

**Information for File # 2013-00531-MMJ;
Trunk Highway (TH) 7 / Louisiana Ave. Interchange Project**

Applicant: City of St. Louis Park

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Primary County: Hennepin

Location: Section 17, T. 117 N., R. 21 W.

Information Complete On: 2/1/2013

Posting Expires On: 2/25/2013

Authorization Type: LOP-05-MN

This application is being reviewed in accordance with the practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Sections 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 07-01. We have made a preliminary determination that the aquatic resources that would be impacted by the proposed project are regulated by the Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Our jurisdictional review and final jurisdictional determination could result in modifications to the scope of the project's regulated wetland impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements identified above. An approved jurisdictional determination will be made prior to reaching a permit decision, and will be posted on the St. Paul District web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/>.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION: The primary purpose of the TH 7 and Louisiana Avenue Interchange Project is to address deteriorating safety and operational conditions at the intersection. The project as proposed would replace the existing at-grade intersection with a new interchange; TH 7 would be elevated to bridge over Louisiana Avenue. TH 7 would remain as two thru-lanes in each direction, and would be located along the same alignment. Single entrance and exits ramps would be located at each quadrant of the existing intersection.

Two single lane roundabouts would replace the signal-controlled intersections of Louisiana Avenue at Walker and West Lake streets. The slip ramp intersections at Lake Street West (north side of TH 7) and Hampshire Avenue South (south side of TH 7), located east of the existing intersection, would be closed. Traffic would be directed towards the new roundabouts. Removal of these accesses would be a significant safety improvement, by reducing access to TH 7.

Pedestrian trails would be replaced along both sides of Louisiana Avenue. The trails would be the same dimensions as the existing trails, but are a significant safety

improvement, as they would be located under the bridge, and pedestrians would not have to cross over TH 7.

Two storm water ponds would be constructed with the project. Walker Pond will be located in the northeast quadrant, and would be used for initial treatment and flood storage. West Lake Pond would be located in the southeast quadrant, and would provide for additional flood storage and treatment to meet Minnehaha Creek sediment and nutrient reduction requirements.

NAME, AREA AND TYPES OF WATERS (INCLUDING WETLANDS) SUBJECT TO LOSS: The project as proposed would result in the permanent discharge of fill material over 0.38 acre of wetland. The project would also involve excavation of 0.72 acre of wetland, in conjunction with the construction of an improved storm water management system at the intersection. Reconstruction as proposed would adversely impact approximately 1.10 acres of wetland.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: In addition to the no-build alternative, the City of St. Louis Park and its project partners identified and evaluated ten concept designs, including seven grade-separated interchange designs and three at-grade intersection designs.

