 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date:	September 24, 2018
	Agenda Item No.	41B
	Roll Call No.	[_____]
	Communication No.	<u>18-487</u>
	Submitted by:	Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Direct the City Manager to work with the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to remove the Southwest Connector from Iowa Highway 28 to Park Avenue as part of the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan and complete a traffic study to determine future roadway network improvements in southwest Des Moines.

SYNOPSIS:

Since the 1998 Southwest Diagonal Corridor Study, the Des Moines Airport Authority completed a Terminal Area Concept Plan which shows a new terminal complex along Fleur Drive instead of the west side of the airport. Traffic volumes have not grown as projected in the 1998 study, and recent modeling by the MPO shows that the City has capacity on existing roadways to accommodate the projected 2040 traffic growth in the area. City staff recommends working with the MPO to remove the Southwest Connector as part of the update to the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan, Mobilizing Tomorrow.

As part of the removal of the **portion of Southwest Connector between Iowa Highway 28 and Park Avenue** from the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan, a detailed traffic study is needed to determine future roadway network improvements, including:

- Intersection improvements at 63rd and McKinley and 63rd and Park, and 63rd and George Flagg
- Possible new roadway extension from George Flagg Parkway to Bell Avenue
- Investment in the existing roadways in the area south of Park to McKinley to provide access to vacant land for development

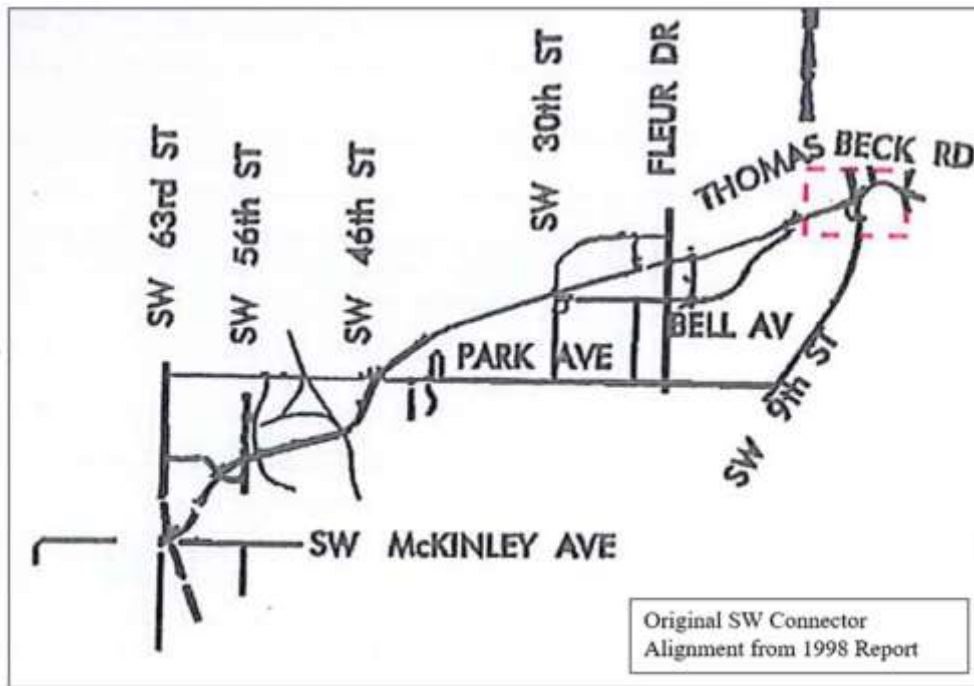
FISCAL IMPACT:

Traffic study cost to identify roadway network improvements to be determined.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The Southwest Connector alignment was identified as the preferred alternative in the 1998 Southwest Diagonal Corridor Study. The Southwest Connector was proposed to run from SW 7th Street diagonally across the southwest portion of Des Moines to 63rd Street at McKinley Avenue. This included two (2) travel lanes in each direction with a center landscaped median and a trail and/or sidewalk along with an area for tree planting behind the sidewalk.
- The 1998 study recommended a new roadway be built for the following reasons:

- The airport terminal building was planned to move to the west side of the airport requiring access from a major roadway.
- Traffic volumes on Park Avenue and Fleur Drive were anticipated to be over capacity.
- Since the 1998 study, the Des Moines Airport Authority completed a Terminal Area Concept Plan which shows a new terminal complex along Fleur Drive instead of the west side of the airport.
- The volumes on Park Avenue and Fleur Drive have not grown as projected in the 1998 study. The 1998 study stated that traffic volumes on Park Avenue volumes west of Fleur Drive were projected to be 20,000 vehicles per day and Fleur Drive was projected to be at 41,500 vehicles per day by 2020. Most recent 2016 counts show that volumes on Park Avenue are 12,500 vehicles per day and Fleur Drive is at 30,000 vehicles per day currently.
- Recent modeling shows the City has capacity on existing roadways to handle the future growth without the Southwest Connector:
 - Updated Travel Demand Modeling by the MPO as part of MoveDSM, shows that none of the existing roadways will be at 80% of their volume to capacity ratio in 2040.
 - Traffic modeling now predicts that the Southwest Connector is projected to carry 9,000 vehicles per day south of Park Avenue and does not provide much relief on existing roadways including Fleur Drive and Park Avenue:
 - Without Southwest Connector
 - Fleur = 33,780 vehicles per day
 - Park = 12,000 vehicles per day
 - With Southwest Connector
 - Fleur = 32,633 vehicles per day
 - Park = 10,405 vehicles per day
 - The Southwest Connector is listed as an Illustrative Project in the MPO's current long-range transportation plan, Mobilizing Tomorrow, with the total project estimated at a cost of approximately \$215 million.
 - With this new information, City staff recommends working with the MPO to remove the Southwest Connector **from Iowa High 28 to Park Avenue** as part of the update to the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, Mobilizing Tomorrow.
 - West Des Moines City Manager has voiced concerns with abandoning the plan for the Southwest Connector.
 - As part of the removal of the Southwest Connector **from Iowa High 28 to Park Avenue** from the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, a detailed traffic study is needed to determine future roadway network improvements, including:
 - Intersection improvements at 63rd and McKinley and 63rd and Park, and 63rd and George Flagg
 - Possible new roadway extension from George Flagg Parkway to Bell Avenue,
 - Investment in the existing roadways in the area south of Park to McKinley to provide access to vacant land for development



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: December 18, 2000

Roll Call Number: 00-4704

Action: Receipt of City's Transportation Consultants draft corridor study reports for two major transportation projects, Southeast and Southwest Corridor for consideration by City Manager, Parks Board, Plan and Zoning Commission, and the Traffic Safety Committee. (Copy on file in City Clerk's Office). ([Council Communication No. 00-573](#)). Moved by Brooks to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1. Absent: Coleman.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Funding of future study of improvements needed to roadway network without the Southwest Connector, including Capital investment required to upgrade rural roadways to an urban cross section in the new growth areas.

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