

# Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Application

## Northfield Modal Integration Project

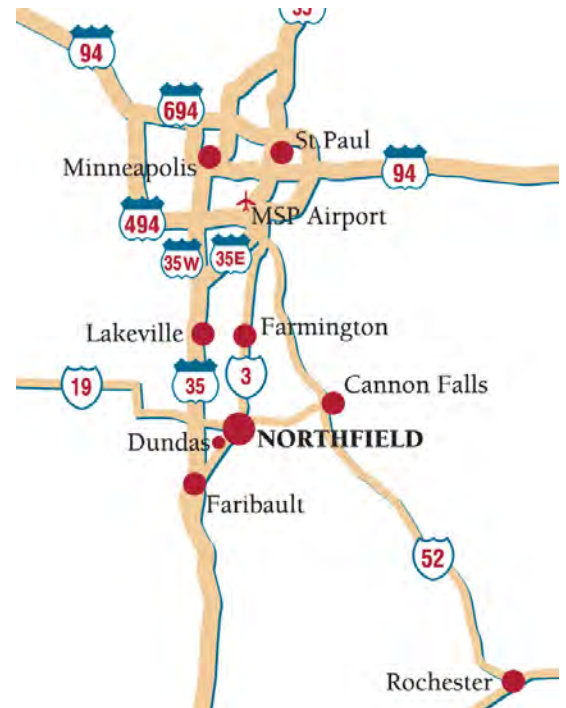
Northfield, MN

September 15, 2009

**Type of Project:** The proposed project is a highway/bridge project which upon completion would include the construction of 2 pedestrian overpasses, a trail underpass, a public parking lot, and a transit hub/trail head. This project would enable motorized and non-motorized users to share the roadway environment safely and efficiently.

**Location:** The proposed project is located in Northfield, Minnesota which is in Rice County, U.S. Congressional District 2. Northfield is located approximately 35 miles south of Minneapolis/St. Paul.

**Area:** The City of Northfield feels like a small-town and also offers all the benefits of a progressive, sophisticated urban atmosphere. The current population is approximately 19,900, including approximately 5,000 college students. The proposed project is located within the City limits and is in an urban area.



**Grant Funds:** The City of Northfield requests \$5.99 million to invest in transportation infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits, preserve and create jobs, promote economic recovery, and assist an area that has been deeply affected by the current economic downturn.



Looking west on 5th Street at Highway 3

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I.

## Community Background

### A. Location

Northfield is situated along the banks of the Cannon River just south of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, and northwest of Rochester, in the rich agricultural region of southeastern Minnesota. The city is bursting with vibrant culture, esteemed academics, celebrated arts, progressive technology, and a cherished history.

The transportation system in the City has evolved over the years and several challenges with the current system exist. Some of the very things that make the City an attractive place to live and work, also make it challenging to move people, goods, and services around and through the City by walking, bicycling, or driving a motor vehicle. These challenges are due to the beautiful natural features in the area, the vital state highways and rail lines bisecting the community, the important educational institutions of St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges, as well as the evolution of the City's development pattern.



The Cannon River generally runs from the southwest to the northeast through the City, and there are four crossings of the river in Northfield at Highway 3, 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Water Street, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. There are also drainage ways, wetland complexes, and topography ranging from rolling to steep slopes that present challenges for expanding transportation facilities.

The rail lines and state highways provide vital links for people and goods; however they also represent challenges to providing safe mobility for all modes of travel. Pedestrians and bicyclists encounter challenges when maneuvering through and across the motorized vehicle traffic stream to access different parts of the City.

### B. History

The City of Northfield was founded in 1855 on the banks of the Cannon River. There are few Minnesota cities with the rich history of Northfield, and there are fewer still that have done such a wonderful job of preserving their historic treasures. The City is filled with many examples of 1800's architecture throughout the community. Northfield values its unique heritage as a mill and college town, and reflects its community identity by preserving its historic and environmental character, and enhancing its quality of place through a progressive and sustainable development pattern.



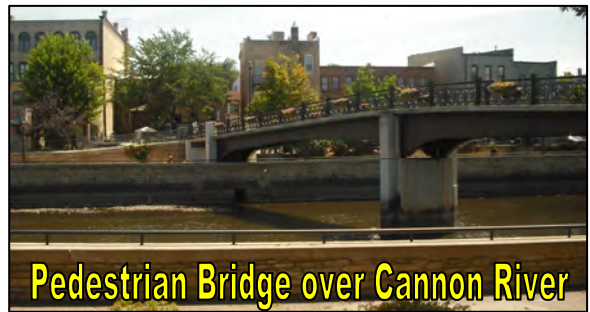
### C. Population and Setting

The City of Northfield feels like a small-town and also offers all the benefits of a progressive, sophisticated urban atmosphere. The current population is approximately 19,900, including approximately 5,000 college students. The City has excellent schools, a vital regional medical center, an active arts culture, a thriving business community and a wide array of organizations and activities that enhance Northfield's quality of life.

The community is committed to providing quality education through a broad range of educational approaches. The Northfield School District offers a progressive educational program with several options for meeting the needs of all students. The district's Community Education

and Recreation Department offers many classes, activities and experiences to community members of all ages. Northfield also has three public charter schools, one private Catholic school (K-8), two private Montessori schools (pre K-K) and two private liberal arts colleges (St. Olaf and Carleton colleges).

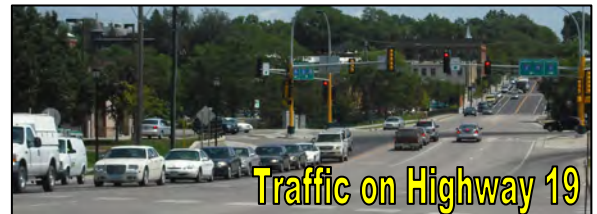
The neighborhoods and homes in Northfield are a fascinating blend of the historic, traditional, and contemporary architecture. New developments maintain a close sense of community with locations convenient to schools, parks, and businesses. There are also many choices for townhome, apartment, and retirement living.



#### D. Description of Study Area

Highway 19 and Highway 3 present various transportation challenges to travelers in the Northfield area. As Minor Arterial corridors, they provide an important role of moving regional traffic through the City. The expanse of the highways and speed of vehicles moving through the area create obstacles in connecting pedestrians and bicyclists to and from different parts of the City. In particular, non-motorized mobility needs to be improved to connect northwest Northfield and St. Olaf to the downtown, as well as across Highway 19. Given the traffic volumes and the width of highway to cross, a grade separated non-motorized crossing has been recommended in the City's Transportation Plan adopted in 2008.

Additionally, the north and south junction intersections of Highway 19 and Highway 3 are currently near congested or congested during the morning and evening peak travel periods of the day and are forecasted to be congested in the future. The City of Northfield has grown around the intersection of Highway 3 and Highway 19. On the west side are industrial properties, a large residential area, and St. Olaf College. On the east side is the historic downtown, Carleton College, schools, recreation areas, commercial centers, and another large residential area. The Cannon River cuts through the center of the City, running north-south, with limited river crossings. Highway 3 also runs north-south and creates another barrier since it is a wide and highly traveled 4-lane divided roadway. A funneling effect exists in the City as all modes of traffic need to travel one small section to transverse the community. With the funneling effect a large amount of conflicts occur between different modes of traffic and create delays for the movement of local and regional goods, services, and people. See the graphic on the following page that depicts the funneling effect.



Interstate 35 is the primary Principal Arterial serving the Northfield area. This corridor, along with others, has been identified by the State of Minnesota as part of an Interregional Corridor system indicating its significance in serving the economic interests of the state. It connects the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with other metropolitan areas such as Des Moines, Iowa, and Kansas City, Missouri. Highway 3 and Highway 19 are very important Minor Arterials that serve the Northfield area, as well as moving regional traffic through the City. The regional traffic served by Highways 3 and 19 through Northfield is expansive, including eastern Rice County and western Dakota County and other rural communities connecting to employment centers. Highway 19 provides the important connection from Northfield to Interstate 35 to the west and the Principal Arterial of Highway 52 to the east.

