



# I-29 CORRIDOR STUDY


## Exit 73 to Exit 77



Newsletter #18

September 21, 2009

### Solberg-Tallgrass Overpass Progressing

Anticipating the project to have nil effect on the remaining Interstate System improvements being investigated, the SDDOT and the City of Sioux Falls have claimed "independent utility" to separate the Solberg Avenue –Tallgrass Avenue crossing project from the rest of the I-29 Corridor Study. URS Corporation has been asked to prepare a stand alone Environmental Assessment (EA) for the crossing project. It is anticipated that the document will be ready for public review in November. The project to construct Solberg Avenue from 59<sup>th</sup> Street to 69<sup>th</sup> Street is currently scheduled to be let to contract in September 2010 with construction anticipated in 2011. 



### Draft I-29 / 85<sup>th</sup> Street Interchange Justification Report Update

It has been two months since the last newsletter, and the South Dakota Department of Transportation is still awaiting an official response from the Federal Highway Administration regarding the draft I-29 / 85<sup>th</sup> Street Interchange Justification Report (IJR) submitted in June. It is suspected that FHWA had been awaiting release of a policy revision regarding access to the Interstate System. (See article on page 2 for details.) Now that the revised policy has been released, it is the SDDOT's hope that an official response from FHWA to the draft IJR will be forthcoming.

All of the ramifications this Federal policy revision will have on the 85<sup>th</sup> Street IJR and the I-29 Corridor Study will be unknown until FHWA responds to the draft IJR. SDDOT analysis of the revised policy and FHWA's questions regarding the draft IJR leads to speculation that changes will need to be made for the final IJR that include adding a construction phasing plan and a conceptual permanent signing plan for the composite that becomes the preferred option.

Those interested in reviewing the draft IJR document can download it from the study webpage [http://www.sddot.com/pe/projdev/planning\\_ss\\_i29.asp](http://www.sddot.com/pe/projdev/planning_ss_i29.asp)



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### Study Advisory Team News

There are no meetings scheduled at this time. 



# Federal Highway Administration Releases New Policy on Interstate Interchange Access

On August 18, 2009, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a revised policy statement titled *Access to the Interstate System*. The policy statement describes the justification and documentation needed for requests to add or revise access to the existing Interstate System. The revised policy was released to the public in the August 27, 2009 edition of the *Federal Register*. The initial policy was first published in the *Federal Register* on October 22, 1990 with the last modification being published on February 11, 1998.

The following is from the Summary of Changes section of the *Federal Register* that released the revised policy to the public:

“The changes in FHWA's policy were made to reflect the direction provided in SAFETEA-LU, to clarify the operational and safety analysis and assessment of impacts that provides the basis for proposed changes in access to the Interstate System, and to update language at various locations to reference Federal laws, regulations, and FHWA policies.

The following specific revisions have been made to the existing policy statement:

1. Updates were made to Requirement 1 clarifying the need for agencies to analyze and justify that the projected design-year traffic demands cannot be adequately accommodated by existing access to the Interstate.
2. Additional examples were added to Requirement 2 to identify the type of improvements to be considered in the planning for and development of proposed changes in access.
3. Text was added to Requirement 3 to clarify that the safety and operational analysis to be performed and documentation to be submitted provide the justification for proposed changes in access. (The change to Requirement 3 adds a requirement that a conceptual signing plan for all options be included in the access

change request in addition to clarifying the requirement.)

4. Revisions were made to Requirement 4 clarifying the need to meet or exceed design standards for all roadway improvements included in proposals to change access.
5. Changes were made to Requirement 5 to reference the current requirements contained in SAFETEA-LU and 23 CFR part 450.
6. Text was added to Requirement 6 clarifying the analysis to be performed in support of proposed changes in access involving multiple interchanges.
7. Clarification to Requirement 7 was made identifying the justification needed to support any proposed change in access due to changes in land use or density of development.
8. Revision was made to Requirement 8 to clarify and avoid duplication with Requirement 5.
9. Updates were made to the Application section to reference current Federal laws, regulations, and FHWA policies. Revisions were made to paragraph 4 and a new paragraph 5 was added to clarify what is a change in access and how this policy may apply to different types of access changes. Paragraph 8 was added to clarify how FHWA's review and approval of proposed changes in access relate to other Federal actions, reviews, and approvals. Paragraph 9 was added to clarify that proposals for changes in access need to be reevaluated and the proposal resubmitted to FHWA for review and approval if the project has not proceeded to construction within 8 years.

The revised policy statement also includes various editorial changes to enhance clarity and readability.”

