

Attachment A

Proposal for a South Avenue Corridor Multimodal Assessment Study

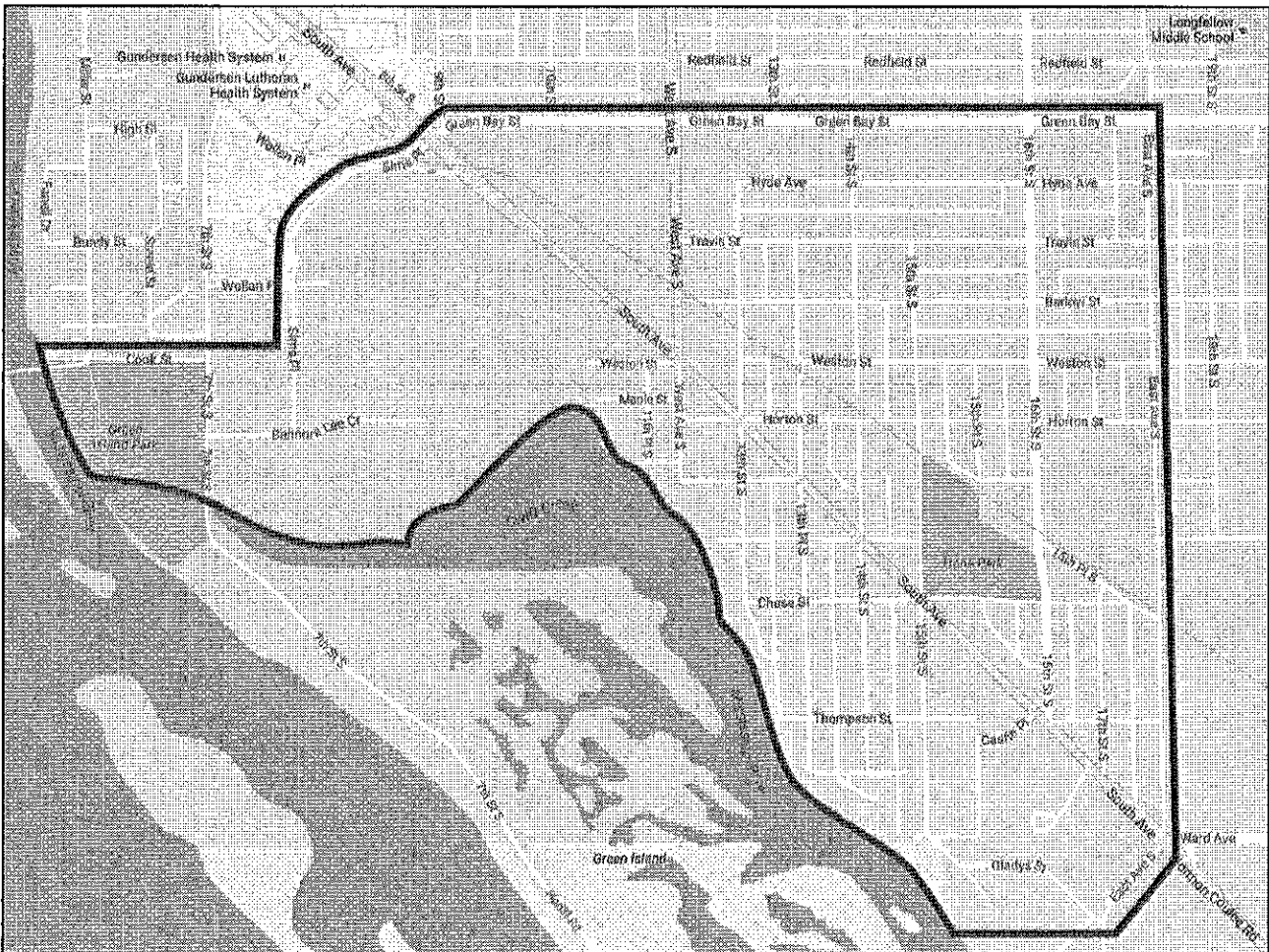
Introduction

Toole Design Group (TDG) proposes to evaluate the South Avenue Corridor for multimodal access, connectivity, and accommodations. The project will evaluate the design concepts developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) for reconstruction of South Avenue, as well as alternative routes for bicyclists and pedestrians in the broader study area.

Project Area

For the purposes of this project, the South Avenue Corridor means South Avenue between Green Bay Street and Ward Avenue, the area south of this portion of South Avenue to Swift Creek and the Mississippi River, and the area north of South Avenue roughly bounded by Green Bay Street and East Avenue. The approximate Study Area is displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Approximate Study Area for the South Avenue Multimodal Connections Study.