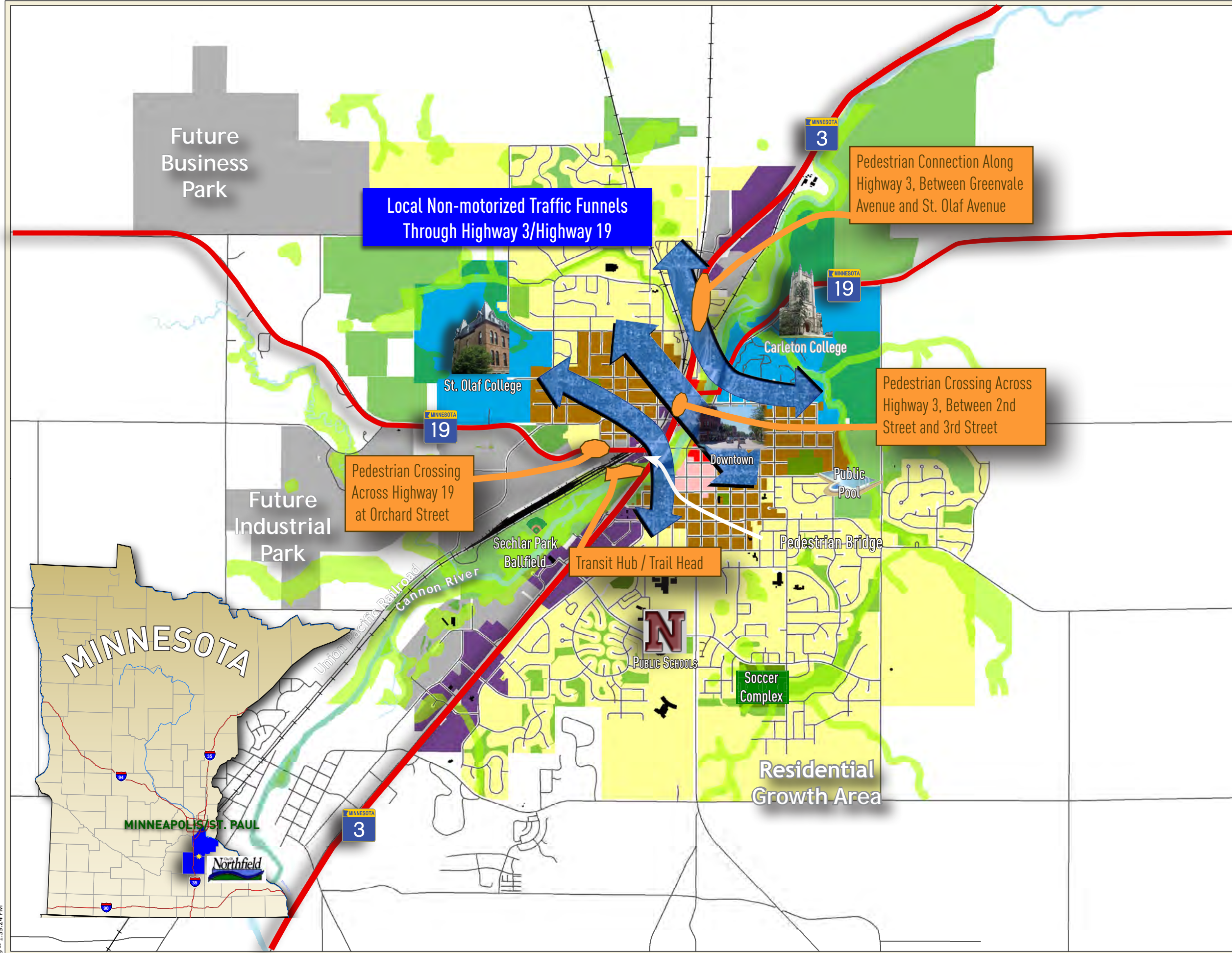


### TH 3/TH 19 MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY

#### Legend

##### Context

- Downtown Core
- Downtown Transition
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Educational District
- Urban Neighborhood
- General Neighborhood
- Water
- Environmentally Significant Area
- Preservation Area
- Civic Use
- Major Road
- Railroads



Source: City of Northfield, Rice County, MNDOT, MNDNR



### TIGER Basemap

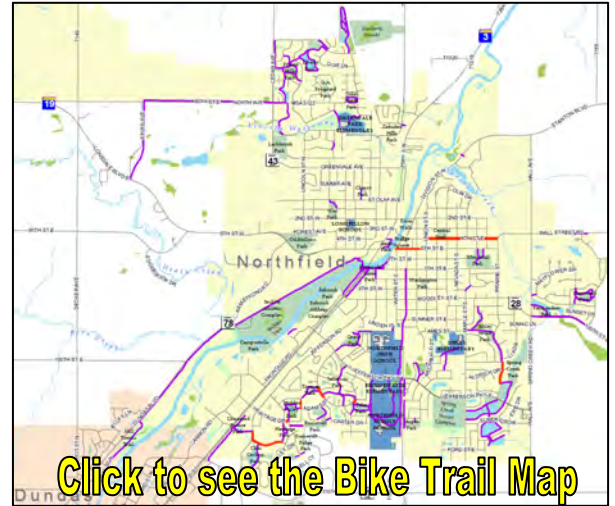


July, 2009

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#### E. Amenities

The City of Northfield Streets, Parks and Facilities Division maintains publicly-owned places and facilities that offer many ways to enjoy an active life in Northfield. This includes over 35 parks and open spaces, over 20 miles of pedestrian and bicycle paths, 2 sports complexes, an arena and outdoor pool. Another amenity to the area is the Mill Towns Trail. Segments of this regional trail are completed in the City. Upon completion, the trail will provide connectivity between the Mississippi River in Red Wing (35 miles east), through Northfield, Faribault, and ending in Mankato (60 miles southwest).



#### F. Business

Northfield's vitality is dependent on local businesses and corporations. They provide products, goods, services, jobs, tax revenues, and community amenities. Northfield's business community includes multi-national corporations, national industries, several professional services, retail stores, and entrepreneurs. Major employers with more than 100 employees located in Northfield are:

- Malt-O-Meal (food processing)
- St. Olaf College (higher education)
- Carleton College (higher education)
- Northfield Public Schools (public education)
- City of Northfield (municipal government)
- Multek Flexible Circuits, Inc. (global electronic manufacturing supplying)
- Northfield Hospital (regional medical care facility)
- McLane Company (grocery wholesale distribution)
- Allina Medical Clinic (medical care facility)
- Three Links Care Center (nursing care facility)
- Cub Foods (supermarket)
- Cardinal CG (glass manufacturing for solar industry)
- Target (discount store)
- Northfield Retirement Center (nursing care facility)

#### G. Multi Modal Community

Northfield is a bit different than most cities its size in Minnesota. While three-quarters of the population drive alone to work in other Minnesota Cities, only about half do in Northfield. In addition, more than one quarter of the work force in Northfield (2,446 out of 8,820) walk or bicycle to work, while less than one tenth do in other Minnesota Cities.



#### H. Impact of Economic Downturn

The economic downturn has resulted in the reduction of staff in many area businesses. From an employment perspective, Rice County's unemployment rates have been rising from a 4.3% annual average in 2006 to 8.5% (adjusted for inflation) in July of 2009. The troubles have

expanded from the loss of businesses to the lack of tax revenue which has resulted in the inability of government to provide services and eliminating City staff. Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges have felt the economic downturn through the drop in enrollments. Additionally, below is a list of recent events that display the impacts of the economic downturn to the City of Northfield over the past year as reported in the Northfield News on Wednesday August 5, 2009.

- Aug. 27, 2008 — Cuts from 2009 city budget take \$500,000 to help balance the \$10.8 million budget.
- Oct. 4, 2008 — Layoffs begin in city departments to compensate for a projected \$800,000 shortfall in the 2009 budget.
- Feb. 25, 2009 — City reveals plans for budget cuts in hopes to balance 2009 and 2010 budgets without depleting savings.
- April 22, 2009 — Rice County unemployment hits a 20-year high; Northfield at 6.7 percent and county at 10 percent.
- April 25, 2009 — Carleton College fears \$7 million deficit as a result of a backsliding endowment and a drop in donations given to the school; deficit brings possibility of up to 30 full-time position cuts.
- May 20, 2009 — Malt-O-Meal plans to move nearly 14 percent (130 jobs) of its Northfield workforce out of town to accommodate growth and to prevent product contamination.
- June 17, 2009 — Pawlenty cuts nearly \$1 million in state funding to the city this year and next.
- July 8, 2009 — Cardinal Glass announces plan to cut almost 30 jobs.



