

# The Journal

Print this Page

[←--back to story](#)

## **Walz seeks \$103 million in federal funding for Hwy. 14**

By Kevin Sweeney Journal Editor

POSTED: May 12, 2009

NORTH MANKATO - Congressman Tim Walz announced Monday he is seeking \$103 million in federal funding for Highway 14 upgrades, including the expansion of the North Mankato to New Ulm stretch.

Walz, in a series of announcements along Highway 14, said he would add the request to the new Surface Transportation Bill being written in Congress.

In addition to \$35 million for the New Ulm to North Mankato upgrade, the request would include \$35 million to upgrade the section of highway between Owatonna and Dodge Center; \$18.4 million for an interchange at Highway 14 and Highway 41 in North Mankato, and \$14.7 million for an interchange at Blue Earth County Road 12.

Walz is also requesting \$7 million for 55th Street and \$15 million for 65th Street in Rochester.

"We need a 21st century transportation corridor that efficiently moves people, goods and services throughout the region," said Walz. "America needs this Surface Transportation bill more than ever - to liberate our ingenuity, enhance mobility and protect the environment, reduce the cost of transportation inefficiencies, and put thousands of American workers back on the job. As your elected Member of Congress, I strongly believe, that is my duty to fight for funding for high quality projects like Highway 14 and the 55th Street Extension and 65th Street Interchange."

"As we all know, the Hwy 14 corridor is among the deadliest highways in America. Now is the time to upgrade this critical infrastructure, and create jobs. These projects will help bring key economic development investments and put people back to work,"Walz said.

Walz expects the bill to be done soon. A partner bill must be passed in the Senate, and the two bills would be merged before being sent on to President Obama.

Walz said he hopes the House can have its bill done by August, with the entire process complete by the end of the year.

New Ulm Mayor Joel Albrecht, one of the speakers at the North Mankato announcement, said the money requested would cover the completion of the required environmental impact statement (EIS) for the New Ulm to North Mankato branch, and some land acquisition.

"One thing that Congressman Walz said struck me," said Albrecht. "He said he can talk to anyone along the corridor, and everyone has the same story. They are not pushing their segment, or saying one part is more important than the other. They are all pushing the entire project. He said he was at the groundbreaking for the Janesville portion of the project, and I was there. Mayor Albrcht has nothing to gain from the Janesville portion, but he was one of the biggest cheerleaders."

Albrecht said the money represents the federal portion of the 80-20 split with the state. "We still have to come up with the 20 percent from the state to access the federal funds," said Albrecht. "But we (the state) have several years to do it."

Walz said he was confident that the request, or at least a portion of it, would survive the committee process, said Albrecht, since Walz is a member of the House Transportation Committee, and the chair of the committee is Minnesota's 8th District Rep. James Oberstar.

[Subscribe to The Journal](#)