Project Understanding

South Avenue is an urban arterial on the south side of La Crosse. South Avenue is also designated as US Highways 14 and 61, and Wisconsin Highway 35. Within the study area, South Avenue is a four lane street with two travel lanes in each direction. The street has a highly constrained right of way, with narrow terrace areas, sidewalks, and buildings immediately adjacent to the street. South of the project area, South Avenue adds a continuous center turn lane, and has a wider right of way. Portions of South Avenue within the study area have motor vehicle crash rates well above state averages. In order to address these safety issues, WisDOT has proposed reconstructing the street with a series of roundabouts at larger intersections, a narrow center median, and slightly narrowed travel lanes. While these changes will likely result in fewer and less severe motor vehicle crashes, they will not provide bicycle accommodations and may hinder pedestrian access across South Avenue, result in higher motor vehicle speeds, and limit access to local businesses and residences.

This study will seek to mitigate some of these negative impacts by examining ways to improve pedestrian connectivity and access along and across South Avenue, provide access to side streets, businesses, and residences, and provide for bicycle connectivity in the corridor. The project will also highlight opportunities for land use changes and redevelopment of specific areas within the corridor. It should be recognized from the outset of the project that specific design treatments proposed by WisDOT will negatively impact many of the ideals put forward in the City of La Crosse Transportation Vision. In particular, multilane roundabouts can be challenging for both pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate safely and comfortably, and a narrow center median will increase vehicle speeds while also eliminating access to local streets and destinations. However, both of these treatments will also likely result in fewer and less severe motor vehicle crashes.

This study will not propose wholesale design concepts for South Avenue, but will provide recommendations for changes to WisDOT's proposed design as well as recommendations within the broader study area for improving connectivity and access for all users.

Project Staff

Toole Design Group's Madison staff will lead this work effort, with potential assistance from TDG staff based in Minneapolis. The core project team will consist of:

- **Kevin Luecke**, Madison Office Director, will serve as the Project Manager, and will lead the primary work tasks. Kevin is serving as TDG's Project Manager for the Highway 53 Corridor Study currently underway on the north side of La Crosse; this project and the Highway 53 project share many similarities.
- **Tom Huber**, a Senior Planner, will be involved with most project tasks. Tom served as WisDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for nearly 20 years, and is well versed in addressing bicycle and pedestrian access issues along state highways in urban settings.
- **Jennifer Hefferan, RLA**, is a landscape architect and urban designer. Jenny is proficient at mapping and visual communications, and is highly knowledgeable in issues of pedestrian safety and complete streets.

Due to the length and complexity of the corridor, the project team will be augmented by additional Toole Design Group employees. The firm has 100 employees in 10 offices across the country. From this large pool of talent, specific staff will be utilized for their expertise and past experience with project similar to this one.

Scope of Services

Task 1: Project Management & Coordination

This task provides for general project administration, oversight, and ongoing meetings and updates with City staff.

Project Startup and Kickoff Meeting

The TDG Team will begin the project by preparing the following items:

- A draft work plan memo based on this scope of work that provides additional detail and clarity for key tasks;
- A project schedule that depicts the order of each task in this scope of work and preliminary dates or time periods for stakeholder and public engagement activities; and
- An initial data request memo requesting existing GIS and other data that will be used throughout the project.

The TDG Team will host a kick-off meeting with City staff to review these items and seek feedback. This meeting will serve a variety of purposes:

- The meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to identify opportunities and challenges and confirm the ultimate objectives that must be accomplished through the Plan;
- The meeting will allow the TDG and City staff to confirm how communications and data transfer will occur; and
- TDG will discuss with the City if a project Steering Committee is needed; if a Steering Committee is desired, TDG will provide guidance on the types of people that are desirable to serve on the Steering Committee, but will rely on the City to select and invite individuals to participate. The budget attached to this proposal does not include time for Steering Committee meetings and coordination.

Based on the feedback of City staff, TDG will revise the draft project work plan memo and project schedule and provide final versions to the City.

Coordination with City Staff and WisDOT Project Team

The TDG Team will regularly communicate with City staff and the WisDOT Project Team regarding the proposed design of South Avenue. It will be critical that this study does not get ahead of the South Avenue design project from a public involvement standpoint. This study should not be revealing design decisions that have been made as part of the South Avenue design project to the general public, and this study should not be expected to address major concerns with the proposed design of South Avenue.

Monthly Progress Reports

A monthly Progress Report Memo will be provided with monthly invoices for the project. The Progress Report Memos will include a brief summary of work completed during the invoice period as well as work that is anticipated to be completed during the next period. Memos and invoices will be submitted via email each month.