#### **I. Project Description**

This proposed multimodal project is of high value and effectively manages the transportation needs of a vibrant, growing town and the region for residents, businesses, and visitors. The project would facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services within and through the City on a safe, convenient, coordinated, and fiscally-responsible network of routes using a variety of transportation modes. This project would enable balancing the transportation needs with the land use principles identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

This project would enable motorized and non-motorized users to share the roadway environment safely and efficiently, which is not an easy task. The characteristics of these modes of travel are vastly different, and yet, they compete for the same space. The physical and behavioral characteristics of pedestrians vary considerably. In addition to planning and designing for the average pedestrian, accommodating the needs of children and the elderly, as well as those with physical, visual, or mental disabilities must be incorporated.

The proposed project is in line with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan which encourage multi-modal transportation alternatives for the City. It was specifically identified as a short-term priority to address and improve the integration of travel modes and safety non-motorized and motorized users. It also addressed many concerns that have been discussed by the City's Non-Motorized Transportation Task Force, the Community Transit Task Force, and the Parks Board. It also pulls together the many issues and concerns from various modal user groups, the public, and Mn/DOT to identify a shared vision and sustainable solution for the community.

**J. Components of Project**

This project would enable the promotion and enhancement of non-motorized transportation opportunities and builds a more cohesive community. This proposed multifaceted project recognizes and addresses the challenges and opportunities as described below.

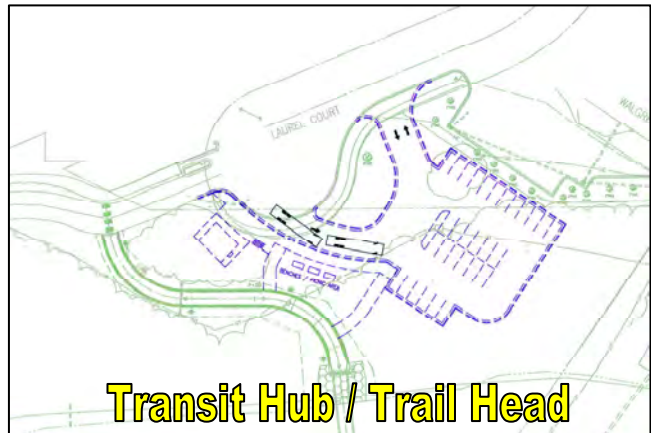
**1. Transit Hub / Trail Head**

A key component to this project would enable the construction of a multi-purpose facility on Laurel Court providing a transit hub / transfer station, park and ride location, intercity hub, trail head, shelter, and traveler information. This facility would provide connections to the Mill Towns Trail, adjacent parks and City trails, and downtown. In addition, the proximity of this facility to the existing rail line may provide an opportunity for passenger rail service in the future.



Northfield Transit received earmarked facility funds for the transit hub through the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) 5309 capital program. The total grant amount is for \$346,500, \$277,200 federal apportionment with a required 20% local share match of \$69,300. These funds are to clean up the contaminated site. The Phase II Environmental Site Assessment is in the process of getting underway. Contamination found during that analysis will be mitigated with those funds.

The layout of the facility and parking area will allow for easy entrance by large motor coach type (e.g. Jefferson Lines, Greyhound) buses as well as Northfield Transit buses, which include the Northfield Lines Metro Express and Northfield Transit. The Northfield Lines Metro Express use large coach buses.



Transit use would be higher during the week, and on weekends the use of site would be a trailhead. This site will not only serve those who reside in Northfield, but the outlying communities who would like to utilize the local and regional trails or transit connections.

**2. Pedestrian Crossing Across Highway 19 at Orchard Street**

Located within the study area, the Malt-O-Meal plant (the City’s largest employer) is located south of Highway 19, while it’s primary employee parking areas are located north of Highway 19. As a result, there is substantial pedestrian activity across Highway 19 on a daily basis with a



concentration of pedestrians at regular shift changes.

The existing at-grade pedestrian crossings have been relatively effective in providing a safe crossing for Malt-O-Meal employees and pedestrians; however pedestrian safety is a growing concern for the company, Mn/DOT, and City. The high volume of pedestrian crossings also introduces considerable delay to motorized travel on Highway 19. There have been many close calls incidents that occur and are not reported.

As traffic volumes continue to increase on Highway 19, the at-grade crossings and associated delay are expected to become more problematic. The rising traffic volumes on Highway 19 introduce more conflicts with pedestrians. As the Malt-O-Meal plant grows, along with the City, the crossing will

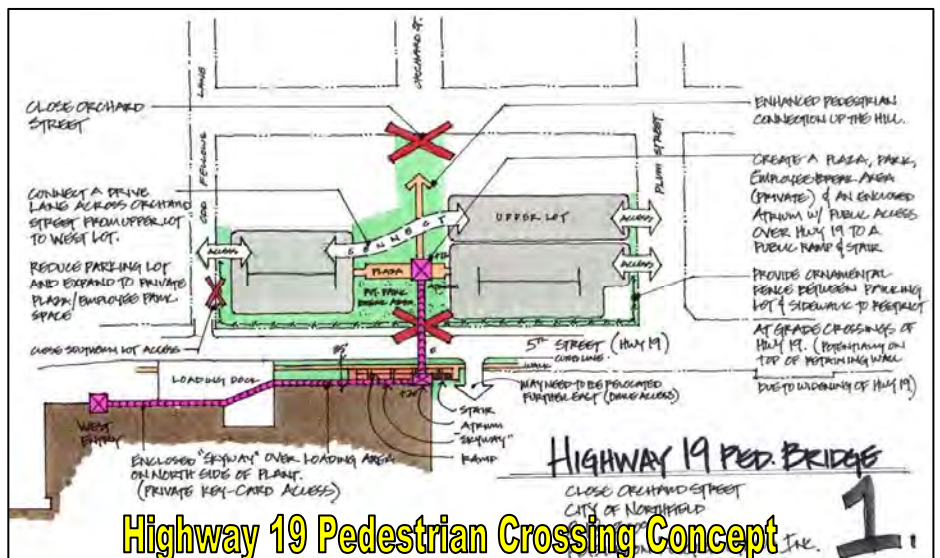


become more dangerous, especially with traffic volumes expected to double in the next 20 years. Mn/DOT's *Northfield Area Access Management and Safety Plan* completed in 2008 recommended a grade separated pedestrian crossing at Highway 19 at Orchard Street.

Recent meetings have been held with Malt-O-Meal representatives to discuss the current and future pedestrian crossing and concerns. Malt-O-Meal supports a grade separated pedestrian crossing in the location proposed. They feel the existing pedestrian crossing is a significant safety concern and have developed an annual training program that focuses on highway crossing safety for employees specifically at this location.

A grade separated pedestrian crossing in this location would also provide a benefit to the large residential area and St. Olaf faculty and students in this vicinity and to the north of the proposed crossing. Pedestrians and bicyclists would cross Highway 19 utilizing this new structure and continue on the south side of Highway 19 to gain access to the Mill Towns Trail, transit hub, and southeast destinations.