All of the ramifications this Federal policy revision will have on the 85<sup>th</sup> Street IJR and the I-29 Corridor Study are unknown at this time.

Those interested in reading the revised policy can download it at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-20679.pdf>



## SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS

STUDY ADVISORY TEAM MEETING #6  
TO BE DETERMINED

PUBLIC MEETING #3  
TO BE DETERMINED

## SDDOT CONTACT INFORMATION

The I-29 Corridor Study is being administered by Mr. Steven Gramm, P.E., from SDDOT's Project Development Office located in Pierre, SD. Steve can be reached via email at [steve.gramm@state.sd.us](mailto:steve.gramm@state.sd.us) or by phone at 605-773-6641.

## URS CONTACT INFORMATION

The I-29 Corridor Study is being coordinated by Mr. Bill Troe, AICP, from the Surface Transportation Group of the URS Division located in the Omaha, NE office. Bill can be reached via email at [Bill\\_Troe@URSCorp.com](mailto:Bill_Troe@URSCorp.com) or by phone at 1-866-671-5309.

## USD CONTACT INFORMATION

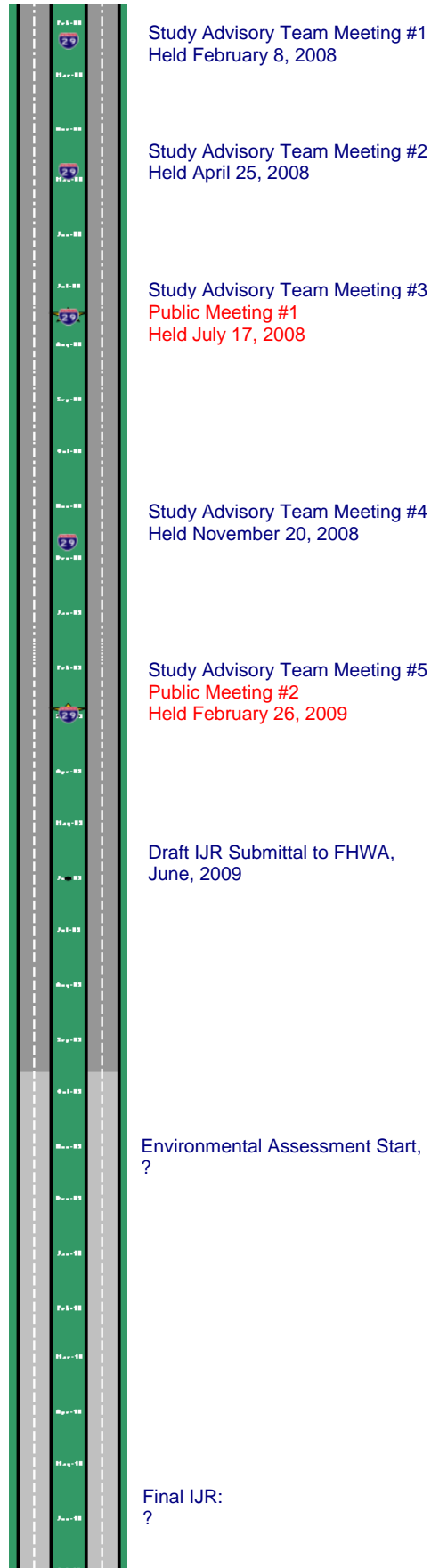
The economic impact portion of the I-29 Corridor Study is being coordinated by Mr. Wade Druin of USD's Business Research Bureau. Wade can be reached via email at [wdruin@usd.edu](mailto:wdruin@usd.edu) or by phone at 605-677-5287.

## STUDY WEBSITE

[http://www.sddot.com/pe/projdev/planning\\_ss\\_l29.asp](http://www.sddot.com/pe/projdev/planning_ss_l29.asp)

## STUDY NEWSLETTER

Requests to be added to the newsletter mailing list can be made with an email to [steve.gramm@state.sd.us](mailto:steve.gramm@state.sd.us). Past newsletters can be downloaded from the study website.



Study Advisory Team Meeting #1  
Held February 8, 2008

Study Advisory Team Meeting #2  
Held April 25, 2008

Study Advisory Team Meeting #3  
**Public Meeting #1**  
**Held July 17, 2008**

Study Advisory Team Meeting #4  
Held November 20, 2008

Study Advisory Team Meeting #5  
**Public Meeting #2**  
**Held February 26, 2009**

Draft IJR Submittal to FHWA,  
June, 2009

Environmental Assessment Start,  
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Final IJR:  
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