Ongoing Coordination / Monthly Coordination Conference Calls

This subtask provides time for general project administration including coordination with the City Project Manager. In addition, members of the TDG Team will meet regularly via conference call with City staff to provide updates on the project's status and completion of tasks, discuss any outstanding project needs, and solicit feedback on the project.

Task 1 Deliverables

- Draft and Refined Work Plan memo
- Refined Project Schedule
- Data Request memo

- Project Team Kickoff Meeting, including agenda and notes
- Ongoing coordination with City staff and the WisDOT Project Team regarding the South Avenue design.
- Monthly progress reports and invoices
- Monthly coordination conference calls

Task 2: Multimodal Connectivity Analysis and Alternatives

This task provides for analysis of the proposed design for South Avenue on multimodal connections and access in the corridor. While the study will focus on bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, it will also examine issues related to limited side street and driveway access for all users, and potential new linkages in the corridor.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Analysis and Alternatives

Bicycle and pedestrian access along and across South Avenue is currently challenging: the street does not provide any bicycle accommodations, and pedestrian facilities are subpar. WisDOT's proposed design for South Avenue addresses some of these concerns. In particular, the design provides for standard width sidewalks behind a narrow terrace; this will improve pedestrian comfort as well as the overall aesthetics of the corridor. The design also provides median refuge islands for pedestrians at a number of crossings of South Avenue; this will make crossing South Avenue easier and safer at these locations. However, the design does not provide bicycle facilities on or along South Avenue itself, and introduces a number of multilane roundabouts which can be challenging for both pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate. This study will focus on the issues below related to bicycling and walking in the Study Area.

South Avenue Crossings

South Avenue currently serves as a significant barrier separating neighborhoods and businesses south of the street from the rest of La Crosse. This study will evaluate the crossings of South Avenue proposed in the WisDOT design, and offer recommendations for improving crossing comfort and access. This may include recommendations for additional crossings of South Avenue, high visibility crossings, additional median refuge islands, and the use of Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs) or Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHBs, commonly known as HAWK signals).

Parallel Routes

WisDOT's proposed design for South Avenue does not include bicycle accommodations, and will be very uncomfortable for the vast majority of bicyclists to use. Because South Avenue runs at an angle across the standard street grid, it is challenging to find a parallel route for bicyclists. This study will examine parallel routing options for bicyclists in the Study Area. This will include review of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, other relevant plans, and an assessment of street conditions for bicycling in the Study Area. The primary goal of this assessment will be to identify bicycle routes and/or facilities in the Study Area that provide a reasonable alternative to South Avenue and provide connectivity across South Avenue.

Side Street Access Analysis and Alternatives

A key recommendation of WisDOT's plans for South Avenue is the installation of a continuous median approximately two feet wide between roundabouts that will be constructed at key intersections; this median will eliminate left turns off of and onto South Avenue to residential and commercial driveways, and more importantly, to numerous local streets. This study will examine how the median and the installation of roundabouts at select locations will impact access to destinations on or nearby South Avenue. The study may propose adjustments to the WisDOT proposed design for South Avenue to provide better access to side streets and other destinations from South Avenue.

New Linkages Analysis and Alternatives

There is the potential for a number of new transportation links to be established within the Study Area. The primary new links include an extension of the VIP Trail and Benora Lee Court. These will be evaluated to determine their contribution to the establishment of a parallel route while additional alternatives may be identified and investigated as part of the study.

The VIP Trail

The VIP Trail is an existing trail running from 7th Street South to a parking lot on the Gunderson Lutheran Health System campus; at 7th Street South, the VIP Trail connects to the Isle La Plume Trail which provides a direct connection north to downtown via Market Street, and includes two bridges over portions of the Mississippi River. In 2014, the City was awarded a grant by WisDOT to widen portions of the existing VIP Trail, and to construct two extensions: one connecting to the Grand Brewery Lofts on South Avenue, and another connecting to the west end of Maple Avenue. These trail extensions will provide critical non-motorized connections from neighborhoods south of South Avenue to the Gunderson Lutheran campus, downtown La Crosse, and beyond.

Benora Lee Court

Benora Lee Court is a short street south of the Gunderson Lutheran Health System campus. The street begins at 7th Street South and terminates in a cul-de-sac approximately 1,200 feet to the east (approximately the alignment of 9th Street South). If extended east to South Avenue, the street would provide a direct connection existing housing, businesses, and Green Island Park, as well as land that is potentially ripe for redevelopment. Design of any extension of Benora Lee Court will have to carefully consider the planned extensions of the VIP Trail.