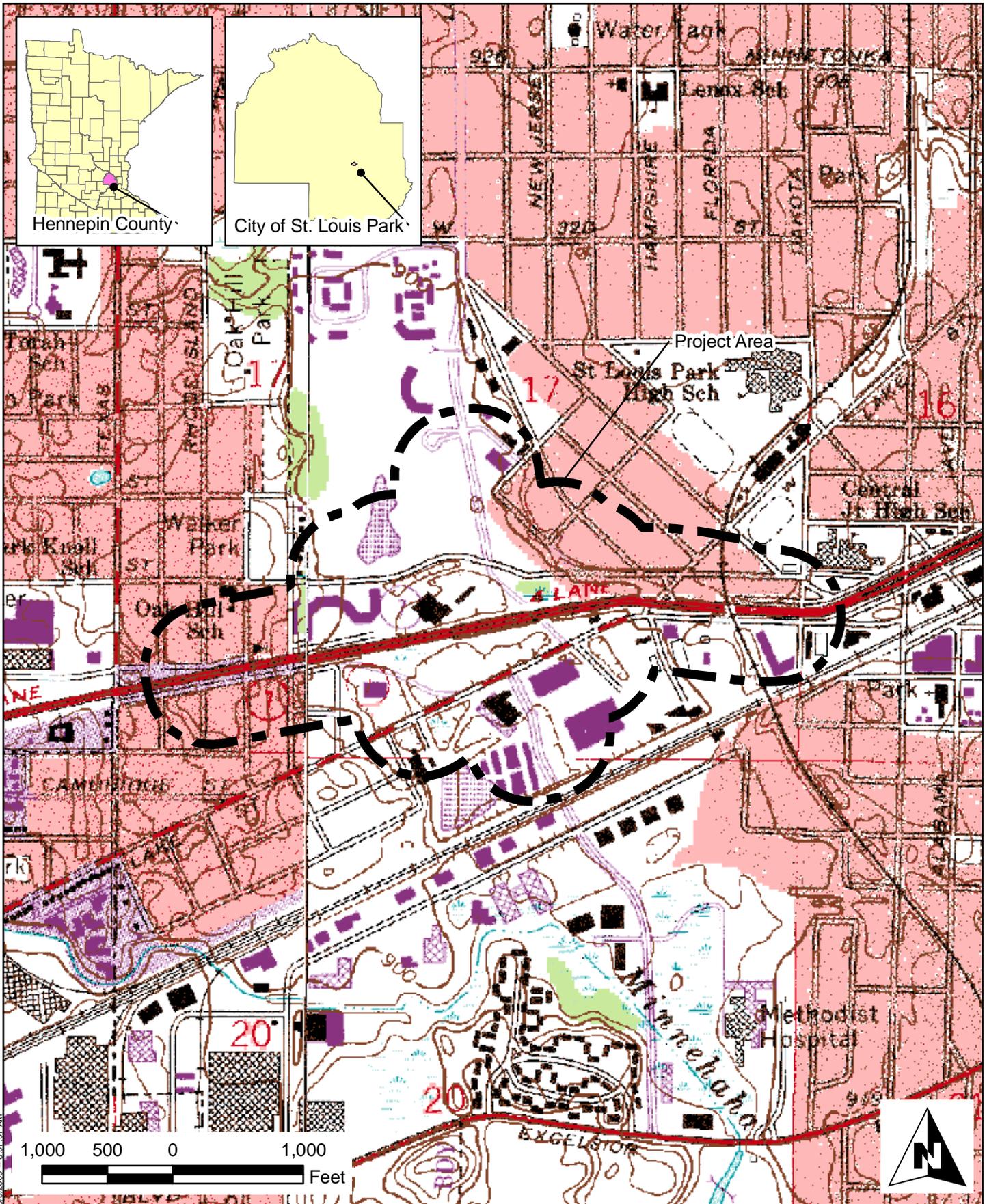
Numerous measures were used to evaluate how well each concept alternative achieved the project purpose and need and satisfied the project goals and objectives, including: Traffic Operations/Mobility, Sensitivity to Traffic Forecast, Safety, Transit Friendliness (compatibility with the proposed Southwest LRT line and transit station at Louisiana Avenue), Environmental Impacts, Right of Way/Property Impacts, Aesthetics, etc. Based on this evaluation, eight concept alternatives were removed from further consideration. A total of two build alternatives (#6 Tight Diamond with Roundabouts and #4 Buttonhook Ramps with Roundabouts), and the No-Build Alternative, were carried forward for a more detailed evaluation to compare the potential impacts to the natural and built environment as well as the affect on traffic operations.

After reviewing technical evaluations, assessments, and input from the public and agency representatives that occurred as part of a multi phase screening process, the alternative Tight Diamond with Roundabouts was identified as the preferred alternative. This decision was made with regard to many variables, but ultimately would have the least overall environmental impact, and would concentrate the project to within the existing Louisiana Avenue corridor.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The reconstruction of the TH 7 and Louisiana Avenue intersection into an interchange has been proposed as a safety improvement. The City of St. Louis Park applied for a federal grant for this project on this basis, and was awarded funding. An Environmental Assessment was completed to satisfy Federal Highway Administration requirements, and also highlighted the need of the project being based primarily on safety improvements.

On the basis that the project is proposed primarily for safety improvements, and the project is being led by a local road authority (City of St. Louis Park), compensatory mitigation would be achieved by debiting wetland credits (at a 2:1 ratio) from a Corps-approved, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Local Government Roads Wetland Replacement Program (LGRWRP) mitigation bank.

Drawings: See attached, labeled as 2013-00531-MMJ, Figures 1-4.



