Who We Are

The I-494 Corridor Commission is made up of elected officials and city administrators from Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Minnetonka, and Richfield, and supported by representatives from MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, and the private business community.

The Commission, together with its Commuter Services outreach program, encourages economic growth and regional prosperity through improved transportation options and supports commuter alternatives along with roads, bridges and transit improvements as a combined solution to slow the growth of traffic congestion and improve mobility.

I-494 connects travelers from across the region, state and world to the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, tourists to the Mall of America, and hundreds of thousands of commuters to their place of work.

I-494 is one of the most widely used corridors in Minnesota:

- There are more jobs along the I-494 Corridor than in downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul combined.
- People from 85 out of 87 counties use the I-494 corridor on a daily basis.
- Nearly one-quarter of trips along I-494 originate outside of the metro area.

Commuter Services annually works with more than 1,000 businesses along I-494 to manage commute programs and assist employees with alternatives to driving alone to work.

In a typical year, Commuter Services converts over 5,500 drive alone commuters into an alternative mode including carpooling, transit, bicycle commuting and telework.

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In 2018 alone, the I-494 Corridor Commission, through its Commuter Services program successfully shifted 5,756 drive alone commuters into sustainable commute modes.

2020 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

The Commission also serves as a Transportation Management Organization (TMO) in its member cities, working with employers to encourage the use of transit, carpool, telework and bicycle commuting programs.

In Progress/Completed Projects

- Orange Line BRT
- I-494/I-35W Interchange Phase 1
- Southwest LRT
- Red Line BRT
- Bush Lake Road access to I-494
- Third lane on I-494 from TH 55 to I-694
- I-494/Hwy. 169 Interchange

Roadway and Interchange Projects

1. Add lanes on TH 62 in each direction from TH 77 to Portland and from Penn to Hwy. 169 to continue Crosstown Commons improvements.
2. Hwy. 169/Valley View Road interchange reconstruction.
4. The 77th Street underpass (like American Boulevard to the south) is needed to distribute a portion of the consolidated traffic to 24th Avenue where there is an existing interchange with 494 – which was designed with the 77th Street underpass in mind.
5. American Blvd. arterial BRT, connecting the Blue, Red, Orange and Green Transitways with the high employment corridor along I-494.
6. Riverview/W. 7th Street Corridor; Transit service connecting Bloomington, MSP and downtown Saint Paul.
7. D-Line arterial BRT connecting Bloomington, Richfield and downtown Minneapolis.
8. Hwy. 169 BRT, connecting Dakota and Scott Counties with Eden Prairie, Bloomington, Edina, Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Downtown Minneapolis.

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Transit Projects

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Transit

Blue Line
Green Line
Orange Line
Red Line
Other potential high frequency transit routes

I-494 Corridor Commission Priority Projects

(numbers below correspond to map above, not priority ranking)
Transportation Management Organization (TMO) Funding Reduces Congestion and Connects People to Jobs

The I-494 Corridor Commission also serves as a TMO in its member cities, working with employers to encourage the use of transit, bicycling and walking to work as well as carpooling, vanpooling and teleworking.

In 2018 alone, these efforts resulted in shifting 5,756 drive-alone commuters to sustainable mode choices, saving an estimated 56 million vehicle miles not traveled. Each vehicle mile reduced by Commuter Services outreach cost only 1 cent.

By the numbers, 2018 efforts resulted in:

- 1,887 new transit riders
- 1,635 new carpoolers
- 1,254 new bicycle commuters
- 937 new teleworkers
- 43 new vanpoolers

This was achieved through the relationships built with over 1,000 companies who promote our free commute resources. Transportation Management Organizations need local funding to match federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program funds and support administrative costs incurred to deliver services to employers and commuters to reduce traffic congestion. In 2015 and 2017 state lawmakers provided appropriations to these efforts.

The I-494 Corridor Commission requests the Legislature provide it with $150,000 per year in funding to support the work of the TMO.

I-494/35W Interchange Reconstruction and I-494 Corridor Improvements

In May 2018, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) awarded $204 million in Corridors of Commerce funding for projects along I-494, including Phase 1 of the reconstruction of the I-494/I-35W interchange. The current I-494/I-35W cloverleaf loop, which carries about 275,000 vehicles a day, has one of the worst crash frequencies and rush hour congestion levels in the state. Approximately $70 million of the Corridors of Commerce funding would go toward building a direct ramp for northbound-to-westbound traffic, thereby eliminating some of the inner loops. The ramp could reduce 1,600 hours in total daily delays and about $1.1 million in annual crash costs, according to MnDOT. The other $134 million would go to building an eastbound carpool lane along I-494 from France Avenue to TH 77, and a westbound carpool lane from TH 77 to I-35W. The lanes could cut down a total of 2,900 hours of delays a day and $2 million in annual crash costs, MnDOT officials said.

MnDOT has undertaken planning to fully modernize I-494 from Hwy. 169 to the MSP Airport, which the 494 Corridor Commission strongly supports. The $204 million in Corridors of Commerce funding partially funds this vision.

The I-494 Corridor Commission supports any additional funding needed to fully implement this plan.

Jobs through Transportation and Transit Improvements and Corridors of Commerce

With more jobs than downtown Minneapolis and downtown Saint Paul combined, the I-494 Corridor is a critical economic development driver for Minnesota. Investing in the corridor’s transportation infrastructure will keep this engine running, growing and producing dividends for the state.

Support Transportation Economic Development Program

The Commission strongly encourages increased investment in the Transportation Economic Development (TED) program. The TED program was created to support local transportation projects that create jobs and improve economic opportunities while making needed improvements to our roadways and interchanges. It offers innovative financing options and allows private sector partners to participate, e.g., United Health/Bren Road and I-494/Penn Ave.

Support Corridors of Commerce

The Corridors of Commerce Program funds projects that reduce barriers to commerce by improving the safe and efficient movement of goods and services throughout the state. It aims to increase highway capacity and freight movement on segments where bottlenecks occur. The program uses trunk highway bonding for projects that are not already in the state’s four-year State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Commission deeply appreciates the Corridors of Commerce funding for the I-494 Corridor granted in 2018. The Commission urges the legislature to continue adequately funding this program going forward.

I-494 Corridor Jobs

There are more jobs along the I-494 corridor from the airport to I-394 than downtown Minneapolis and downtown Saint Paul combined.

A large number of excellent examples of TED funding candidates are highlighted on our project priority map. They have local backing and a portion of the funds necessary to proceed. The TED program can provide a funding match.

State of Minnesota

People from 85 out of 87 counties use I-494 between Hwy. 169 and the MSP airport daily.

23% of trips on an average weekday come from Greater Minnesota.