



Background

- Minnesota was awarded \$133.3 million through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Partnership Agreement to improve traffic flow to and from downtown Minneapolis. The local match of \$50.2 million was secured in the 2008 legislative session.
- When the series of projects that make up the initiative are completed in 2010, commuters will experience more transportation choices and less traffic congestion on some of the busiest roadways in Minnesota. The initiative will accomplish this through a combination of technology, transit, road pricing and telecommuting.
- The UPA agreement with the U.S. DOT requires that the highway projects be operational by Sept. 30, 2009, and most of the transit projects be completed by Dec. 31, 2009. The exceptions are the High Occupancy Toll lane within the Highway 62/Crosstown project area, Cedar Grove Park & Ride, and the Lane Guidance System will be completed by Oct. 31, 2010.
- Minnesota's UPA partnership includes Mn/DOT, the Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit, Minnesota Valley Transit Authority, University of Minnesota; Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin and Ramsey counties; the city of Minneapolis, and Transportation Management Organizations.
- This innovative partnership allows Minnesota to leverage federal dollars and keep project costs low while pioneering new ways to move traffic. Building the UPA ultimately will increase safety, move goods more efficiently and improve the quality of life for motorists.

Project components

Transit

- Expansion of the single-bus lanes to two-bus lanes on both Marquette Avenue and 2nd Avenue in downtown Minneapolis will nearly triple the capacity for the number of buses while reducing bus travel time by up to 10 minutes through the 16-block downtown area.
- Construction of nearly 2,900 new parking spaces at six new or expanded park and ride facilities along the Highway 77/Cedar Avenue and I-35W corridors north and south of downtown Minneapolis.
- Purchase of 27 new buses for new or expanded express service from the Highway 77/Cedar Avenue and I-35W corridors to downtown Minneapolis.
- Construction of a transit-only left turn lane at Highway 62/Crosstown and Highway 77/Cedar Avenue, which was completed in November 2008, will result in more predictable and quicker rides.

Road Pricing

- Existing high occupancy vehicle lanes on I-35W from Burnsville Parkway to I-494 will be converted to MnPASS Express lanes.
- Upon completion of the Crosstown project, a new I-35W MnPASS Express lane from I-494 to 46th Street will be opened.
- From 46th Street to downtown Minneapolis on northbound 35W, UPA will replace current bus-only shoulders with priced dynamic shoulder lanes.
 - Buses to travel at free-flow freeway speeds instead of the current 35 mph limit on bus-only shoulders.
 - The priced dynamic shoulder lanes will be used during peak periods and will operate as shared rapid transit lanes for buses and carpoolers and MnPASS express lanes for single occupancy vehicles.

Technology

- Lane guidance technology using global positioning satellites and other techniques will be installed on ten buses to keep transit vehicles centered in narrow shoulder lanes, ensuring safe and fast operations on highway shoulders.
- Real-time electronic commuter information signage will be installed at select locations along the I-35W corridor to alert motorists about the estimated time of the trip by auto and bus, and how many parking spots are still available at the nearest park and ride.
- Real-time bus arrival and departure signage will be installed on Marquette and 2nd Avenues and at select transit facilities along the Cedar Avenue/Highway 77 and I-35W corridors to alert transit customers about arriving and departing buses.
- Transit signal priority on Central Avenue from 2nd Street to 53rd Avenue will provide an advantage for transit and help maintain transit schedules
- Cameras and instrumentation on local roadways connecting to the I-35W and Cedar Avenue/Highway 77 corridors will provide traveler information for motorists and improve traffic flow.

Telecommuting

- Partnerships with major employers along the I-35W corridor and in downtown Minneapolis will be established to promote flex-time and telecommuting programs with a goal to increase the number of telecommuting workers by 500 individuals by 2011.