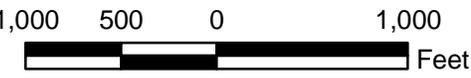
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	<p>3535 VADNAIS CENTER DR. ST. PAUL, MN 55110 PHONE: (651) 490-2000 FAX: (651) 490-2150 WATTS: 800-325-2055 www.sehinc.com</p>	<p>Project: STLOU 106311 Print Date: 06/03/2009</p> <p>Map by: naa/srh Projection: NAD 83, UTM zone 15 Source: USGS, Mn/DOT, SEH</p>	<p>PROJECT LOCATION TRUNK HIGHWAY 7 AND LOUISIANA AVENUE INTERCHANGE PROJECT St. Louis Park, Minnesota</p>	<p>Figure 1</p>
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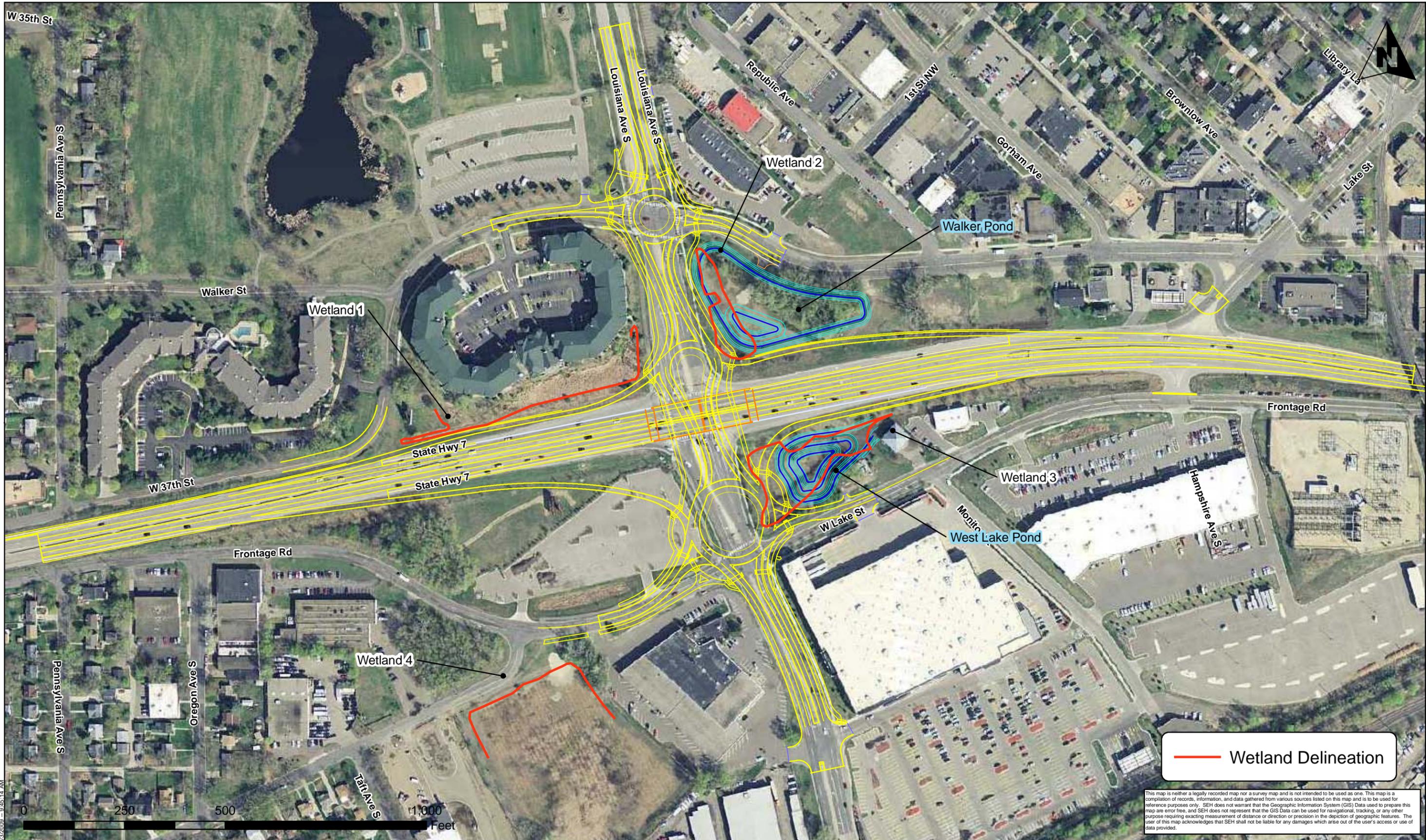


