COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

CITY OF DES MOINES OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	Number:	**25-223**	Meeting:	**June 9, 2025**
	Agenda Item:	**8**	Roll Call:	**25-0805**
	Submitted by:	**Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer**		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving and authorizing execution of the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) Cooperative Agreement for the 6th Avenue Improvements from School Street to University Avenue project.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend Approval of IDOT Cooperative Agreement 2025-16-055 between the City of Des Moines and IDOT for the safety improvements along 6th Avenue, including geometric safety improvements, pedestrian facilities, and pavement resurfacing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: $2,250,000 Estimated total project costs

Funding Source: Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Page 122, 6th Avenue Streetscape, ST266, Being: $500,000 in Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) Funds and $1,750,000 in G.O. Bonds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The IDOT implemented an annual program beginning in 1988 to provide for statewide traffic safety improvements. These improvements may include roadway construction projects to correct high-crash locations, upgrading of obsolete traffic control devices to comply with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, or traffic studies to determine how to correct a safety problem. Since the program began, Des Moines has been successful in securing funding, including several major intersection improvements, traffic signal upgrades, and other safety projects.

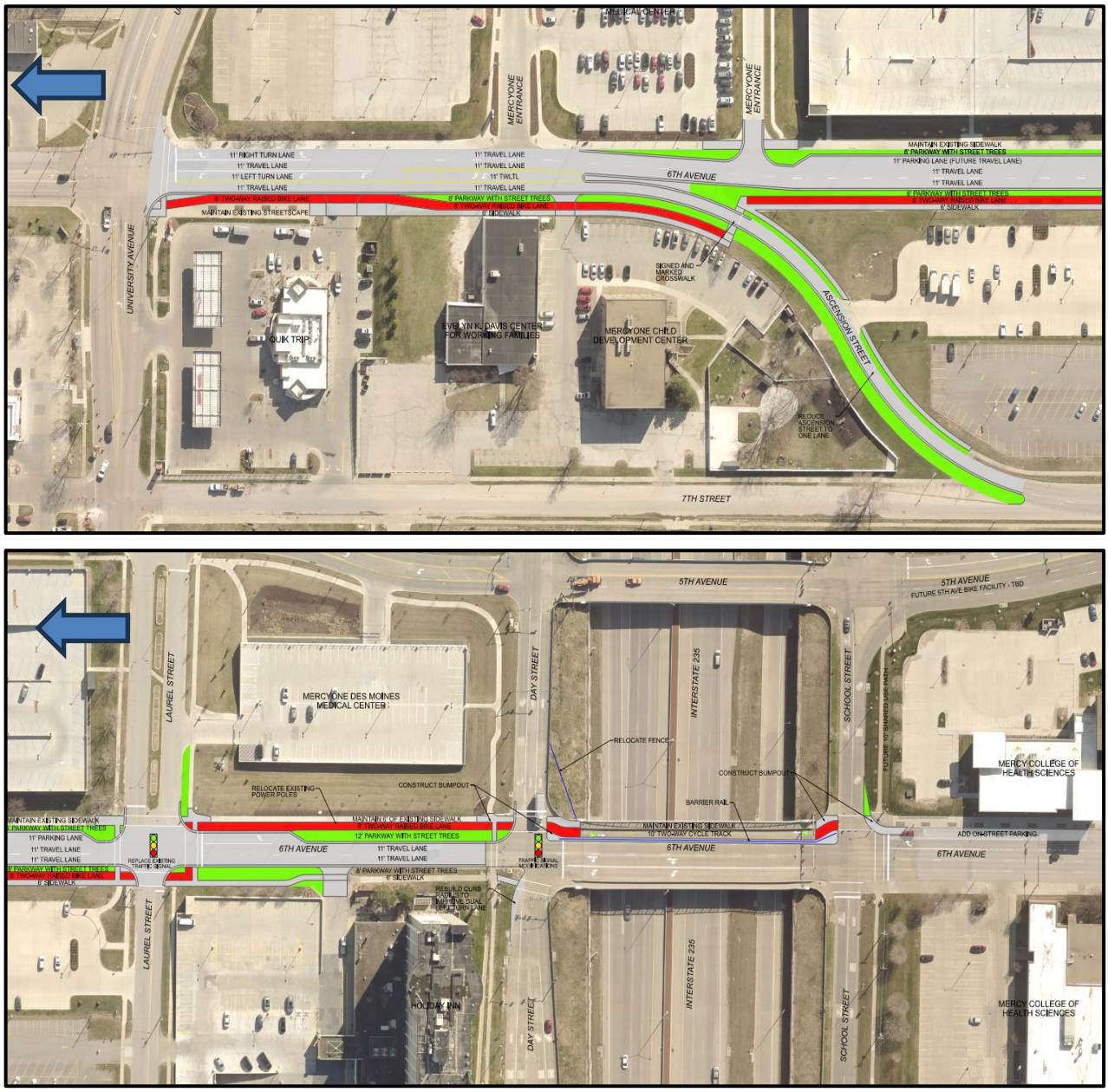
- Staff has reviewed potential safety improvement projects and recommends the approval of TSIP funds be used for the intersection of 6th Avenue and Day Street. 6th Avenue is on the High Injury Network (HIN) identified in Des Moines' Vision Zero Transportation Safety Action Plan. According to the IDOT's Potential for Crash Reduction (PCR) for the timeframe of 2016-2020, this intersection ranks as the 4th highest intersection for potential crash reduction in the entire state of Iowa and 2nd highest (statewide) for the category of undivided, low-speed traffic signal controlled intersections.

