

Metro District's Interchange Planning Review

Contact

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Resources

- [Metro Interchange Proposals \(List of Proposals Completed or Currently Under Review\)](#)
- [MnDOT - Metro Area Planning](#)
- [Metropolitan Council](#)
 - Met Council's [Transportation Policy Plan](#)
 - [Appendix F](#) (of Met Council's Transportation Policy Plan)

Background

Metro's Interchange Planning Review (IPR) is a planning stage process. It uses the qualifying criteria in *Appendix F* of the Metropolitan Council's [Transportation Policy Plan](#) to evaluate requests for new interchanges or interchange modifications on any interstate or trunk highway in the Metro District. (See [Appendix F: Highway Interchange Request Criteria and Review Procedure](#)).

Any Metro-area proposed new interchange or interchange modification should:

- Support the Metropolitan Council's Regional Development Framework and Transportation Plan;
- Support local comprehensive plans;
- Access only Principal Arterials or "A" minor arterials;
- Maintain the operational integrity of the mainline;
- Demonstrate objective need (i.e., go beyond subjective arguments);
- Typically provide minimum interchange spacing as follows:
 - On or inside the I-494/I-694 beltway: One-mile spacing;
 - Outside the I-494/I-694 beltway: Two-mile spacing.

Proposed interchanges/modifications must NOT be for the convenience of short trips to compensate for lack of minor arterials, collector systems, and/or local roads.

The IPR process is NOT designed for the following:

The IPR does not address the technical criteria of Appendix F. It is a planning-level process, and design issues are addressed later in project development.

The IPR is not a substitute for project development, layout review, environmental documentation or any other existing process.

On Interstate Highways, the IPR does not replace the Interstate Access Request (IAR) process. As a planning process, the IPR precedes the IAR. During the IPR the FHWA determines if an IAR is needed (assuming the Committee's findings warrant more development of the proposal). See [Interstate Access Requests](#) in the HPDP for more direction.

Nor does the IPR replace the Metropolitan Council's Controlled Access request, but rather precedes it. For coordination with the Metropolitan Council Controlled Access request, see *Memo Re: Approval of Controlled Access Freeways* in the appendix of [Metropolitan Council](#) in the External Coordination section of the HPDP.

Proposal Categories

This section identifies the three categories of interchange actions (Types I, II, and III).

Type I Proposals

Type I proposals include:

- New access at an existing interchange location such as:
 - **I-35W at 4th St**
Partial access exists; proposal adds an entrance to northbound I-35W and an auxiliary lane.
 - **TH 610 at Coon Rapids Blvd**
Partial access exists; proposal completes access but is within ½ mile of a systems interchange.
- New interchange location on an existing freeway such as:
 - **TH 212 at CSAH 140**
Overpass exists; proposal for ½ diamond.

- **I-494 at Argenta Trail**
Overpass exists; proposal for full access (alternatives include access to the east of the existing overpass).
- New interchange on an arterial or developing freeway such as:
 - **US 10 at CSAH 83**
Existing intersection; proposal is for full interchange, but four (4) full access intersections remain – along with many property access points – between the proposed interchange and existing US 10 as a freeway.
 - **US 169 at CSAH 69**
Existing intersection; proposal is for full interchange, spacing is one mile to an existing interchange and to proposed TH 41 interchange.

Type II Proposals

Type II proposals include major geometric revisions at an existing interchange to improve safety or capacity. They do not add access but may:

- Alter the lane count within the interchange (through lanes, turn lanes and/or number of lanes on a ramp), or
- Alter the interchange type (diamond to DDI, diamond to parclo, cloverleaf to 4-level stack)

Examples include:

- **TH 52 at I-94**
Driven by the river bridge replacement, the north to west access is being rerouted and access from eastbound 7th St to westbound I-94 is being closed.
- **I-35E at Maryland Av**
Driven by bridge replacement, interchange remains a diamond type but an extra west-to-south turn lane is added.
- **I-35W at CR E2**
Driven by bridge replacement, only added capacity proposed at this time is a west to north right turn lane; does not meet one-mile spacing guideline to I-694.
- **I-35W at CR C**
Existing ramp terminal proposed to be reconstructed with through and turn lanes added.

