



**Council
Communication**
Office of the City Manager

Date

May 8, 2006

Agenda Item No. 6
Roll Call No. 06-
Communication No. 06-246
Submitted by: Jeb E. Brewer, P.E.
City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Authorization to submit Phase One Interchange Modification Report to the Iowa Department of Transportation for I-235/5th Avenue Interchange.

SYNOPSIS:

Authorize the City Traffic Engineer to submit a Phase One Interchange Modification Report to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) requesting an extension of 5th Avenue north of the I-235 interchange ramp to improve interchange traffic flow and access to major regional facilities north of I-235, including Mercy Medical Center and Clinics and the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) Urban Campus.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$250,000 Estimate plus Right-of-Way costs.

Funding Source: Mercy Medical Center has indicated it will fund the project up to the current estimate of \$250,000 plus Right-of-Way costs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The entire I-235 corridor is currently being reconstructed to improve roadway safety, update the roadway to current design standards, reduce congestion, and improve mobility and Interstate operations. The I-235 interchange at 5th Avenue through 7th Street was designed and constructed so the north ramp has signalized intersections at 5th, 6th and 7th. The 6th and 7th intersections are full four-legged type, but the 5th Avenue ramp is a "T" intersection. The interchange ramp system provides access to and from both eastbound and westbound I-235 through these signalized intersections.

In 2004, the City converted 5th Avenue to two-way traffic from Grand Avenue north to I-235, and the IDOT constructed a new 5th Avenue bridge over I-235 that extends 5th Avenue to this "T" intersection. Currently, there is no public street access north to Laurel Street, an east-west collector street one block north of I-235 that provides access to major regional facilities, including Mercy Medical Center and Clinics and the DMACC Urban Campus.

Mercy has requested an extension of 5th Avenue from the north I-235 ramp approximately 400 feet north to Laurel Street to provide a direct connection from their medical campus to I-235 and to the downtown using 5th Avenue. This interchange improvement will complete the grid street network in this area, and will reduce out-of-distance travel and turning conflicts at adjacent interchange signalized intersections.

Mercy has hired a local engineering firm, Snyder and Associates of Ankeny, to prepare a preliminary Interchange Modification Report Phase I letter of request which documents the traffic impacts and the purpose and need for the improvements. City staff has reviewed the phase one report, and concurs with the traffic analysis and the purpose and need for the improvements. If IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) concur with the request, Snyder and Associates would proceed with the Phase II – Interchange Modification Report to evaluate and document all eight criteria for interchange modification required by FHWA.

Mercy has indicated that they will fund the project development and construction costs, up to the current estimated amount of approximately \$250,000 and will provide any needed property for the street right-of-way. If the FHWA and IDOT approve the proposal to modify the interchange, the City will develop project agreements with IDOT and with Mercy Medical Center to formalize the funding and execution of the improvements, for approval by the City Council.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

Date:

Roll Call Number:

Action:

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

Date:

Roll Call Number:

Action:

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Approval of project agreements with IDOT and Mercy Medical Center.