A pedestrian bridge concept has been developed at Orchard Street that includes modifications to the Malt-O-Meal parking lots to better position the bridge for employee and visitor use, as well as benefit overall use by the public. On the pedestrian bridge, on the south side of



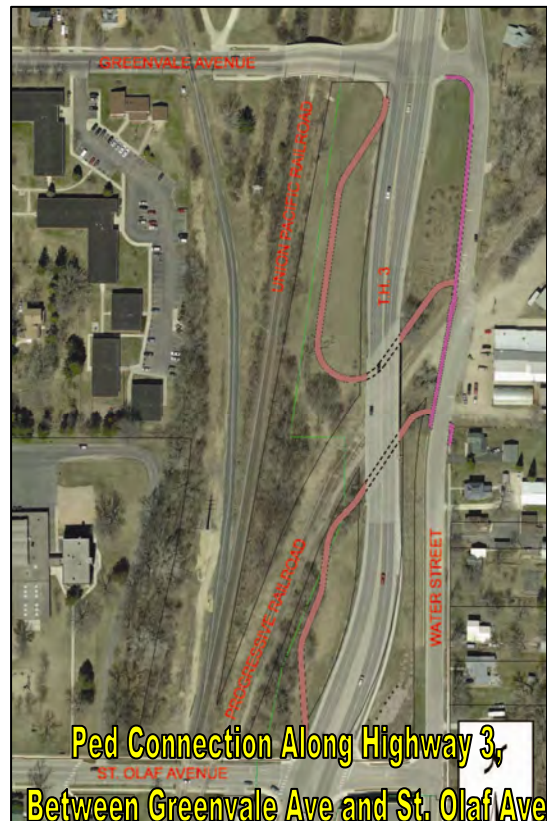
Highway 19, public users would exit using stairs or an ADA compliant ramp. Malt-O-Meal would have the option to connect an enclosed walkway or skyway between the pedestrian bridge and their primary entrance at a later date (not included in this project). This concept requires a strong public – private partnership to achieve a grade-separated crossing of Highway 19 that can alleviate the at-grade pedestrian crossing demand associated with Malt-O-Meal and provide a safe and effective alternative for the general public. A letter of support from Malt-O-Meal is attached at the end of this document.

**3. Pedestrian Connection Along Highway 3, Between Greenvale Avenue and St. Olaf Avenue**

Today pedestrians coming from the north side of the City (west of Highway 3) travel along southbound Highway 3. There are low income housing areas in this vicinity of the City. Many of the residents' modes of travel are as pedestrians and bicyclists to reach downtown businesses and other destinations. There are no pedestrian facilities on the west side of Highway 3 in this area. Pedestrians can walk along the side of the roadway on a dirt path (as noted in the photo above), but once the railroad bridge is reached, they must walk in the travel lane of the busy high speed four lane highway.

With the construction of this proposed multimodal project, access would be improved to provide this area of the City with a safe connection to downtown and other destinations. The construction of trail would allow them to travel off of the Highway and safely cross Highway 3 by going underneath, along the railroad. The connection would also provide future benefits of connecting the greenway corridor at Greenvale Avenue with downtown, providing a broader benefit to the growing northwest part of the City.

The proposed project includes construction of the trail to cross the railroad at the existing at-grade crossing located at Water Street.



**4. Pedestrian Crossing Across Highway 3, Between 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**

There is existing and growing demand for improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Highway 3 between the east and west junction of Highway 19. The width of the roadway and volume of vehicle traffic makes crossing Highway 3 at-grade challenging for many users and impractical for others. Recorded pedestrian volumes indicate the highest demand for a crossing is at or between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street intersections. The City has received

numerous requests for an improved crossing to better promote non-motorized connectivity across Highway 3.

Several options were studied for a pedestrian bridge over Highway 3 in this area. The proposed project would include a bridge at or between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street intersections. To be most effective, the pedestrian bridge would be integrated with existing and future land uses on either side of Highway 3. The area on the west side of Highway 3 is ripe for redevelopment and is designated for commercial uses. With a pedestrian crossing in this location, a direct connection from this area into downtown would be provided.

Impacts to the east side of the pedestrian crossing will cause some loss of public parking spaces in the downtown area which already has a shortage of spaces. To offset this loss of parking, a small parking lot will be constructed in the southeast quadrant of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Highway 3.



There is a large residential population and St. Olaf College to the west of the proposed pedestrian bridge, along with the recreational pedestrians and bicyclists, which would utilize the improvement to get to downtown shopping, work, or school more safely. There is a large population of people who live and work in Northfield. Many of those people live west of Highway 3 and places of employment are in downtown. As a result, they need to cross Highway 3 everyday. Many residents commute via walking or bicycling and this connection would provide a safe and convenient crossing of Highway 3.

With the two colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton, in town there is extensive movement and activity between these schools. This pedestrian structure would accommodate safe and convenient movement between the campuses.

The City is working with property owners and potential developers to refine this part of the project so it integrates well with the adjacent existing land uses and provides opportunities for reinvestment to ultimately provide an effective connection between the origins and destinations of non-motorized users.

Also included with this improvement are technological improvements to the signal system at Highway 3 and Highway 19 east that would better accommodate and inform pedestrians who are completing movements not accommodated by the grade separation or who are more likely to remain on the roadway.

#### **K. Significance of Project**

The City requests the Department waive the \$20 million minimum grant size for the purpose of funding a significant project in Northfield, Minnesota. The proposed project would have a significant impact on the region by improving the mobility and safety of Highway 3 and Highway 19, which are both Minor Arterial corridors. It would also have a significant impact by expanding opportunities for multimodal means of travel. This opportunity is more pronounced in Northfield, because more than one-quarter of the workforce walks or bicycles to work, while less than one-tenth do in other Minnesota cities. This project would provide connections

across very busy highways to connect residential areas with places to work and shop in a way that serves all users of the transportation network. Additionally, it would also provide a transit hub which would reduce the region's dependence on the single occupant vehicle. The benefits of this are more pronounced in Northfield, because while three-quarters of the population drive alone to work in other Minnesota cities, only about half do in Northfield.

**L. Project Cost**

The total amount requested is \$5.99 million, which includes funding for the engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and the construction of the proposed projects as detailed below.

\$220,000	Transit Hub / Trail Head
\$1,970,000	Pedestrian Crossing across Highway 19 at Orchard Street
\$740,000	Pedestrian Connection along Highway 3, Between Greenvale Avenue and St. Olaf Avenue
\$3,060,000	Pedestrian Crossing across Highway 3, Between 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street
\$5,990,000	Total

This estimate does not include funds for the cleanup of the proposed transit site which is being funded by earmark facility funds through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) 5309 capital program.

The total amount needed is requested to ensure a fast delivery. The project will be completed by February 17, 2012.

**II. Primary Selection Criteria**

The proposed Northfield Multimodal Project would have a significant impact on the desirable long-term outcomes for the region. There are many benefits of this proposed multimodal project including:

- Improved condition of existing transportation facilities and systems by providing needed connections to serve modes of traffic other than the single occupant vehicle.
- Preserve the investment by Mn/DOT on the Highway 3 corridor, as well as the overall transportation network, by enhancing the highway with the trail facilities for improved accommodation of multimodal traffic.
- Expand and attract future businesses by reducing transportation overhead costs resulting from lost time and money due to congestion.
- This proposed project would result in a more livable community by giving residents a more complete multimodal network by providing the connections at the locations most needed and most difficult to traverse.
- This proposed multimodal project would provide a sustainable transportation solution to the City as it focuses on moving people rather than single occupant vehicles.
- The improvements identified in this proposed project get to the root of the most significant issues in the City, which are the safe and reliable accommodation of all modes of traffic, including vehicular, pedestrian, freight, and transit.

Benefit-cost analysis has not been completed for this proposed project due to the waiver of the \$20 million minimum grant size requirement for significant smaller projects. Analysis has been completed by qualitative measures as discussed below.

**A. Long Term Outcomes**

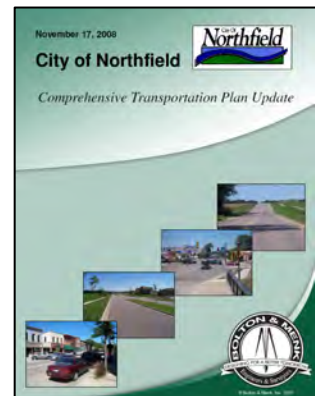
The proposed project would have a significant impact on desirable long-term outcomes for the region. It will leave the region in a state of good repair, allowing it to maximize its economic competitiveness by providing new jobs, while enhancing the community by improving the safety, sustainability, and livability of the region and community of Northfield.

**1. State of Good Repair**

Life cycle costs will be minimized with the proposed construction of this project.

- It is consistent with multiple study documents which demonstrate the need for the project.
- Its main transportation goal is to provide needed connections for multi-modal traffic which is becoming threatened by increasing volumes on the area’s roadways which inhibit the other modes of traffic, including pedestrians and bicyclists.
- It builds on Mn/DOT’s recent investment on Highway 3 which included construction of a 4 lane divided urban roadway with bicycle lanes and sidewalks through most of the project area. This project began at the south end of the railroad bridge on Highway 3.