- **I-694 at White Bear Ave**
Existing diamond proposed to be replaced with a single-point interchange.
- **I-35W at CSAH 96**
Existing diamond interchange proposed to be reconstructed with added through and turn lanes.
- **I-35W at I-694**
A proposal to eliminate northbound weaving by reworking ramps and bridge-braiding these movements.

Type III Proposals

Type III proposals include smaller geometric improvements where access or lanes are not added and impact to infrastructure is small.

Examples:

- **I-94 at TH 101**
A proposal to lengthen north to west left turn lane with small impact to existing infrastructure.
- **I-694 at 10th St**
Parallel acceleration space was added to the loop entering northbound I-694 for better speed matching of entering and through traffic for the purpose of more efficient merging and enhanced safety.
- **I-694 at I-94**
A proposal to revise the geometry of southbound I-694 to eastbound I-94 loop to reduce truck rollovers occurring there.

Submittal / Review Process

Type I proposals are the most involved, while Type II or III proposals typically receive a less complex review. However, some situations may lead to Type I projects being relatively simple – or Type II or Type III projects being more complex.

Type I Process

1. Initial Consultation

(This first step is the same for all proposal Types)

Proposer (Local agency and/or MnDOT representative):

- Meet with the MnDOT Metro District Interchange Coordinator.
To request a meeting, contact the Interchange Coordinator listed under **Contact** at the beginning of this document.

Metro District Interchange Coordinator:

- Determine the proposal's Type (see Proposal Categories above). This helps determine the scope of analysis and the issues that the applicant must address.

2. Initial Request Memo

Proposer:

- Submit a written request addressing the six qualifying criteria from Appendix F.
- If the Initial Consultation determined a Type I action:
 - Develop a proposal that responds to each of the six qualifying criteria, including a concept drawing and an analysis of issues to address policy concerns.

3. Committee Review

Interchange Review Committee:

- Review Initial Request Memo.
- Determine the proposal's consistency with Appendix F qualifying criteria, Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan, Metro District's Highway Investment Plan and local comprehensive and transportation plans.
- Provide input to Coordinator.

(Steps 2 & 3 may be repeated depending on complexity and ability to reach consensus).

4. Write Letter / Inform Proposer

Metro District Interchange Coordinator:

- Based on the Committee's input, write an Interchange Finding Letter to document findings as to appropriate location and the satisfying of all qualifying criteria.
- Provide the proposer with an Interchange Finding Letter and advise the proposer on the next steps in project development and the possible permits that may be needed.

5. Next steps

Proposer:

Depending on the stage of project development and type of project, the Proposer may need to pursue a Controlled Access permit from the Metropolitan Council and/or an Interstate Access Request from FHWA if the project modifies interstate access. The technical and design criteria are typically addressed further on in the project development process.

Type II / III Process

Step 1 is the same as for Type I proposals.

1. Initial Consultation

Proposer (Local agency and/or MnDOT representative):

- Meet with the MnDOT Metro District Interchange Coordinator.
To request a meeting, contact the Interchange Coordinator listed under **Contact** at the beginning of this document.

Metro District Interchange Coordinator:

- Determine proposal's Type (Category).

If the Coordinator decides to follow the Type II/III process, other Committee Members may later alter that decision (See Step 3 below).

2. Draft Interchange Finding Letter

Metro District Interchange Coordinator:

- Write a draft Interchange Finding Letter.
- Send the Interchange Finding Letter and the proposal to other Committee members for their review.

The Interchange Finding Letter describes the proposal's consistency with Appendix F qualifying criteria, Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan, Metro District's Highway Investment Plan and local comprehensive and transportation plans.

3. Committee Review

Interchange Review Committee members:

- Review proposal and Interchange Finding Letter.
- If appropriate: Request a full review process (as for Type I proposals).

Within the two week review period any committee member may call for a full Type I Process review (see above).

4. Finalize Letter / Inform Proposer

MnDOT Metro District Interchange Coordinator:

If no committee member requests an Initial Consultation or raises an objection within two weeks:

- Finalize the Interchange Finding Letter and send to the Proposer.

Membership: Interchange Review Committee

- MnDOT Representatives, five reps, including:
 - MnDOT Metro District Interchange Coordinator
 - Statewide Planning Director
- Metropolitan Council Representatives, two reps
- FHWA Representatives, two reps