The study will examine these potential connections and any others identified through the study, the benefits they provide, and challenges they present.

Task 2 Deliverables

- Memorandum detailing bicycle and pedestrian analysis and alternatives
- Memorandum detailing side street access analysis and alternatives
- Memorandum detailing new linkages analysis and alternatives
- Memorandum identifying any necessary modifications to the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as a result of the study

Task 3: Land Use / Redevelopment Strategy

The redesign and reconstruction of South Avenue presents an opportunity to evaluate existing land uses in the corridor, and develop a strategy for redeveloping underutilized parcels. The study will examine the potential for redevelopment of select nodes within the Study Area while examining how changes to South Avenue itself can impact these areas. These nodes will likely include South Avenue between Green Bay Street and West Avenue, and the area around the intersection of South Avenue, East Avenue, and Ward Avenue. Both of these areas have existing businesses, and can serve as nodes of activity along South Avenue. Future land use and a redevelopment strategy included in this study will focus on the South Avenue corridor at a very high level, and will not include any market feasibility, square footage estimates or allocations, or economic analysis.

Task 3 Deliverable

- Memorandum providing a high level overview of land use and redevelopment opportunities in the Study Area

Task 4: Alignment / Strategic Right of Way Acquisitions

The redesign and reconstruction of South Avenue presents an opportunity to evaluate the general alignment of streets within the Study Area, and examine the need for strategic right of way acquisitions. The study will examine the overall alignment of streets, crosswalks, and trails within the study area, and make recommendations for any realignments. It is anticipated that any recommended realignments will be relatively minor and will limit impacts on adjacent properties. Additionally, opportunities for right of way acquisition for future street or trail connections will be evaluated. This latter evaluation will be specifically linked to the potential extensions of the VIP Trail and Benora Lee Court noted in Task 2, although other potential right of way acquisitions will also be evaluated.

Task 3 Deliverable

- Memorandum recommending street and trail realignments and strategic right of way acquisitions within the Study Area

Task 5: Public Engagement

This study will include a public engagement element to solicit ideas, information, and concerns from residents, employers, and others about the issues described in Tasks 2-4. It is assumed that WisDOT (or their consultant) will undertake their own public engagement process for the South Avenue redesign; this project will take that design as a given, and will not be soliciting input on the South Avenue design, except for how it relates to Tasks 2-4.

Open Houses (2)

Two open houses will be held to solicit input from the public and describe the overall study. The first open house will be held early in the study and will focus on asking residents, employers, employees, and other users of the Study Area about bicycle and pedestrian issues that they face, concerns over connectivity in the Study Area, and other issues. The second open house will be held late in the study to unveil study recommendations to the public and ask for feedback on the recommendations. The City will be responsible for coordinating and reserving space for the open houses, and for promotion of the events.

Stakeholder Interviews / Focus Groups (up to 4)

TDG will host up to four (4) interviews or listening sessions with stakeholders to solicit information and feedback from specific groups related to the items detailed in Tasks 2-4. These stakeholder interviews or focus groups may include bicycle clubs/groups, neighborhood associations, City transportation committee members and staff, business owners and large employers in the Study Area, and others. The City is expected to assist in identifying specific groups or individuals for interviews. The interviews may be conducted in person or over the phone.

Task 4 Deliverables

- Study Open Houses (2)
- Interviews / Focus Groups (up to 4)

Task 6: White Paper on Use of Level of Service Metrics in Transportation Planning

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of traffic delay commonly used in transportation planning. In short, the amount of traffic on an existing street is measured, and models are used to predict how much delay a driver may experience at intersections. For planning projects, traffic volumes are forecast for the future, and predicted delay is again modeled. The use of LOS to plan future roadways is problematic for a variety of reasons:

- DOT traffic forecasts nearly always predict increased traffic, even if local trends do not support such growth.

- Based on projections for increased traffic and the associated LOS measures, streets are built that make it faster and easier to drive while simultaneously:
 - Devaluing the area around the faster road via reduced access;
 - Adding value to land far away; and
 - Making it relatively more difficult to walk, cycle, drive, or take transit locally.
- It violates the City vision that supports shorter trips lengths, less automobile dependency, connectivity, and multimodalism.

In recognition of these issues, a number of transportation agencies are now moving away from the use of LOS to drive the design of new streets. TDG will research current practice regarding the use of LOS for transportation planning and possible alternatives to the use of LOS and will produce a brief whitepaper describing the topic and its applicability to La Crosse.

