

WIS 175 FEASIBILITY STUDY

WISCONSIN AVENUE TO LISBON AVENUE

Memorandum of Understanding between WisDOT and the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County

This Memorandum of Understanding (the “Agreement”) formalizes the goals, expectations, and responsibilities for a collaborative partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (“WisDOT”), Milwaukee County (the “County”), and the City of Milwaukee (“City”) (WisDOT, the County and the City shall be collectively referred to herein as “Study Partners”) for the WIS 175 Feasibility Study. The WIS 175 Feasibility Study is a commitment to reimagining WIS 175 from Wisconsin Avenue to Lisbon Avenue. Success of this study relies on strong partnership, collaboration, and decision-making. A consultant team, led by Graef, USA, was jointly selected to assist the entities develop their scope of work.

STUDY GOALS

The Study Partners identified the following common goals to help develop viable alternatives through robust community engagement:

- Increase community connectivity for residents between neighborhoods and nearby destinations
- Improve mobility and safety for all users – people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving
- Address equity, environmental impacts, and social justice issues
- Enhance economic development and commercial vitality throughout the corridor

COMMUNICATIONS EXPECTATIONS

Study Partners agree to work and collaborate as a team:

- In good faith
- In an open, respectful, and trusting manner
- In a co-operative way
- In a way to avoid disputes by adopting a “no blame” culture
- With non-assumptive, listening-based communications
- Fairly towards each other
- In such a way that is required under applicable law and within each’s statutory authority

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following summary will inform the Project Management Plan (PMP) and represents a commitment to specific expectations around different roles and responsibilities of the Study Partners during the study:

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- The intentional promotion of racial equity will be carried out in all aspects of the study.
- Study Partners will work to design the study to identify and address policies, practices, and power structures that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, create barriers for black, brown, and indigenous people.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

- WisDOT is the lead agency and will oversee day-to-day project management, but Milwaukee County (represented by the Milwaukee County Department of Transportation) and the City of Milwaukee (represented by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Department of City Development (DCD)) are equal partners in this study. All Study Partners will practice shared/consensus decision-making throughout the project, and especially at key project decision points.
- The City and County will review and provide feedback on milestone reports and decision points. These include consensus-building and reaching agreement on the final consultant scope and public involvement plan, setting evaluation criteria and goals, identification of alternatives, selecting the final recommended alternative(s), the Design Criteria Memorandum, traffic study reports, Conceptual Stormwater Quality Control Report, public involvement summaries, feasibility reports, and environmental, planning and land use reports. Adequate review time of 7-10 days is necessary and should be built into the project schedule.
- Study Partners will hold frequent (biweekly or monthly) project meetings to stay abreast of study progress and provide feedback. City and County staff serving on the project team will be responsible for providing written updates to their leadership and arranging briefings to committees as necessary. WisDOT and/or the consultant team participation may be requested.
- City and County leadership (elected officials and appointed positions) will also participate in the larger stakeholder advisory group created for this project.
- The City and County will provide designated staff support to attend meetings and review materials within the previously noted 7-10 days. Staff will be empowered to make decisions in a way that is designed for maximum efficiency and to provide appropriate recommendations to the study team throughout the process. Staff will work within their respective departments to provide timely information for the study.
- A Project Management Plan (PMP) will be jointly created to provide more details on our respective roles and responsibilities.

ALTERNATIVES DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

The study will follow WisDOT policies, practices, and guidelines and will accommodate items 1 and 2 below.

1. The project development process, including design goals, data collection, public involvement, and alternatives development, will reflect and adhere to Complete Street elements to ensure all users - regardless of age, ability, or mode - are considered throughout.
2. On topics related to land use planning, DCD will be the lead partner (following consensus decision-making principles) in providing recommendations to the study team based on City planning goals, stakeholder involvement, and other project input.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public involvement plan developed for this study must be robust, incorporating DCD’s Public Involvement Plan and Breaking Down Barriers to Participation Implementation Plan procedures so that the final Plan can be adopted as part of the City’s official Comprehensive Plan. The minimal standards of public involvement requirements are at least three public meetings, an advisory committee, engaging community organizations as part of the planning team, and sufficient notice of public meetings and the final report. Additional public engagement, such as, but not limited to, attendance at community events and online engagement, is expected.

Furthermore, as part of the overall public involvement strategy, WisDOT and/or the consultant team will partner with and, when appropriate, compensate community organizations in the study area. There are several high-capacity community organizations in the study area who are already experts at doing public engagement work in their respective communities. Their guidance and participation should be invaluable for truly engaging residents and stakeholders. The community organizations will be determined in consultation with the City and County. It is anticipated that these community organizations will supplement the public involvement strategy by advertising public involvement events and participating in advisory committees. Additional tasks may also be identified.

- The City and County will assist in advertising public engagement efforts, through web sites and other means, staffing public engagement efforts, communicating with local elected officials, and facilitating partnerships between WisDOT, Consultant Team, and community organizations.
- The City and County will provide local knowledge, expertise, and guidance (local traffic counts, neighborhood groups, community groups, demographics, design criteria, lessons learned, etc.).

STUDY ADOPTION

City staff will facilitate Common Council adoption process of the final plan as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is the City's official guide for land use decisions.

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