Components of this proposed project have an identified need from multiple sources. The **City of Northfield Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update** from November 2008 has identified this overall multimodal study /project as a recommended short-term priority. See the plan’s content (section 5.2.2) by clicking the image to the right for further project details. Mn/DOT District 6 Office of Planning prepared the **Northfield Area Access Management and Safety Plan** in partnership with Rice and Dakota Counties, the City of Northfield, and the surrounding townships in March 2009. Recommendations from this study include the construction of a grade separated pedestrian crossing across Highway 19 in the vicinity of Orchard Street. The long-term recommendations include a broader look at the corridor to improve the facility.



Mn/DOT will be conducting an EIS for improvements to Highway 19, which would include the segment through Northfield. The project will start later this fall (2009). The project limits will extend from Interstate 35 to Highway 56 and will identify the ultimate vision for the corridor. The study will define the long range vision for Highway 19, including the area through Northfield. The recommendations of the study associated with this proposed project are compatible and retain a high value with the undefined long range vision of the corridor, because traffic conflicts through this area of town are expected to remain as Northfield is a major destination for regional traffic along with the local traffic.

In conjunction with the preparation of this TIGER application, the City completed a study defining the multimodal transportation vision for this area of Northfield. The final study report is currently underway and



will be completed in September 2009 and formally adopted by the city council. See the proposed project's website by clicking the image above for further project details.

In 2005-2006 Mn/DOT reconstructed Highway 3 through the City and the roadway is in good condition. This proposed project would enhance and protect that previous investment by constructing a trail and grade separated pedestrian crossing. These proposed improvements would ensure the viability of the transportation network into the future as the area grows by providing pedestrians and bicyclists' safer crossings of the City's busiest segment of roadway. The pedestrian connections that are components of this proposed project would reduce the amount of pedestrians crossing the roadway. Mobility of the corridor will be improved by limiting the delay triggered by high pedestrian movements. The investment in transit in Northfield would also provide benefits by reducing emissions and promoting the use of the existing transit network, reducing the volume of automobiles on the region's roadways. This proposed project would implement the City's long term vision located in the busiest area of the City and leave it in a good state of repair. The grade separated pedestrian crossings along with additional transit services, will improve the movement of goods, services and people by eliminating or reducing pedestrian delays on the arterial highway corridors.

Through the design process the lowest life cycle cost will be analyzed when determining pavement design, bridge design, and grading and utility design to determine the most cost efficient design.

Project partners are committed to constructing the right size project that addresses the most important issues in the community and provides long lasting solutions to those issues. The City of Northfield, in partnership with Rice County and Mn/DOT, fully support this proposed project and would ensure that the proposed project is appropriately capitalized up front and will use asset management approaches that optimize its long-term cost structure.

## 2. Economic Competitiveness

This proposed project promotes the City's economic competitiveness by improving the safety and efficiency of Highway 3 and Highway 19 for both motorists and pedestrians. These highways funnel nearly all traffic through the City due to the proximity of the Cannon River and railroads which create impediments for connecting people to places of employment and efficient movement of goods and services. The proposed project would reduce or eliminate pedestrian conflicts and their associated delay in moving goods and services.

The City has proactively studied, adopted, and begun implementing their Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Plan that identify specific initiatives to capitalize on creating long-term quality jobs. Two specific initiatives relate to expansion of private sector investment opportunities by providing readily developable land for business and industry and attracting and retaining alumni from Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges. The City has built on these studies by undertaking evaluation and development of implementation strategies for two sites totaling 1000 acres that are dependent on



the mobility of Highway 3 and Highway 19. These sites are identified to serve as a catalyst to the City and region for additional development. Without a reliable vehicular transportation system to move goods, services, and people the City cannot effectively promote these sites. The second initiative of recapturing some of the nation's best and brightest highly educated graduates from Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges presents a promising strategy for developing a talent base for a quality workforce and expanding public and private investment. These proposed improvements would help existing businesses expand and attract future businesses by reducing transportation overhead costs resulting from lost time and money due to congestion.



This proposed project would improve the current transit services and promote the opportunity for expansion by providing safe connections between the proposed Laurel Court transit hub, existing residential and employment concentrations, and the planned industrial parks. The proposed improvements would facilitate long-term job creation, workforce accessibility, and modal integration by amplifying the already strong transit connections within the City and their extensions into the southern Twin Cities Metro Area and Rice County. The charm of Northfield and quality multimodal transportation system poises the City to retain and attract quality employment.

### 3. Livability

This proposed project would provide for a more livable community by giving residents a more complete multimodal network providing the most needed and difficult transportation connections to make. This proposed project would allow pedestrians and bicyclists to get around town without crossing the two busiest corridors, Highway 3 and Highway 19, at grade through town. As previously mentioned, a funneling effect exists in the City as all modes of traffic need to travel through one small section to transverse the community. With the funneling effect, many conflicts occur between the different modes of traffic.



The proposed project would have a large livability benefit, which would significantly enhance user mobility through the creation of more safe and convenient transportation options for travelers. Broader livability benefits include serving a more diverse population, reducing energy demands and noise and air pollution, enhancing

community cohesion, and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Proposed project components include:

**Transit Hub / Trail Head**

The transit hub/trail head facility would promote non-motorized recreational and business related travel. Construction of this facility, as well as safe and convenient access to it by non-motorized means, will encourage healthy lifestyles, reduce air and noise emissions, and enhance community connectivity.



**Northfield Lines Bus**

**Pedestrian Crossing across Highway 19 at Orchard Street**

For many decades factory workers at Malt-O-Meal have been crossing busy Highway 19 everyday as they come and go from work. The existing crossing is a safety concern for the company and the hundreds of workers crossing in this location multiple times every day. With the implementation of a grade separated pedestrian crossing, in addition to serving the employees of the City's largest employer, broader community benefits would be realized through improved linkages to the transit hub/trail head facility resulting in greater transportation choices.



**Malt-O-Meal ped crossing**

This proposed crossing would provide a benefit to the large residential area in this vicinity and to the north of the proposed crossing. Pedestrians and bicyclists would cross Highway 19 utilizing this new structure and would continue on the south side of Highway 19 to gain access to the Mill Towns Trail, transit hub, and downtown destinations. The result would be the ability to serve the more complete population, including the young and old, as well as persons with disabilities, and remove community cohesion barriers.

**Pedestrian Connection along Highway 3, Between Greenvale Avenue and St. Olaf Avenue**

Today pedestrians coming from the north side of the City (west of Highway 3) travel along southbound Highway 3 adjacent to the travel lanes.

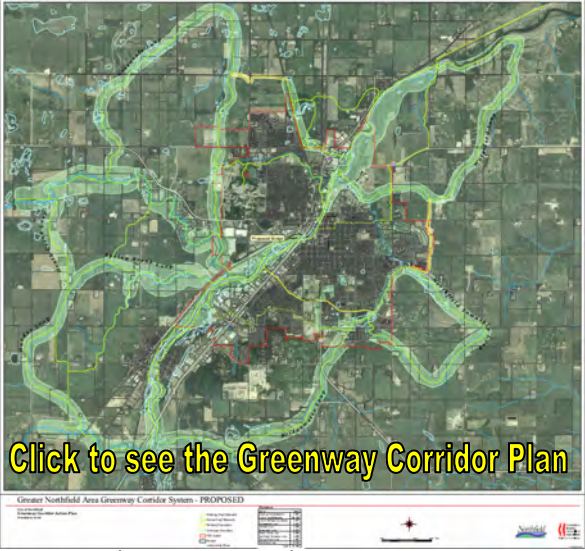
Pedestrians can walk along the side of the roadway on a dirt path, but once the railroad bridge is reached the



**Highway 3 bridge over RR**

pedestrians must walk in the travel lane of a busy high speed four lane highway. There is a large residential area in the northwest part of the City, as well as a low income housing area closer to the proposed project area. Many of the residents travel as pedestrians and bicyclists to the historic downtown which includes rich cultural, retail and service businesses, as well as employment and residential opportunities. The

highway presents an impediment to the cohesion of the City and the low income neighborhood is especially underserved. The livability of this large residential area, including the low income neighborhood, would be improved with a safe connection to important destinations located downtown for work, as well as accessing goods and services. Other livability benefits include reduced air and noise emissions and energy reliance, as well as improved opportunities for developing healthy lifestyles by walking or bicycling. The connections provided with this component would improve the liability of the broader community and fit directly in with the City's long range plan of a Greenway corridor along the rail. Click on the thumbnail to the right to see the plan for the Greenway Corridor. Construction of this connection will tie in both sides of the City to the future trail corridor.



