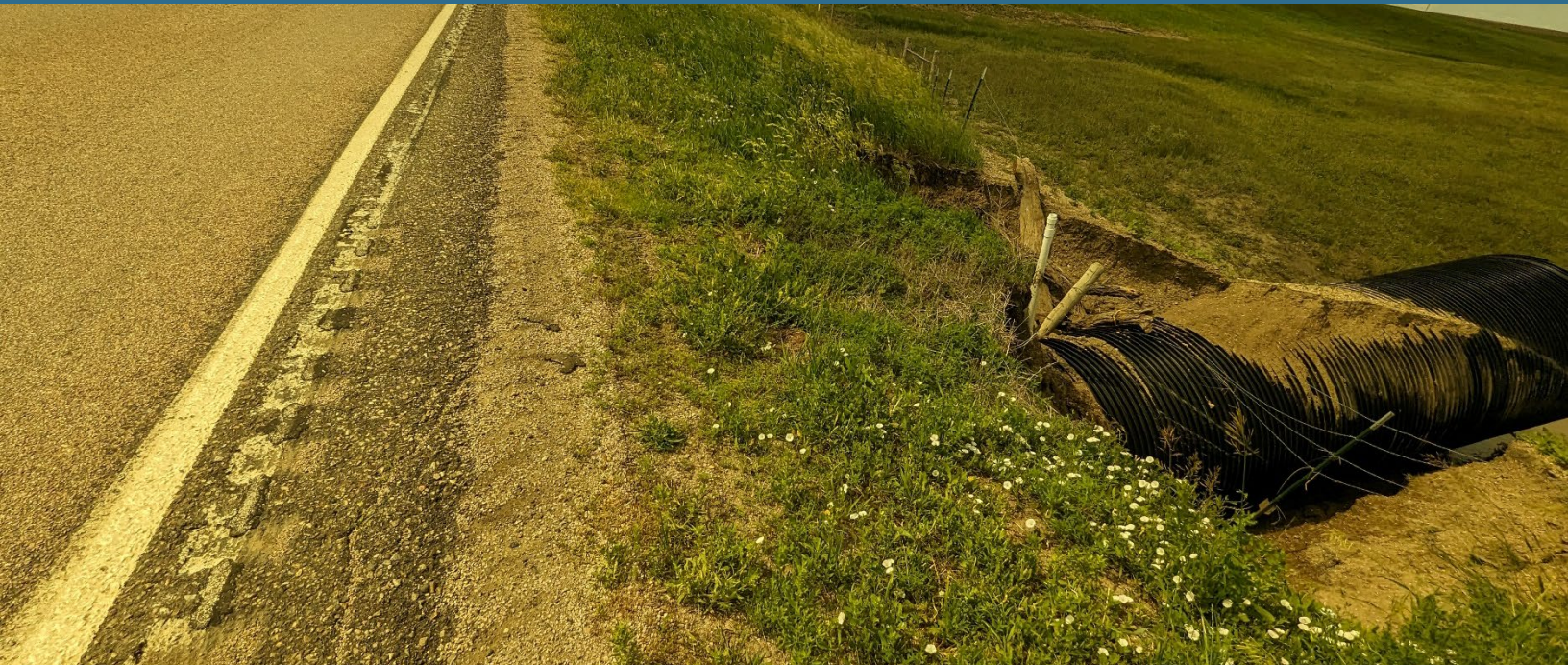


New Underwood Road Reconstruction

I90 to SD34 – Meade and Pennington Counties

2023/24 MULTIMODAL PROJECT DISCRETIONARY GRANT (MPDG) OPPORTUNITY



Project Readiness

Project Name: New Underwood Road Reconstruction - I90 to SD34 – Pennington and Meade Counties

Project Type: Rural

Total Project Cost: \$98,702,114

2023/24 Rural Funds Requested: \$73,421,624

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Supporting Information can be found at:
<https://www.srfconsulting.com/meade-cty-sd34>

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Project Readiness

Environmental Risk assessment

SDDOT has a demonstrated history of managing and delivering projects, and with a proven and robust staff assures that necessary procedures and activities will be completed to allow FY 2023-FY 2024 MPDG funds to be obligated sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline (September 30, 2026). The non-federal match and other federal funds allocated to the Project are programmed in the [South Dakota Statewide Transportation Improvement Program](#) (STIP). Input and outreach to disadvantaged communities has occurred and updates will continually be available on the [Project website](#).

Project Schedule

A project schedule identifying major project milestones is presented below. All planning, agreements, permitting, review periods, and approvals have been considered and incorporated into the Project's schedule.