Task 6 Deliverables

- Draft whitepaper
- Final whitepaper

Task 7: Draft and Final Reports

A study report will be developed based on the deliverables developed for prior tasks. The study report will be visually rich, and will focus on providing a succinct document that is easily digestible. A draft report will first be developed for review by City staff and key stakeholders. Comments on the draft report will be incorporated into a final draft report that will be released for public review. Following public review, any comments received from the public and any additional comments from City staff or other stakeholders will be incorporated into a final report. All levels of the study report (draft, final draft, and final) will be provided electronically as PDFs.

Task 7 Deliverables

- Draft Study Report
- Final Draft Study Report
- Final Study Report

Attachment B Proposed Study Schedule

Study Schedule

It is anticipated that the study will take approximately six months to complete. A summary schedule is provided below, and we anticipate working with City staff to refine the overall schedule.

Task	Month					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Project Management & Coordination						
Project Startup and Kickoff Meeting	■					
Coordination with WisDOT Project Team						
Monthly Progress Reports						
Ongoing Coordination / Conference Calls						
2 Multimodal Connectivity Analysis & Alternatives						
Bicycle & Pedestrian Analysis & Alternatives			●			
Side Street Access Analysis & Alternatives			●			
New Linkages Analysis & Alternatives			●			
3 Land Use / Redevelopment Strategy						
Land Use / Redevelopment Strategy				●		
4 Alignment / Strategic ROW Acquisitions						
Alignment / Strategic ROW Acquisitions				●		
5 Public Engagement						
Open Houses (2)		■			■	
Stakeholder Interviews / Focus Groups		■				
6 White Paper on LOS						
White Paper on LOS				●		
7 Draft & Final Reports						
Draft Report Development & Review					●	
Final Draft Report					●	
Final Report						●

- Meeting
- Deliverable

Attachment C Proposed Cost Estimate

Cost Estimate

A cost estimate to complete the work described in the Scope of Services in Attachment A is provided below.

Tasks	Principal In Charge	Project Manager	Senior Advisor	Senior IA	Project Engineer	Senior Researcher	Task Hour Subtotal	Task Fee Subtotal
	Toole	Luecke	Hüber	Hefferan				
	\$260	\$140	\$150	\$120	\$140	\$140		
1 Project Management & Coordination								
Project Startup and Kickoff Meeting		20	6				26	\$3,700
Coordination with WisDOT Project Team		12	12				24	\$3,480
Monthly Progress Reports		6					6	\$840
Ongoing Coordination / Conference Calls		18	12				30	\$4,320
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	0	56	30	0	0	0	86	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$0	\$7,850	\$4,500	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$12,340
2 Multimodal Analysis & Alternatives								
Bike & Pedestrian Analysis & Alternatives	2	36	24	28	8		98	\$13,640
Side Street Access Analysis & Alternatives	2	8	8	8	8		34	\$4,920
New Linkages Analysis & Alternatives	2	16	16	32	8		74	\$10,120
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	6	60	48	68	24	0	206	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$1,560	\$8,400	\$7,200	\$8,160	\$3,360	\$0		\$28,680
3 Land Use / Redevelopment Strategy								
Land Use / Redevelopment Strategy	2	16	8	40			66	\$8,760
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	2	16	8	40	0	0	66	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$520	\$2,240	\$1,200	\$4,800	\$0	\$0		\$8,760
4 Alignment / Strategic ROW Acquisitions								
Alignment / Strategic ROW Acquisitions	2	8	6	16	20		52	\$7,260
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	2	8	6	16	20	0	52	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$520	\$1,120	\$900	\$1,920	\$2,800	\$0		\$7,260
5 Public Engagement								
Open Houses (2)		32	16	16			64	\$8,800
Stakeholder Interviews / Focus Groups		24	24				48	\$6,960
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	0	56	40	16	0	0	112	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$0	\$7,840	\$6,000	\$1,920	\$0	\$0		\$15,760
6 White Paper on LOS								
White Paper on LOS	2	4	4			60	70	\$10,080
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	2	4	4	0	0	60	70	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$520	\$560	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$8,400		\$10,080
7 Draft & Final Reports								
Draft Report Development & Review	2	28	4	28			62	\$8,400
Final Draft Report	2	8	2	12			24	\$3,380
Final Report	2	8	2				12	\$1,940
<i>Hours Sub Total</i>	6	44	8	40	0	0	98	
<i>Labor Subtotal</i>	\$1,560	\$6,160	\$1,200	\$4,800	\$0	\$0		\$13,720
<i>Total Hours</i>	18	244	144	180	44	60	690	
<i>Total Dollars</i>	\$4,680	\$34,160	\$21,600	\$21,800	\$6,160	\$8,400		\$96,600

Total Labor	\$96,600
Direct Expenses	\$2,692

Total Fee	\$99,292
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