**Pedestrian Crossing across Highway 3, Between 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**

There is existing and growing demand for improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Highway 3 between the east and west junction of Highway 19. The width of the roadway and volume of vehicle traffic makes crossing Highway 3 at-grade challenging for some users and impractical for others. Recorded pedestrian volumes indicate the highest demand for a crossing is at or between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street intersections. The City has received numerous requests for an improved crossing to better promote non-motorized connectivity across Highway 3.



To be most effective, the pedestrian bridge would be integrated with existing and future land uses on either side of Highway 3. The area on the west side of Highway 3 is ripe for redevelopment and is designated to be commercial property. With a proposed pedestrian crossing in this location there could be a direct connection from this area into downtown. Redevelopment opportunities present the ability to continue mixed use and promote business and residential investment of the urban core rather than sprawling to the edges of town. Pedestrian and bicycle activity to and from the historic downtown which includes rich cultural, retail and service businesses, as well as employment and residential opportunities will expand downtown activities during non-business hours.

There is a large residential population to the west of the proposed pedestrian bridge that would utilize the improvement to get to downtown shopping, work, or school more safely along with the recreational pedestrians and bicyclists. There is a large population of people who live and work in Northfield. Many of those people live west of Highway 3 and places of employment are in downtown Northfield, resulting in the need to cross Highway 3 everyday. Many residents commute via walking or bicycling and this connection would provide a safe crossing of Highway 3 and improve community cohesion.

With the two colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton, in town there is extensive movement and activity between these schools. This proposed pedestrian structure would accommodate safe movement between the campuses.

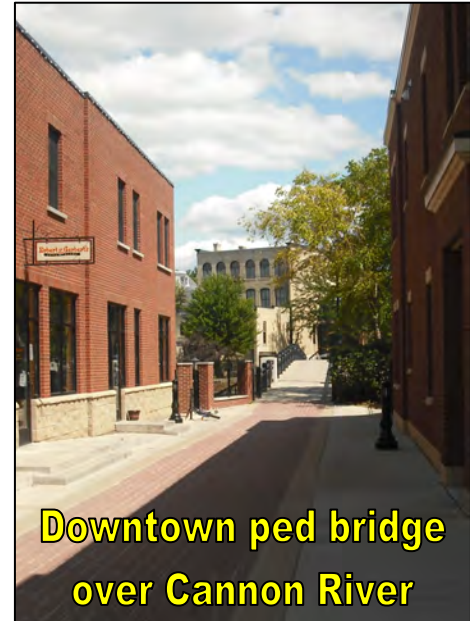
This proposed pedestrian structure would be enhanced to serve as a gateway to the downtown and community. Treatments would include development of plaza/park areas, incorporation of the City's rich history, and character designed in fitting with the Downtown's skyline.

Like the Cannon River, Highway 3 is a wide barrier to pedestrians in the City of Northfield between the northwest residential / St. Olaf College and downtown businesses, residents on the east side, and Carleton College. With the construction of these proposed improvements pedestrians would finally be able to move freely and safely and be better connected to other parts of town. Other livability benefits include reduced air and noise emissions and energy reliance, as well as improved opportunities for developing healthy lifestyles by walking or bicycling.

#### 4. Sustainability

The City of Northfield is well aware that the key to the movement of people is by providing a complete network with multimodal opportunities. Three-quarters of the population drive alone to work in other Minnesota Cities, only about half do in Northfield. In addition, more than one quarter of the work force in Northfield (2,446 out of 8,820) walk or bicycle to work, while less than one tenth do in other Minnesota Cities. These proposed multimodal improvements would infuse an investment into the community to bridge the busiest corridors in the City and providing the connections that have been desired for a long time.

This proposed multimodal project would provide a sustainable transportation solution to the City as it focuses on moving people rather than single occupant vehicles.



- Improvements would be constructed with this project includes 3 locations for pedestrian improvements which would encourage non-carbon expending transportation.
- Another major component of the proposed project is a transit hub that would encourage users to walk or bike to the transit hub and then to complete their longer trips using transit.
- The proposed pedestrian overpass would be designed with redevelopment of a large area on the west side of Highway 3 that would have a direct link into downtown. The redevelopment would be centered on multimodal traffic traversing the site but also cater to those modes of traffic.
- This proposed project would reduce consumption of natural resources by providing less delay to the vehicular and trucking traffic and would also promote other modes of transportation such as walking, biking, and transit.
- The proposed project would promote an environmentally sustainable transportation system by improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The City of Northfield is a growing community like many in the region, but what is different about Northfield when compared to other communities is the amount and acceptance of other modes of traffic. To meet the needs of the public and provide a more livable community, a great effort is underway in the City to accommodate and promote all users access to safe and reliable means of transportation. Future growth will perpetuate these community values.

There are many ways in which this proposed project would reduce the consumption of energy and realize the reduction of associated reliance on oil and emanation of greenhouse gases such as those listed below:

- Reduction in delays at traffic signals due to the large number of pedestrians from pressing the walk signal and increasing the delay for waiting motorists
- Promote and provide a long lasting solution to provide transportation choices to all users. The public would be more likely to walk or bike to destinations within the City since there would be convenient, safe, and reliable connections established.
- Today pedestrians and bicyclists avoid certain areas of the City due to the heavy traffic conflicts. With the implementation of this proposed project, a further augmentation of the modes would take place and a larger percentage of the population would travel utilizing other modes since the barriers would be breached.
- This proposed project would construct a transit station in the City that would provide local, regional and interregional connections to the City. Many benefits would be provided by promoting the use of mass transit.
- The trailhead would be a place for people to come, meet, and explore the area as a rollerblader, bicyclist, or pedestrian.



The 2000 Census information indicated that Northfield has 8,820 workers and that 8,519 of these live in Rice County. This demonstrates that almost all of Northfield workers reside in Rice County. The Northfield Comprehensive Plan also demonstrated that 70% of the workforce who live in Rice County work in Northfield. Investment in the movement of people as pedestrians and bicyclists will enable the City to grow and prosper as the healthy multi-modal community it has become, allowing a larger percentage of its population to live and work in the City and enabling them to maneuver through the City safely and efficiently on a large network of trails and sidewalks.

The completed project itself presents opportunities for a balanced approach to achieve goals related to environmental stewardship, social awareness, improved livability, and economic viability. It is anticipated that the proposed project may include various sustainable components. Stormwater reclamation may be incorporated to be reused for irrigation purposes. LED lighting is being reviewed for the bridge structures. Also being considered is exceeding the City's tree replacement standards at the transit hub / trail head.

## 5. Safety

The safety improvements to the City with the completion of the proposed project are many. The proposed improvements aim to upgrade surface transportation network by providing safer and more efficient crossings throughout the City. The construction of this proposed project would enable and improve the future economic growth and stability of the City. The improvements associated with this proposed project would enable the City to get to the root of the largest issues they are facing which are the safe and reliable accommodation of all modes of traffic, including vehicular, pedestrian, freight, and transit.

Crash data was reviewed that included crashes from 2007 through June of 2009. Data prior to 2007 was disregarded due to the construction activities on Highway 3. Since the completion of the Highway 3 improvements, the crash rate is near the state average for similar facilities. There was a pedestrian crash at both the south and north junction of Highway 19 and Highway 3 and also at the pedestrian crossing to Malt-O-Meal. Fortunately, the crash reports indicated these crashes were not serious as they were identified as "possible injury" crashes.

The proposed project area does not experience an extraordinary safety deficiency, but the improvements proposed are proactive. Traffic volumes are expected to more than double in the next 20 years. Congestion will also increase and access from the side streets will experience high delays in the peak hours. With the increase in traffic it will become ever more difficult for pedestrians to cross the busy highways, especially at non-signalized locations. With construction of the proposed project, primary pedestrian movements would be grade separated from the highways, thus providing a large safety benefit as the conflicts with vehicular traffic are eliminated at the crossing locations.



