Hentges | | | Title: | City Manager |
| Phone: | 507.387.8695 | Fax: | 507.387.8481 | Cell: | 507.995.9990 |
| Email: | phentges@city.mankato.mn.us | | | | |
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| Agency Sponsor: (Include the name and contact information of any federal agency representative who supports your project request) | | | |
| Agency: | | | |
| Contact Person: | | Title: | |
| Phone: | | Email | |

PART 5 – FOR DEFENSE REQUESTS ONLY:

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| If you are requesting funds from the Department of Defense, please provide the following information, in addition to the above. | |
| Budget Account and Service/Agency: (ie: R&D, Army; O&M, Air Force; R&D, Air Force) | |
| Program Element:* (for R&D projects only) | |
| Line Number:* (for procurement and R&D accounts) | |
| Line Item Title* | |
| Does this project fulfill a validated military requirement? If so, please cite the relevant DOD documents. | |

** These can be found in FY2008 P-1 and R-1 documents on the DOD comptroller website: www.dod.mil/comptroller*