Construction on the Project (Section 1) is expected to begin in a timely manner in FY 2025.

Upon the MPDG grant obligation notice, SDDOT, in collaboration with Meade County, will immediately initiate further design and engineering of the Project. SDDOT will concurrently start NEPA documentation for efficiency and improved coordination. Community engagement along the corridor will take place throughout project development and delivery.

Required Approvals

Environmental Permits & Reviews

Construction activities will result in earth disturbance and work in a waterway, which will require two permits including the Department of Agricultural & Natural Resources (DANR) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities, and the EPA 2017 Construction General Permit.

SDDOT has initiated communication with applicable environmental agencies and interested parties regarding the Project. Preliminary baseline data collection to identify natural and cultural/historic resources potentially affected by the Project is underway. This information will be refined during the Project's design phase and will be used to avoid and minimize potential impacts to any identified resources.

It is anticipated that the Project qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) because the Project will occur primarily within existing right-of-way. At present, New Underwood Road is owned and maintained by Meade and Pennington Counties; however, the parties are executing a Transfer of Ownership Agreement to transfer ownership to the SDDOT. Limited right-of-way acquisition is anticipated for the Project, but some will be necessary. Temporary construction easements for material laydown sites, assembly, or vehicle access may be required. To comply with NEPA, SDDOT will process the Project using the CE Checklist to streamline project delivery.

Construction activities are not anticipated to result in significant earth disturbance or work in waterways. The South Dakota Department of Agricultural & Natural Resources (DANR) will be engaged as part of the review process for the Project's design to determine whether a General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities is necessary. Should a DANR General Permit for Storm Water be required, SDDOT will submit the Notice of Intent (NOI) to DANR 15 days prior to Project start in order to obtain coverage under the General Permit. Work will only begin once the DANR letter of approval is received.

The contractor retained to complete the work must adhere to the "Special Provision Regarding Storm Water Discharges to Waters of the State." The contractor will complete the DANR Contractor Certification Form prior to a pre-construction meeting. The form certifies, under penalty of law, that the contractor understands and will

comply with the terms and conditions of the permit for the Project. Work may not begin on the Project until this form is signed and submitted to DANR.

The EPA 2017 Construction General Permit is required for the Project. SDDOT has this permit and will submit the NOI to EPA 15 days prior to the Project's start to obtain coverage. Work can begin only after authorization is received from the EPA. This permit provides coverage for construction and dewatering activities for the Project.

A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed prior to the submittal of the NOI and will be implemented for all construction activities for compliance with the permit. The SWPPP must be kept on-site and updated as site conditions change. Erosion control measures and best management practices will be implemented in accordance with the SWPPP. The Storm Water, Erosion, and Sediment Control Inspection Report Form DOT 298 will be used for site inspections and to document changes to the SWPPP. A copy of the completed inspection form will be filed with the SWPPP documents and retained for a minimum of three years.

The inspection will include disturbed areas of the construction site that have not been stabilized, areas used for storage materials, structural control measures, and locations where vehicles enter or exit the site. These areas will be inspected for evidence of, or the potential for, pollutants entering the drainage system. Erosion and sediment control measures identified in the SWPPP will be observed to ensure that they are operating correctly, and sediment is not tracked off of the site.

State and Local Approvals

SDDOT anticipates receiving all required project approvals well in advance of construction. The Project is entered as part of SDDOT's project development process, and while not officially part of the STIP yet, the Project is on the path to becoming a STIP item in the future.

Letters of support have been provided on the Project website indicating state and local support for the overall grant application and respective local match contributions.

There are no South Dakota legislative approvals required to complete the Project.

Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

As noted above, the Project is entered as part of SDDOT's project development process, and while not officially part of the STIP yet, the Project is on the path to becoming a STIP item in the future.

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

The Project recognizes the possibility of unexpected delays due to funding, environmental review findings, permitting, real estate acquisition, and weather-related events. Due to the rural location of the Project, increased bid costs in hauling material (e.g. asphalt, concrete, gravel, steel), is also another potential factor to consider.

The proposed Project presents minimal environmental risks to the surrounding natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and adjacent populations. Potential impacts of the Project are almost entirely those experienced during construction. However, SDDOT has taken care to recognize some potential project risks that commonly occur on similar projects, and to identify and specify mitigation strategies to address these potential risks. Table 1 displays key potential risks and mitigation strategies. Highlighted below are potential areas the SDDOT will focus mitigation strategies during design and construction:

- **Wetlands and Waterways:** SDDOT will identify and prescribe mitigation strategies to minimize potential impacts to any wetlands, streams, creeks or rivers during the Project's design, and will engage the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), DANR, and EPA as part of the design process to help ensure acceptable mitigation is developed and deployed. Prior to the start of construction, SDDOT will incorporate the specified mitigation strategies as part of the construction contracting documents, and conduct field reviews of the contractor's installation of mitigation treatments. Due to the crossings of Elk Creek, the Belle Fourche River, and Elm Creek, the Project will require compliance with permitting requirements pursuant to Sections 401/404 of the Clean Water Act. SDDOT will coordinate with the USACE and the DANR for

permitting requirements. The USACE holds the final discretion as to what permit will be required to authorize construction.