A large benefit is realized for the pedestrian movements that are not served today along southbound Highway 3, where pedestrians walk across the highway bridge in the traffic lane. There is no sidewalk or shoulder in this location. With traffic volumes increasing, this dangerous movement becomes even more dangerous. The proposed project would provide area pedestrians safe alternative routes to get to and from downtown area businesses.

The City's largest employer, Malt-O-Meal, has a plant on the south side of Highway 19 and the parking for the plant on the north side of Highway 19. Every day multiple shifts of hundreds of workers are crossing the busy highway on a crosswalk. An identified improvement in the ***Northfield Area Access Management and Safety Plan (March 2009)***, "Construct a grade separated pedestrian walkway across MN 19 in the vicinity of Orchard Street." The proposed pedestrian overpass in the vicinity of Malt-O-Meal would directly address this issue by providing residents and workers in this region of the City with a safe grade separated crossing of Highway 19.

Today Malt-O-Meal feels the existing pedestrian crossing is a significant safety concern and have developed an annual training program that focuses on highway crossing safety for employees specifically at this location, which does enhance the safety of this crossing.

There is a large residential neighborhood (45% of the residents of Northfield) west of Highway 3. All the schools other than one elementary are on the east side of Highway 3. All youth recreational facilities are on the south and east sides of the highways, including Sechler Park ball fields, Spring Creek Park soccer complex, public pool, and the skateboard plaza. The proposed improvements would give children and employees traveling to and from school safe crossing alternatives.

Only experienced pedestrians attempt to cross busy highways such as Highways 3 and 19. Less experienced children and families do not walk or cross roadways such as these. With the completion of the proposed project safety will be improved for all users and open up new areas of the City to the less experienced users and pedestrians will have much less conflicts with vehicular and trucking traffic.

## **6. Job Creation and Economic Stimulus**

Jobs would be created immediately with this proposed project as the engineering and environmental studies would be completed. Guidance found on the USDOT's website <http://www.dot.gov/recovery/ost/responses090828.htm> states one job year is created for every \$92,000 spent of government funds. Mn/DOT's website located at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/federalrecovery/index.html> estimates that 27 jobs are created for every million dollars spent. These two estimates have a high amount of variation and therefore an average is reported.

A large employment benefit would be during the construction of this \$5.99 million dollar project. It is estimated that 114 jobs could be created with this proposed project based upon guidance listed above. 64%, or 73, of the job-year estimates represent direct and indirect effects and 36%, or 41 of the job-year estimate represents induced effects.

The construction of this project would utilize a broad spectrum of vocations while completing the bridge construction, retaining walls, paving, and landscaping benefiting the region. It would involve many different suppliers for steel, concrete, bituminous

and other materials. The activity in the community would also cause increased spending at local business in areas such as restaurants and hotels.

Measurable project goals will be established that meet federal requirements in the proposal development stage for the construction of the project and guidance will be added into the request for proposals. These goals will be evaluated through the bidding and selection process. Once the selected contractor is underway, reviews and audits will be performed to monitor adherence to the goals. The general goals include, but are not limited to:

- Provide job opportunities for low-income workers through the use of best practice hiring programs and utilization of apprenticeship programs
- Maximize practicable opportunities for small business and disadvantaged business enterprises, including veteran-owned small businesses and service disabled veteran-owned small businesses
- Make effective use of community-based organizations in connecting disadvantage workers with economic opportunities
- Support entities that have a sound track record on labor practices and compliance with Federal laws ensuring that American workers are safe and treated fairly
- Implementing best practices, consistent with our nation's civil rights and equal opportunity laws, for ensuring that all individuals benefit from the Recovery Act

Federal wage requirements would be met on this project. See the attached certification, signed by the City, which states the City will comply with the requirements of subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (Federal wage rate requirements), as required by the Recovery Act.

These strategies together would help build a sustainable skilled workforce that will immediately benefit workers and employers, their families, and the City. Business contractors would benefit from an improved pool of skilled workers. Area businesses would be enhanced through the increased disposable income of workers, the improved pedestrian connections to jobs and retail establishments, and reduction in transportation expenses due to better mobility. Overall, these factors improve the economic condition of the City and the United States.

There are many more opportunities in the City that would directly benefit from the completion of this proposed project, including spurring private investment. As previously discussed, the City's largest employer, Malt-O-Meal, would benefit from a grade separated crossing of Highway 19. Malt-O-Meal is in the process of designing site improvements which include the main entry to the plant. If this TIGER grant is successful, Malt-O-Meal may construct major site improvements. These proposed improvements may include a long skyway connection around their building



that tie into the pedestrian crossing, which would extend the benefits of this project. The Malt-O-Meal project would be a direct offshoot of this project and 100% funded by private industry.

There are discussions ongoing at the City for redevelopment of the underutilized property west of Highway 3 between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. This location is where the other pedestrian overpass would be constructed. Redevelopment would be designed around the pedestrian crossing. The proposed project would enable tying this location in with the Downtown community and make it a more viable site for redevelopment. This is a benefit that could be realized as soon as the investment in the pedestrian crossing is approved.

The long-term viability of the City's pedestrian and bicyclist network is very important to the businesses and residents of the community who depend on a reliable network for the movement of goods and services in, around and out of the community. The proposed project would enable the elimination of barriers in this community for pedestrians and bicyclists and provide safe and efficient means of travel. It would also provide more travel choices within the City as connections for bringing workers into the City to reach the planned industrial parks in the northwest part of the City. These initiatives would assist in attracting private investments and employment to the City.

There is a steadily growing demand for transit services in the nation. This proposed project would construct the first transit hub in the City that provides regional connections. Opportunities to expand the service area to improve accessibility to more users will occur as the use of the transit and this region grows.

This would be a major project for the City of Northfield and benefits would be felt regionally. The infusion of funds to construct the much needed components of this project will enable benefits for years to come. Most importantly, it will put Northfield, along with other southeastern Minnesotans, back to work which will in turn spur additional growth and investment in the community.

### **III. Secondary Selection Criteria**

The proposed multimodal project would enable many benefits through the use of innovative approaches to achieving programmatic objectives.

- The proposed project is innovative in the sense that it focuses on the movement of people as pedestrians and bicyclists by providing the most desired and difficult connections to make through the City
- The proposed project has and would continue to involve collaboration with many different boards and commissions in the City, the public, business owners, and Mn/DOT
- The proposed project has integrated transportation decision making with decision making by other public agencies with similar public service objectives

#### **A. Innovation**

This proposed multimodal project is an innovative project as it focuses on moving people rather than single occupant vehicles. It specifically removes barriers and promotes non-motorized transportation alternatives while maintaining motorized level of service. Significant improvements that will be constructed with this project include 3 locations for pedestrian improvements which encourage non-carbon expending transportation. The other component of

the project includes a transit hub that encourages users to walk or bike to the transit hub and then to complete their longer trips using transit.

The pedestrian overpass would be designed with redevelopment of a large area on the west side of Highway 3 that would have a direct link into downtown. The redevelopment would be centered on multimodal traffic traversing the site but also cater to those modes of traffic. Also included with this improvement are technological improvements to the signal system at Highway 3 and Highway 19 east that would better accommodate and inform pedestrians who are completing movements not accommodated by the grade separation or who are more likely to remain on the roadway.

The City of Northfield is well aware that the key to the movement of people is by providing a complete roadway network with multimodal opportunities. Three-quarters of the population drive alone to work in other Minnesota Cities, while only about half do in Northfield. In addition, more than one quarter of the work force in Northfield (2,446 out of 8,820) walk or bicycle to work, while less than one tenth do in other Minnesota Cities. These proposed multimodal improvements would infuse an investment into the community to bridge the busiest corridors in the City and provide the connections that have been identified for a long time to significantly enhance the transportation system.