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— Wetland Delineation

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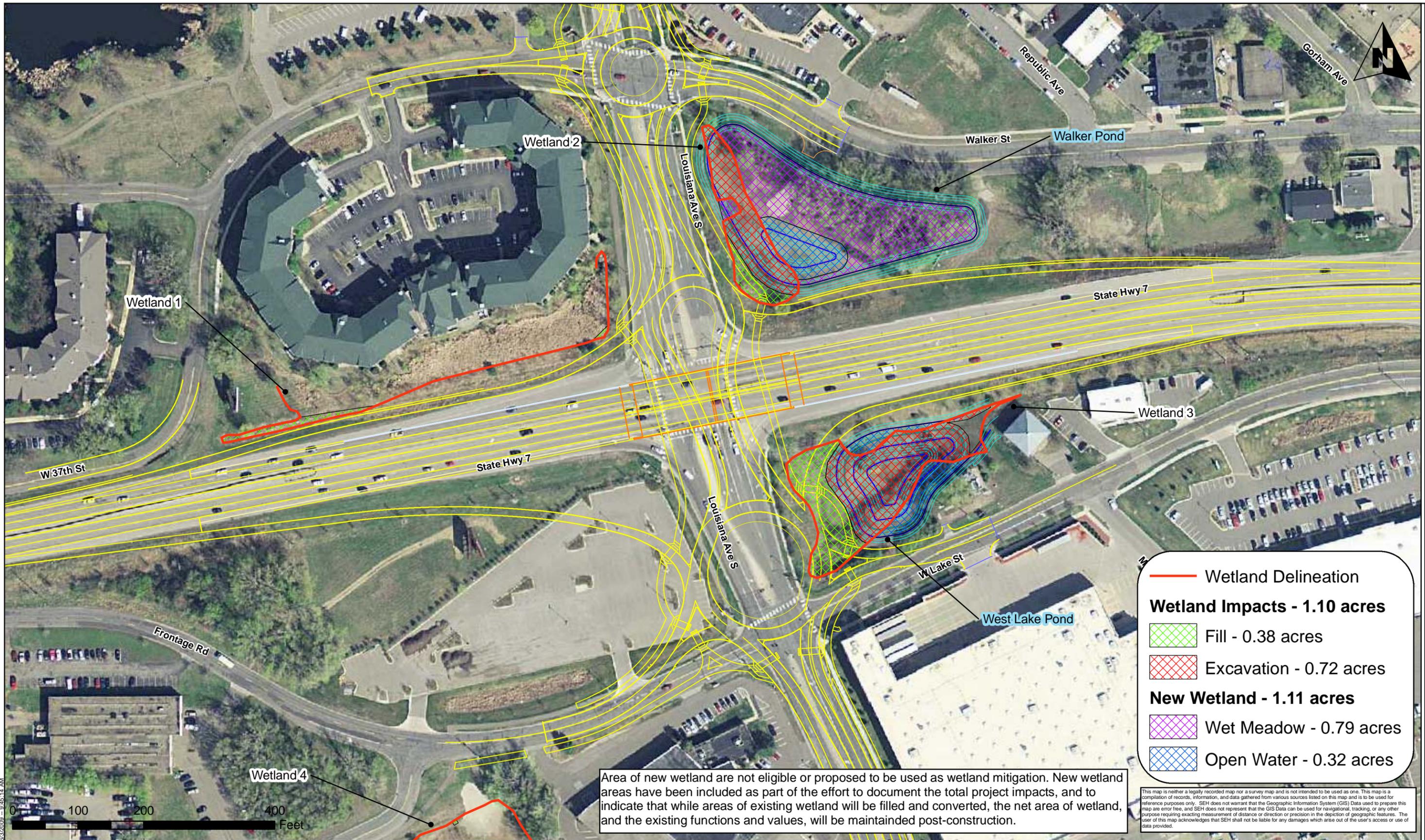
Project: STLOU 106311
Print Date: 06/03/2009
Map by: naa/srh
Projection: NAD 83, Hennepin County Feet
Source: Aerials Express, Mn/DOT, SEH

TRUNK HIGHWAY 7 AND LOUISIANA AVENUE INTERCHANGE PROJECT

St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Construction Plans

**Figure
4**



Area of new wetland are not eligible or proposed to be used as wetland mitigation. New wetland areas have been included as part of the effort to document the total project impacts, and to indicate that while areas of existing wetland will be filled and converted, the net area of wetland, and the existing functions and values, will be maintained post-construction.

— Wetland Delineation

Wetland Impacts - 1.10 acres

- Fill - 0.38 acres
- Excavation - 0.72 acres

New Wetland - 1.11 acres

- Wet Meadow - 0.79 acres
- Open Water - 0.32 acres

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TRUNK HIGHWAY 7 AND LOUISIANA AVENUE INTERCHANGE PROJECT

St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Wetland Impacts

Figure 5