Table 1. Potential Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Construction Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary construction detours may impact access and travel time • Storm water runoff and erosion control • Cultural/historic resource disturbance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing construction in a timely manner • Communicating detours and construction schedules to the community through multiple channels in English and Spanish • Erosion control and best management practices
Project Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right-of-way acquisition and/or temporary construction easements • Additional or unknown utility relocation costs could increase overall project costs • Materials shortages and inflation causing volatility in materials and construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and engineering will confirm utility locations and relocation costs • Appropriate contingency funds will be included in the construction cost estimate to account for supply chain difficulties and current inflation rates
Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROW acquisition delays • Delays in any permits could delay the project schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is designed to minimize ROW acquisition and is primarily being constructed within existing ROW and roadway extents • Coordination with any affected property owners will begin once further engineering is complete

- **Storm Water:** Water runoff from storm events is always a potential environmental risk during construction projects. SDDOT is well acquainted with the SWPPP process and employs erosion control and best management practices, and will coordinate with the appropriate state and federal agencies regarding the Project to secure all permits prior to the start of construction. Furthermore, SDDOT will incorporate contractor compliance requirements and conduct field visits to ensure proper installation of storm water management features. Prior to construction, SDDOT will obtain a NPDES permit to ensure storm water is properly treated and controlled during construction.
- **Cultural/Historic Resources:** The State of South Dakota has a rich natural history that includes the discovery of historic artifacts spanning geologic times prior to human settlement periods, along with eras of history that include prehistory/paleolithic human migration and settlements, ancient history, and modern/post-classical history. It is therefore anticipated that the Project's location could include previously unknown cultural and historic resources. Fortunately, SDDOT is well positioned to address cultural and historic resources and the discovery of previously unknown resources. It is anticipated that consultations pursuant to Section 106 and the National Historic Preservation Act will occur concurrently with the NEPA process to ensure that any potential impacts to known historic resources are avoided and minimized, and that procedures are established should any historic resources be discovered during design and construction of the Project.

- **Right-of-Way Acquisition:** While much of the reconstruction of New Underwood Road is anticipated to occur within existing right-of-way, it is anticipated that some small extents of right-of-way may be necessary, including or Temporary Construction Easements (TCEs). A delay in acquisitions (permanent or temporary) could result in schedule setbacks. SDDOT intends to work proactively with landowners as soon as it determined that property acquisition is necessary for the Project.

Technical Capacity

The Project represents the culmination of a planning effort coordinated by the SDDOT and involving representatives from Meade and Pennington Counties. SDDOT will serve as the Recipient responsible for administering the grant if selected for award, funding partner, owner of Project ROW, and will provide oversight of project delivery. As the project sponsor, SDDOT will apply its experience in successfully delivering this Project.

During the development of the MPDG package, several project risks were considered, but each has a comprehensive mitigation strategy. The Rapid City Design Office of the SDDOT will likely be responsible for managing the Project. This office represents one of the larger design offices in the state and has the capacity to complete the Project. Preliminary design is currently underway and coordination between the design team and the environmental team will continue to ensure that the Project goals and community needs are met while, avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating potential environmental impacts.

Considered comprehensively, the potential environmental risks of the Project are primarily limited to construction-related activities. Potential environmental risks and impacts of the Project are all anticipated to be minor to the surrounding natural landscape, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and any adjacent residential populations. Still, SDDOT will obtain all applicable state and federal permits for the Project before commencing construction activities.

SDDOT and Meade County have a demonstrated history of successful collaboration delivering transportation projects similar to this. Working together and with local partners and supporters of the Project, SDDOT and Meade County have created a focused vision through multiple planning efforts that will drive the completion of the proposed scope of work in a timely manner.

Once SDDOT has called for, received, and analyzed bids for the Project, a contractor will be selected and awarded. Financial contingencies have been included in the cost estimate, amounting to five to 10 percent all roadway construction costs, depending on the segment.

Supporting Documents

Links to supporting documents are included throughout this narrative. All supporting documents and the MPDG grant application narrative are available to view at the following webpage:

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/meade-cty-sd34>