- The 6th Avenue bridge over Interstate 235 (I-235) is owned and maintained by IDOT. Engineering staff have worked with IDOT staff to identify safety improvements to reduce the number and severity of crashes at this intersection. Proposed safety improvements at this intersection include:
  - Narrowing the travel lanes on 6th Avenue from 14 feet wide to 11 feet wide.
  - Reducing lanes on 6th Avenue from three (3) lanes to two (2) lanes by removing the easternmost travel lane.
  - Relocating the existing chain-link fence on the southwest corner of the intersection to improve intersection sight distance.
  - Traffic signal timing modifications.
  - Installing additional traffic signal heads to improve visibility of the traffic signal.
  - Installing backplates with retroreflective borders to traffic signal heads as recommended by the Vision Zero Transportation Safety Action Plan.
  - Installing a barrier rail separated two (2)-way cycle track on the 6th Avenue bridge over Interstate 235 (I-235).
  - Adding curb bump-outs to shorten pedestrian crossing distance and increase visibility of pedestrians.
  - Installing stop bars and crosswalk pavement markings.

- These improvements will be part of the 6th Avenue Streetscape – Phase 3 project planned for construction starting in 2026. This project will be the third and last phase in the revitalization of the 6th Avenue Corridor from the Des Moines River to I-235. The first phase of this project from Hickman Road to College Avenue was completed in 2020. The second phase from College Avenue to University Avenue was completed in 2022.

- The 6th Avenue Streetscape – Phase 3 project, shown conceptually in the graphics below, will include:
  - Narrowing 6th Avenue between University Avenue and Ascension Street, including removing one (1) of the two (2) southbound lanes on 6th Avenue.
  - Narrowing Ascension Street between 6th Avenue and 7th Street, including removing one (1) of the two (2) southbound lanes on Ascension Street.
  - Narrowing 6th Avenue between I-235 and Ascension Street, including removing one (1) of the three (3) northbound lanes on 6th Avenue.
  - Geometric safety and sight distance improvements at the 6th Avenue and Day Street intersection.
  - Adding an eight (8)-foot-wide, two (2)-way, raised bicycle facility along 6th Avenue from University Avenue to I-235.
  - Adding a five (5)-foot-wide sidewalk along Ascension Street.
  - Increasing the amount of parkway with street tree plantings along the corridor between the roadway and sidewalk/raised bicycle facility.
  - Replacement of traffic signals at the intersection of Laurel Street and 6th Avenue.
  - Traffic signal modifications at the intersection of Day Street and 6th Avenue.

- Resurfacing (mill and overlay) 6th Avenue from University Avenue to Day Street and on Ascension Street.



- On August 7, 2023, by Roll Call No. 23-1064, City Council approved the FY2025 TSIP Application to IDOT for the intersection of 6th Avenue and Day Street for $500,000 (maximum amount per project under TSIP).

- On May 6, 2024, by Roll Call No. 24-0641, City Council approved the execution of the IDOT agreement for $500,000 in TSIP funding for the 6th Avenue Streetscape – Phase 3 project.

- The Cooperative Agreement between the City and IDOT establishes joint participation in the improvements to 6th Avenue, including a portion located over I-235. This agreement reflects the current concept of the project and any modification in this agreement supersedes the previous concept identified in the TSIP funding agreement.

- IDOT will be the contracting authority for this project since a portion of the project includes work within I-235. The project is scheduled for an IDOT bid letting in November 2025, with construction beginning in 2026. The estimated construction cost for this project is $2,250,000 and IDOT will be responsible for making all payments to the contractor. The City will be responsible for reimbursing IDOT for the amount of the final project costs upon completion of the project. The TSIP funds of $500,000, previously approved by Roll Call No. 24-0641, will be credited towards the City's eligible costs incurred for the intersection improvements at 6th Avenue and Day Street.

- This project will be fully funded by the City of Des Moines, except for the TSIP funds provided. IDOT is required to bid and manage this project since work will be done over the Federal Right-of-Way (I-235).

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: May 6, 2024

Roll Call Number: 24-0641

Action: Approving and authorizing the execution of IDOT Agreement for the Intersection Improvements of 6th Avenue and Day Street. (Council Communication No. 24-190) Moved by Coleman to adopt. Second by Gatto. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: August 7, 2023

Roll Call Number: 23-1064

Action: Approving the FY2025 TSIP Application to the IDOT for the intersection of 6th Avenue and Day Street. (Council Communication No. 23-365) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Boesen. Motion Carried 6-1. Absent: Sheumaker.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Anticipated future actions related to this project include final acceptance of the project and reimbursement of the City's share of project costs to IDOT.

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