## **B. Partnership**

This proposed project would enable the implementation of the City's transportation vision through strategic funding and objective and definitive decision making with the collaboration of surrounding jurisdictions and Mn/DOT. This proposed project has and would continue to involve all affected parties, including the City, County, State, along with local businesses and residents. Through the preparation of this TIGER document, two open houses were held to continue the dialog established with the community and to keep all interests informed to identify a solution that will be supported by all. As the proposed project progresses into environmental documentation, final design, and construction, all interests and the community would be kept well informed.

### **1. Jurisdictional and Stakeholder Collaboration**

Along with the City of Northfield, the Mn/DOT fully supports this project. With the current economic conditions, Mn/DOT does not have funds to contribute to the proposed project. The Highway 19 pedestrian overpass was a recommendation from the Northfield Area Access Management and Safety Plan (March 2009). Neither the City of Northfield nor Mn/DOT have the financial means to readily and efficiently complete this proposed project without Federal assistance. See the letters of support attached at the end of the application from Mn/DOT, Malt-O-Meal, Northfield Chamber of Commerce, State Representative Bly, State Senator Dahle and a resolution passed by the Northfield City Council expressing support for this project.

### **2. Disciplinary Integration**

Through the development of this proposed project and the funding application, the engineering, EDA, and planning staff worked closely with multiple boards and commissions within the City and Mn/DOT.

This proposed project has resulted in a strong collaboration between City staff, Mn/DOT, Economic Development Authority, City Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Streetscape Taskforce, Environmental Quality Commission, and public and

private business owners. As this proposed project moves into the next phase of preliminary design and environmental documentation, these groups would continue to be engaged.

#### **IV. Project Delivery**

##### **A. Project Schedule**

This proposed project schedule is detailed below to demonstrate that the proposed project would be ready for construction and constructed quickly upon receipt of a TIGER Discretionary Grant to provide a quick infusion of funds to the region with construction of this project. The Grant Funds would be spent steadily and expeditiously once construction starts in the spring of 2011.

- **Conceptual Design and Environmental Screening – Completion October 2009**  
This phase would determine the proposed project components and the various options for each component. An environmental screening has been completed to identify cultural resources, potential environmental impacts, and potential social impacts within the proposed project area. This phase is mostly complete now. Final documentation of this phase is currently underway. This TIGER application is requesting funding for the recommendations of this study.
- **Preliminary Design and Environmental Documentation – Completion May 2010**  
The next step would be to complete the appropriate environmental documentation and a corresponding preliminary design to better determine the footprint and impacts. National Environmental Policy Act requirements would be completed and final documentation received by May 2010.
- **Final Design – Completion September 2010**  
The final design would develop design plans for all the components of the proposed project. The final design would further refine the cost and quantities, including permanent and temporary right-of-way impacts.
- **Right-of-Way – Completion January 2011**  
Some right-of-way acquisition would be required for this proposed project. Right-of-way would be acquired from project partners who have voiced support for the project.
- **Construction – Estimated start in January 2011 with 100% completion in November 2011**  
Construction would be completed in 9 months of initiation. It is estimated that 37 jobs would be created in the first quarter of 2011, 42 jobs in the second quarter, and 35 jobs in the third quarter.

##### **B. Environmental Approvals**

An environmental screening has been completed to identify cultural resources, potential environmental impacts, and potential social impacts within the proposed project area.

Further environmental documentation needs to occur in the next phase of work. The appropriate environmental documentation would be completed in conjunction with preliminary design upon receiving the TIGER Grant Funds. All environmental approvals necessary for the project to proceed to construction would be sought, including satisfaction of all Federal, State and local requirements and completion of the National Environmental Policy Act process.

##### **C. Legislative Approvals**

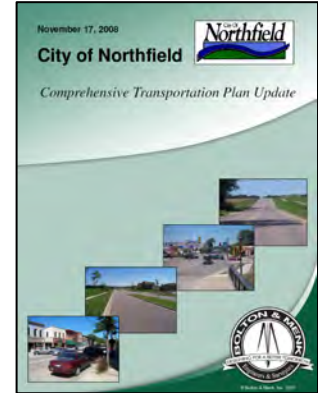
The City of Northfield, in partnership with Rice County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation, fully support this project and would ensure that the proposed project is

appropriately capitalized up front and will use asset management approaches that optimize its long-term cost structure.

**D. State and Local Planning**

Components of this proposed project have an identified need from multiple sources and studies. The City of Northfield's Comprehensive Transportation Plan update from November 2008 has identified this overall multimodal study / proposed project as a recommended short-term priority.

Mn/DOT District 6 Office of Planning prepared the Northfield Area Access Management and Safety Plan in partnership with Rice and Dakota Counties, the City of Northfield, and the surrounding townships in March 2009. Recommendations from this study include the construction of a grade separated pedestrian crossing across Highway 19 in the vicinity of Orchard Street. The long-term recommendations include a broader look at the corridor to improve the facility.



Project partners are committed to constructing the right size project that address the most important issues in the community providing long lasting solutions to those issues. The City of Northfield, in partnership with Rice County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation, fully support this project and would ensure that the project is appropriately capitalized up front and will use asset management approaches that optimize its long-term cost structure.

**E. Technical Feasibility**

The proposed project has been identified to be technically feasible through the conceptual design and environmental screening phase. A substantial amount of preliminary engineering work has been completed as part of the study. The proposed project has undergone significant input and coordination, making it a feasible concept supported by project partners and the public.

**F. Financial Feasibility**

Project partners are committed to constructing the right size project that address the most important issues in the community providing long lasting solutions to those issues. The City of Northfield, in partnership with Rice County and the Mn/DOT, fully support this project and would ensure that the proposed project is appropriately capitalized up front and will use asset management approaches that optimize its long-term cost structure.

The City of Northfield can provide evidence of stable and reliable financial commitments and contingency reserves, as appropriate, and evidence of the City's ability to manage the grant. The City understands that they are responsible for cost overruns that may occur during the completion of the proposed project.

**G. Evaluation of Project Performance**

There are many areas to evaluate to measure the short and long term performance of this project. The City would evaluate the performance of the proposed project to measure the success of the project. Measures include unemployment rate in the City, building permits issued, new business startups, expansion of existing employment, and increased attendance at the Colleges, number of users utilizing the new pedestrian connections, ridership numbers on the transit service, and crash rate. The City would also use the reporting system established by the selected construction contractor to track ARRA specific initiatives.



Minnesota Department of Transportation

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Transportation Building  
395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-1899

August 25, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood  
U.S. Transportation Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

This letter is to express support for the Northfield T.H. 19/T. H. 3 Modal Integration. The City of Northfield is applying for TIGER Discretionary Grant funding for this project, and Mn/DOT is supportive of projects that, like this one, are consistent with state transportation plans and which are deliverable within the timeframe of the TIGER Grant Program.

Mn/DOT intends to work with the City of Northfield to ensure the success of this project, should it be selected for TIGER Discretionary Grant funding. However, Mn/DOT cannot commit any additional matching funds beyond any that may be noted in the application.

Thank you for the opportunity to express support for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas K. Sorel".

Thomas K. Sorel  
Commissioner



701 West 5th Street • Northfield, MN 55057 • 507-645-6681

August 27, 2009

Katy Gehler-Hess  
City of Northfield – City Engineer  
801 Washington Street  
Northfield, MN 55057

Re: Proposal for Pedestrian Bridge across Highway 19

Katy,

This letter is to express Malt-O-Meal's support for a pedestrian bridge crossing over Highway 19.

We clearly see value in creating a means for the downtown area to be more accessible to the public as well as providing for a safer means of crossing the highway for Malt-O-Meal employees and visitors to our facility.

Malt-O-Meal has worked with the City and the Minnesota State Highway Department to increase the safety of the existing crosswalks. These efforts have dramatically improved lighting, signage, driver notification and pedestrian awareness, however, near misses and accidents still occur. An elevated cross walk concept in partnership with the city will provide a solution to increase mobility around the city and enhance safety for the public and our 800 Northfield employees.

As we have discussed, Malt-O-Meal greatly appreciates being involved in the preliminary discussions of this proposed project. We would support the concept as well as the efforts of the City of Northfield to seek funding for this proposal. Should funding be approved, we would welcome the opportunity for continued involvement, input and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Geary", written over a horizontal line.

Tim Geary  
Plant Manager – Northfield Operations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Lambert", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Lambert  
Corporate Risk Manager